

H. S. Harris

Hegel's Ladder

Volume I: The
Pilgrimage of
Reason

Volume II: The
Odyssey of Spirit

HEGEL'S LADDER

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I: The Pilgrimage of Reason

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for Ruth,
the artist who
flies over the
fence:

Kullervo, Kalervon poika
jopa aitoa panevi.
Kohastansa kokkahongat
aiaksiksi asettelevi,
kokonansa korpikuuset
seipähiksi pistelevi;
veti vitsakset lujahan
pisimmistä pihlajista;
pani aian umpinaisen,
veräjättömän kyhäsi.
Siitä tuon sanoiksi virkki,
itse lausui, noin nimesi:
"Ku ei lintuna kohonne,
kahen siiven siuotelle,
elköhön ylitse pääskö
aiasta Kalervon poian!"

Untamo osaelevi
tulla tuota katsomahan
aitoa Kalervon poian,
sotaorjan sortamoa.

Näki aian aukottoman,
raottoman, reiättömän,
jok' oli pantu maaemästä,
ylös pilvihin osattu.

Sanan virkkoi, noin
nimesi:
"Ei tämä tähän sopiva!
Pani aian aukottoman,
veräjättömän kyhäsi,
tuon on nossti taivosehen,
ylös pilvihin kohotti:
en tuosta ylitse pääse
enkä reiästä sisälle!
En tieä, mihin panisin,
kulle työlle työnteleisin.

(*Kalevala*: Runo 31)

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An Apologetic Preface

When I applied to the Canada Council (late in 1963) for a Leave Fellowship in support of my first Sabbatical, I said that I intended to write “a commentary on Hegel’s *Phenomenology*.” I received the Fellowship, but I did not keep the promise. What eventually emerged (some seven years later) was *Hegel’s Development I: Toward the Sunlight*. After that, it took more than ten years to produce *Hegel’s Development II: Night Thoughts*. As Doctor Johnson remarked long ago, “every long work is lengthened by a thousand causes that can, and ten thousand that cannot, be recounted. Perhaps no extensive and multifarious performance was ever effected within the term originally fixed in the undertaker’s mind. He that runs against Time, has an antagonist not subject to casualties.”¹ But here, at last, is the best commentary on the *Phenomenology* that I can devise.

Hegel’s Ladder aspires to be a “literal commentary” on *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*. From the first, it was the conscious goal of my thirty-year struggle with Hegel to write an explanatory commentary on this book, and with its completion I regard my own “working” career as concluded. I shall go on writing, no doubt, for as long as I can—but only for my own pleasure and enjoyment, and not predominantly about Hegel.

During the long years of my apprentice work on *Hegel’s Development*—and even in the years in which the commentary has been written—my conception of what I was aiming to write has evolved gradually. When I began (in 1964), there was not much literature in English about Hegel’s first big book. Now, there are probably more book-length studies of it in English than in any other language—even German. (We must include here the translations, for the best book on our long shelf is certainly the translation of Jean Hyppolite’s *Genesis and Structure of Hegel’s Phenomenology*.)²

I have learned much from this steady stream of books, and I have naturally referred to the Anglophone literature more often and more copiously in my footnotes than to the literature in the other languages that I could read. But the Anglophone books have formed my own project mostly by opposition, so my references are rather more chancy and sporadic than they might have been. In most cases—Quentin Lauer’s *Reading* (1976) is a noteworthy exception—I have found that it is difficult to argue constructively with Anglophone interpreters, because the relation between Hegel’s text and their interpretations is so indefinite.

This fault is apparent even in the “Analysis and Commentary” of Howard Kainz, though it contains far more “Analysis” than “Commentary.” His first volume appeared in 1976, and it was followed only a year later by the “Analysis” that J. N. Findlay appended to the new translation by A. V. Miller. Miller’s decision to number the paragraphs of the original meant that we could readily see exactly what Findlay claimed to be analysing at every stage; and my continual disagreements with Findlay’s account of what Hegel’s argument was—the account which almost all of my students were bound to turn to first for assistance—together with the object lesson of uncertainty provided by Kainz, led me to write a paragraph-summary of my own for use in class. In this way I came to see that an “analysis” was one essential element in a satisfactory commentary.³

The prevailing habit of commentators—the way that they pick up and develop freely the themes and arguments that they find intelligible and interesting while disregarding much that they find difficult, unconvincing, or simply dull—is founded on the consensus of opinion that, whatever else it may be, Hegel’s *Phenomenology* is not the logical “Science” that he claimed it was. Some students think that the project is clear and interesting; others will not concede even that. But hardly anyone thinks that the project has been successfully carried out.⁴ This is the received view that I want to challenge and, if possible, to overthrow. If I am right, an acceptably continuous chain of argument, paragraph by paragraph, ought to be discoverable in the text.

But the laying out of the argument is only the first step for a would-be “logical” commentator. It is difficult to do it at all helpfully, without wandering off on paths of one’s own, offering variations, elaborations, and applications instead of faithful analysis. My own “analysis” has undergone many revisions in places where I found that I had substituted reasonings of my own for what the text said; and the discipline of returning to Hegel’s own text has almost always made the analysis more difficult to understand—and therefore less “helpful”—because the mode of expression had to be brought closer to Hegel’s own. Thus, the better (and “safer”) the analysis became, the more the need for a “free” discussion, with full explanations and as much illustration as possible, was evident. Among the books in French and German, we can easily find “analytical” works that cannot be faulted as readily as Findlay’s (or Lauer’s, which is generally more sound). Perhaps the “safest” is P.-J. Labarrière’s structural study (1968), though C. A. Scheier’s large “Analytical Commentary” (1980) also deserves mention in this connection. Labarrière set up the goal of interpreting the *Phenomenology* from within and “as it lies.” I agree with Puntel that this goal is quite unachievable.⁵ Literary critics set up the same sort of ideal for the interpretation of poems, and I remain uncertain what they mean until I see what they say about their chosen cases. In Labarrière’s philosophical case, I find that what his analysis produces is for the most part connections that help us to recognize some interpretive problems and define them accurately, but not to solve them. This contribution is much more valuable, to be sure, than the “superficial” solutions to supposed problems that we find in far too many Anglophone discussions. But it does show that a free-ranging commentary *ab externo* is needed and can be helpful.

We must hang on to the *truth* in Labarrière's view when we face Hoffmeister's gloomy warning that "all those who do not have a comprehensive and precise knowledge of German cultural history, especially from the Enlightenment onwards, lack the necessary prerequisites for the understanding of this work."⁶ I am well aware that I do not have, and could never achieve, the sort of comprehensive and precise knowledge of the cultural background that Hoffmeister and some of his successors among German Hegel scholars and editors possess. I envy them, because that kind of cultural grasp deepens one's understanding and enriches one's enjoyment. But to suppose that this is the essential thing is to deny that a "Science of experience" is possible, and to set one's feet on the downhill path towards the great bonfire of "deconstruction." Deconstruction is not a new concept in Hegel studies. Scholars have been practising it on the "Science of experience" since Haym's time (1857), if not earlier. It is a primrose path—and perhaps all "systems" must end up on the bonfire. But I have not willingly and consciously spent half of my life going downhill. My own endeavor here—in the "long commentary"—will be to interpret the text with as much relevant empirical knowledge as I can muster about Hegel's own thought-world, but to interpret it in terms of my own quite different cultural background. If Hegel did make something like a logical science out of his own experience, then it seems to me that this experiment ought to work; and if, or insofar as, it does, the reader will have some plausible evidence in support of the claim that Hegel's book is what it pretends to be.

Labarrière's project—when supposed adequate by itself—rests on the dream of a utopian perfection of statement, that would leave even the Science of Logic beyond our ordinary finite human grasp. Hoffmeister's prescription is the voice of one who already despairs of the possibility of a logical "Science of experience." By combining the models of the "short commentary" and the "long commentary" that the great Arabs—especially Averroës—devoted to the works of Aristotle, I hope to have supplied what the optimism of Labarrière leaves out and to have shown that the pessimism of Hoffmeister is unjustified. My work is not word by word, like Augustine's great commentary on Genesis *ad litteram*, and it can certainly never have the lasting authority of the great interpreter whom Aquinas dubbed "Commentator" pure and simple. My hope is only that this commentary will prove good enough to provoke a better one rather than suffer the fate of a slow deconstruction, fragment by shattered fragment (although I suppose that that must inevitably come first if something better is to follow).

H. S. Harris

The Feast of St. Leo the Great, 1996

Notes

1. In his *Life of Pope* (with reference to Pope's slow progress in translating the *Iliad*). See James Boswell (1934, I, 319 n1).
2. For an excellent study of Hyppolite's interpretation of Hegel, see M. S. Roth (1988, Part 1). See also J. P. Butler (1987, 79–91).
3. H. Kainz (1976 and 1983); J. N. Findlay (1977). The much-revised descendant of my own paragraph-summary is now incorporated in the commentary as a running analysis. For the method of numbering paragraphs see the note on "Conventions and Abbreviations," p. xv.
4. Among the few exceptions, K. Westphal (1989, chapter 11) comes closest, perhaps, to accepting something like my own view of the question.
5. P.-J. Labarrière (1968, 29); L. B. Puntel (1973, 268n.).
6. Hegel, *Phänomenologie*, 1952, V.

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Many people, and several institutions, have been helpful to me during the lengthy gestation of this work. Most of my debts I cannot now remember, and of some I have perhaps never been properly conscious. Those acknowledged here must stand, symbolically, for the others that have been silently passed over (though not always forgotten).

Glendon College, together with the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, provided me with a full year of Sabbatical Leave; and the Killam Foundation (with the College) subsequently awarded me a Research Fellowship for another two years. This made it possible for me to complete the project.

The draft first submitted for publication was carefully reviewed and copiously commented on by Kenneth Westphal. As a result of his sympathetic but searching criticism many passages have been clarified, some errors eliminated, and some useful additions have been made.

My daughter Carol put the whole mass of my manuscript—and many successive layers of footnotes—on disk. Together with Jim Devin she has borne a heavy share of the onerous tasks of copy-editing and proofreading.

Jim Devin loaned me many books and directed my attention to other useful references. My son David and daughter-in-law Jane helped with the Index. The students in my seminars provided stimulus and criticism in a running dialogue that lasted as long as the famous Paris seminar of Alexandre Kojève. Colleagues everywhere have inspired me and urged me on. To all I am immensely grateful. I hope that the results will be found to justify the faith and labor so freely offered and generously expended.

Note on Conventions and Abbreviations

I have numbered the paragraphs of Hegel's text in two ways. For the convenience of those who use Miller's translation, I have adopted his running numbers (in spite of one or two mistakes that he made), but for the benefit of other readers, I have also numbered the paragraphs in each section. This should make it fairly easy to find the place in my commentary with any accurately printed text.

Bibliographical references in the Notes are given in abbreviated form: author's name, (publication date, page number or chapter). Translations of Hegel's works are similarly referred to by the translator's name with a page number. The full reference can be found by looking for the name and date in the Bibliography. Translations are listed in section 2 of the Bibliography specifically. Cross-references are provided in section 3 where confusion appeared likely.

The following abbreviations have been employed regularly:

- Akad.:* Kant, Immanuel, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Royal Prussian Academy, Berlin, Reimer, 1902–38.
- Anm.:* Anmerkung (Remark)
- D.-K.:* *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels and W. Kranz, 7th ed., 3 vols., Berlin, Wiedmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1954.
- Dok.:* *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, Stuttgart, Fromann, 1936, 1974.
- E.L.:* *Encyclopedia Logic*
- Enz.:* *Enzyklopädie (Encyclopedia)*
- G.S.A.:* Hölderlin, J.C.F., *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. F. Beissner and A. Beck, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1943– (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe)
- G.W.:* G.W.F. Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Hamburg, F. Meiner, 1968ff.
- H.S.A.:* Hegel Society of America
- H.S.G.B.:* Hegel Society of Great Britain
- I.J.P.:* *Independent Journal of Philosophy*
- K.P.V.:* Kant, Immanuel, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (Critique of Practical Reason)*, Riga, Hartknoch, 1788.

- K.R.V.*(A,B): Kant, Immanuel, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Practical Reason*), Riga, Hartknoch, 1781 [=A], second edition with occasional improvements, 1787 [=B].
- N.E.D.*: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933 (1971).
- L.C.L.*: Loeb Classical Library
- L.L.A.*: Library of Liberal Arts
- S.T.*: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*
- S.V.F.*: E. von Arnim (ed.), *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 4 vols., Leipzig, Teubner, 1903–24; reprinted, Dubuque Iowa, W.C. Brown, n.d.
- S.W.*: *Sämtliche Werke*
- T.W.-A.*: G.W.F. Hegel: *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. E. Moldenhauer and K.M. Michel, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1970 [*Theorie Werkausgabe*].
- W.L.*: *Wissenschaft der Logik*

Introduction

1. The Genesis of the *Phenomenology*

Hegel's *Phenomenology* is an immensely complex book. It purports to be a "science" of man's experience of the Absolute as a historic process of self-manifestation. According to the title that Hegel eventually gave it, it treats of "the phenomenology of the Spirit." God's appearance to man as "Spirit" is a world-historical process that began in Thomas Mann's "deep well of the past"; it began wherever the preliterate tradition of our cultural ancestors became for the first time a matter of record, and only now (in 1807) has it arrived at its completion in the writing of Hegel's "Science of the Experience of Consciousness."¹ This was Hegel's original title for this "first part" of his "System of Science," and the most obvious and noncontroversial reconciliation of the two titles is provided by the recognition that the formulation of the "Science of experience" is the *culmination* of the historical "appearing of the Spirit." The book itself is the last act of the cosmic drama that it recounts.

Into his account of this drama, Hegel naturally poured all the fruits of his reading and thinking since boyhood; and for his "Science of Experience" he utilized every cognitive experience of his own or of others about whom he had read, insofar as he perceived them to be germane. For this reason, all of his earlier work is relevant to the project of the "Science of experience" in more ways than I could possibly hope to analyse and enumerate. But although I must necessarily be selective, I want to begin by being as objective and noncontroversial as I can in setting forth the facts that are most obviously connected with Hegel's great literary effort in the months before the battle of Jena (and the lesser effort of writing his Preface to the System as a whole after that). So the finding of a relatively noncontroversial reconciliation of the two titles is an auspicious beginning.

As the son of a senior civil servant and a member of the *Ehrbarkeit*, the "honorable" class of the Duchy of Wurtemberg, Hegel was well educated. At the Stuttgart Gymnasium, he received a sound training in the classical languages and literatures as well as a scientific grounding informed by the values and ideals of the Enlightenment; and he began very early to display an active and intelligent interest in the systematic organization of human knowledge. He was a born "encyclopedist," but from the very first his ideal encyclopedia was organized in a conceptual, rather than an alphabetical order.²

Because of his obvious academic bent, Hegel was directed by his father toward a career in the Church or the schools of the Duchy. For this reason he entered the Lutheran Theological Institute at the University of Tübingen—the *Tübinger Stift*—in 1788. There he was subjected to a semimonastic discipline to which he was quite unused (being already accustomed to a dedicated regime of studies directed by himself); and after two years of philosophical and humane studies, he had to begin a more strictly theological curriculum in a dogmatic fundamentalist tradition which his enlightened training and Hellenic interests caused him to regard with violent loathing and contempt. By this time, his own inclinations were leading him to study Kant and Plato side by side, and to examine the problem of how classical rationalism could be reconciled with modern critical rationalism.³

During the two years after his arrival in the *Stift*, the Bastille was stormed, and a revolutionary government took over in Paris. The *Stift* was full of political excitement, and our rebellious student of theology became a fiery political orator and a noted “Jacobin.” The report that “Head off!” was one of Hegel’s favorite sayings⁴ probably reflects his declared attitude toward the fate of “Citizen Capet”; even more vividly, it expresses the feelings which he could not proclaim quite so publicly about Professor Storr and the “old school” of Tübingen theology. But Hegel’s politics were actually much more moderate than the name “Jacobin” suggests. His sympathies were with the Girondins, and he was very unhappy when Dr. Guillotin’s new machine took their heads off in the Terror.⁵

The first important written work of Hegel’s that has survived is the so-called Tübingen fragment.⁶ This essay shows the tension in his mind between the ethical harmony of life, which he ascribed to the Greeks, and the modern enlightenment of understanding, which he now regarded with very mixed feelings. The strong influence of Hölderlin is already evident in his essentially poetic idealization of the Greeks. Hegel was himself—as Hölderlin said and as Hegel’s writings at Bern in the next two years were to show—a “calm man of understanding” (*ruhig Verstandesmensch*). Lessing’s Nathan was one of his presiding geniuses.⁷ But his “Greek Ideal” was highly romantic, and Leutwein, working in the same study-room with him, tells us that “his hero was Rousseau, whose works he continually read.”⁸

In Bern he began to work seriously on the problem of how Christianity had come to be the dogmatic and “positive” faith purveyed by Professor Storr at Tübingen. The “Kantian *enragé*” Karl Diez had claimed that the historic Jesus was no true Messiah of Reason but a “betrayed.” Hegel saw Jesus through the spectacles of Lessing, as a prophet of enlightenment and rational reconciliation. The historical truth of the Gospel was not, indeed, the most crucial concern for him, since he was certainly conscious of improving the record when he introduced Kant’s Categorical Imperative into it.⁹ But the sincerity of the historical hypothesis about Jesus upon which the “Positivity” essay is based can hardly be questioned. Jesus proclaimed a religion founded upon pure Reason; but the Messiah-image that the Jewish tradition forced upon him, led to the founding of an authoritarian faith-doctrine in his memory.

Hegel's view of the early Church owed a great deal to Gibbon's famous fifteenth chapter; and it was Gibbon who provided the conceptual frame for his early meditations on the puzzling question of how this "positive" Christianity had triumphed over his beloved Greek ideal.¹⁰

The object of Hegel's studies in the history of Christianity was the reform and regeneration of religious life and culture in his own Württemberg, and in Germany generally. There was a group of what we may call "mystical rationalists" in the *Stift* who were united by their commitment to this goal. They had rallying-cries such as "The Kingdom of God," "the Invisible Church," and "Reason and Freedom."¹¹ Some of them were declared "Kantians," like the "*enragé*" Karl Diez and the group that Leutwein enumerates; others were disciples of the Württemberg theologians of the "Second Reformation";¹² and still others were simply enlightened "eclectics" like Hegel and Hölderlin, who were united in their enthusiasm for Rousseau, for Lessing's "Spinozism," and for Schiller's Hellenism and aesthetic Platonism. But we can see from the comparison of Leutwein's later publications with the Frankfurt manuscripts of Hegel that their watchwords referred to an "invisible Church" inspired by the Logos-mysticism in the Gospel of John.¹³

In spite of their "eclecticism," Hegel and Hölderlin certainly counted themselves among the "Kantians." Hölderlin, who took the *hen kai pan* of Lessing's Spinozism¹⁴ as his *symbolum* in Hegel's *Stammbuch* (friendship album)—or perhaps was given it by Hegel himself—says in a letter that "Kant and the Greeks are almost my only reading,"¹⁵ while Hegel writes to Schelling that he "expects a revolution in Germany from the perfecting of the Kantian system."¹⁶ It was natural, therefore, for Hegel to be very interested in the Fichtean theory of the Ego as interpreted by his younger (and more brilliant) friend Schelling. It is in this connection that we find in his letters the mention of a project that has struck more than one modern student as prophetic of the *Phenomenology*: "I was once minded to make clear to myself in an essay what it might mean to *draw near to God*, and I believed I would find in that a way of satisfying the postulate that practical Reason rules the world of appearances and the other postulates."¹⁷ By this time Schelling had overturned Hegel's orthodox acceptance of the "moral proof."¹⁸ There is no necessary connection between this project of conceptual clarification and the great historical record of God's drawing near to us, just as there is no necessary historical reference in Kant's *Religion* or in the *Critique of Practical Reason*; and these are the works which inspired Hegel's fleeting ambition at the time that he was writing. He wanted to pour all of the "enlightened" insights, both classical and modern, into a Kantian mold. But the mold is already a very loose one. "Reason" is an intuitive awareness of perennial truth; and the Kantian system is only its best contemporary shape.

The Kantian practical philosophy did, however, provide the conceptual framework for Hegel's historical research. We can see this in the "First System Programme" (which falls exactly between Hegel's Bern and Frankfurt periods).¹⁹ This fragment promises "a complete system of all Ideas, or of all practical postulates (which is the same thing)." On this basis, Hegel intends to "lay down the principles

for a *history of mankind*.” He has integrated the Kantian critical theory into an aesthetic speculative view (inspired by Schiller) in which the ultimate “Idea that unites all the rest” is “the Idea of *beauty* taking the word in its higher Platonic sense.” It is poetry—and not yet a philosophical comprehension of history—that is, “at the end once more, what she was in the beginning—the *teacher of mankind*.” But this poetic teacher (for whom the paradigm is Hölderlin) does need the philosophically and morally organized “history of mankind” in order to do her great work.

We could argue therefore, with some plausibility, that this is where the project of the *Phenomenology* was conceived.²⁰ But the differences between this programme, and the actual course of the *Bildung* of consciousness as it was expounded ten years later are crucial. The *Phenomenology* begins with a justification of the Kantian theoretical philosophy of Understanding; then, after a critical destruction of Kant’s practical standpoint (in *Phenomenology* IV–V), we come to a “history of mankind” (in chapter VI) which establishes the absolute (or “divine”) standpoint. It is evident that there is an important relationship between the two projects, but a revolutionary inversion has occurred during the intervening decade. Our immediate problem is to establish the precise nature and significance of this transformation.

If we assume that the “System programme” itself reflects the influence of Hölderlin’s reconciliation of “Kant and the Greeks” at Tübingen, then Hegel’s move to Frankfurt accounts for his failure to carry it out. For Hölderlin—whose influence again became paramount at Frankfurt as it was in the Tübingen fragment—had by this time moved, through the study of Fichte, to the consciousness of an aesthetically intuited “union” (with God *and* Nature) as his philosophical starting point. Hegel began to work out this poetic intuition into a historical theory of the “forms of Union” achieved by different communities at various stages of cultural development and in varying environmental conditions.²¹

The view that “God” is the “shape” by means of which a community pictures its own relation to the world comes into focus here for the first time. The Greeks were the ideally “happy” people whose “Gods” expressed the ideal harmony of life, but they still had to recognize a “Fate” that was *above* the Gods. The Jews, in contrast, saw themselves as the humble servants and favored clients of that essentially alien and almighty “Fate” whose “Law” they obeyed. The Kantian moralists of Hegel’s own time gave a new twist to this submission to “positive” authority by making the alien power internal to human consciousness as the “Law” of Reason. All parties recognized that “Fate must be revered.”²² But for the Jews and the Kantians, no speculative *reconciliation* with fate was possible, because the very existence of the breach involves a *sin* that can never be properly atoned for, or justifiably blotted out. For the Greeks, however, reconciliation was possible, because “Fate” was only that aspect of the divine life which they had by their own actions made hostile. In principle, they belonged to it, and it to them. Hence, no breach could be final or catastrophic.

Jesus, coming to birth in the community of absolute alienation, recognized the divinity of “life” in its integrity and the consequent possibility of reconciliation. But he could only express this recognition—and his own reconciliation with the

infinity of life—by denying every aspect of the organization of human life in his actual community, and sacrificing his own finite life willingly as the price of that denial. Thus, he became the perfect model of an absolutely internalized reconciliation with the divine Life—the Beautiful Soul.²³

As his meditations proceeded, Hegel moved from the view that in the advance towards “union” the lower state of consciousness is completely drowned and forgotten in the higher (specifically, “love” forgets “law” altogether) to the view that the higher state is a *pleroma*, a fulfillment in which the earlier state is submerged but still preserved. That is how the word *aufheben* (which Hegel had not yet adopted as part of his technical terminology) came to have the complex double meaning which it always hereafter retains in his usage.²⁴

As a result of this development, the sequence of *pleromata* in the revised version of the “Spirit of Christianity” is the first clear instance of the genesis of new objects of consciousness by “determinate negation.” Positive authority, moral law, *Gesinnung*, love, fate, and religion form a sequence of “experiences of consciousness” in the manner of the *Phenomenology* some eight years later.²⁵ The sequence may not be perfectly worked out in the surviving texts, but it is clear that Hegel was aware of it, and it is likely that the methodic theory for it was clearly formulated in the lost “System” of 1800.

That systematic manuscript ended with a contrast between the “middle,” represented by the aesthetic ideal, and the extremes of outward and inward positivity. It was Fichte’s religion of the Ego that provided the inwardly reflective pole. Hegel arrived in Jena with a very clear commitment to the superiority of a “philosophy of Identity” that finds its standard of truth in an aesthetic intuition of the coincidence of “Reason” with “actuality.” This standard (which is most clearly articulated in the *Natural Law* essay) derives from his years of collaboration with Hölderlin. The “Absolute” is an object of experience and the “intuition” of it is a matter of *Erinnerung* rather than of “intellectual intuition.” This conviction provided Hegel with clear and powerful reasons for believing that the “difference” between Fichte and Schelling was very much to the advantage of the latter. But in all of his discussions of the theory of “intellectual intuition” Hegel was clearly uneasy, because the intellectual “intuition” of thinking as a concept is quite different from the aesthetic intuition of Reason as an Idea. The former is *subjective*, the latter *substantial*. How they were to be united was still a problem.

The *Difference* essay was Hegel’s first attempt to deal with the conceptual, subjective pole. It is obvious that he is aware of the difficulty of leading ordinary consciousness towards the “point of indifference.” He agrees in principle with the demand of Reinhold and Bardili that logic should be “objective” (in the sense of being “indifferent” to the subject/object opposition), but he has no patience with a formal “indifference” which can only reiterate the Parmenidean tautology. We can recognize two “ladders to the Absolute” in the *Difference* essay. On the one hand, the subjective transcendental logic of the Critical Philosophy must be made to sublate itself in a self-critical process; on the other hand, the history of philosophy must be rewritten to display the evolution of the true metaphysics—the story of the

“one universal Reason.” When Kant’s critical logic has been made to destroy itself by self-criticism, his conception of traditional metaphysics as a self-destructive dialectical anarchy of opinions can be overcome.

In his regular lecture courses at Jena, Hegel focussed on the two poles of absolute intuition. He dealt with the approach to and development of the theoretical “indifference point” in his “Logic and Metaphysics” and with the practical approach to, and development of, the aesthetic intuition in his “Natural Law” courses. But in the first term, before he was ready to embark on “Natural Law,” he offered both “Logic and Metaphysics” and an “Introduction to Philosophy.”²⁶ Since “Philosophy” means *in primis* Metaphysics, as the story of the “one universal Reason,” he was, in effect, setting up two different approaches to “philosophy as such”: one from the side of thought (as critical Reason) and the other from the side of life (or commonsense experience). What he says about the “need of philosophy” in the *Difference* essay (and in *Faith and Knowledge*) is our best guide to understanding how he saw the problem. On the one hand, it is times of social disagreement and transition which “need” philosophy, because the essentially aesthetic balance of the universal cultural community is upset and there is no unanimity about human goals and values. On the other hand, the reflective human being, the philosopher, needs to find the way to a new mode of balance in life. All philosophically minded consciousnesses must feel this “need” subjectively but truly speculative thinkers will also recognize it as a *social* requirement, and they are therefore bound to try to raise the general consciousness to a conceptual grasp of it. Critical reflection—“logic”—the philosophers need for themselves; but a self-conscious grasp of the problem is what educated society needs generally, if the rediscovery of speculative Reason, and its reestablishment in society as an aesthetically perceptible ideal, is to be made effective.

The experiment of an “Introduction to Philosophy” was not repeated; and Hegel abandoned his first “Logic and Metaphysics” course before he got to the “Metaphysics.”²⁷ When he returned to the lecture hall, it was with a “Logic and Metaphysics” conceived in strictly conceptual terms as the parallel processes of deconstructing finite Reason and reconstructing speculative Reason: “Logic” is now the (obviously negative) *systema reflexionis*, and “Metaphysics” is the “*systema rationis*.”²⁸ The “history of the one universal Reason” passes over into practical philosophy. It appears now in the “Natural Law” lectures as the climactic account of the evolution of Religion.²⁹ In other words, it is there treated in the mode in which it is experienced by ordinary nonphilosophical consciousness.

When Schelling left Jena, Hegel extended the scope of his systematic exposition at once, and simultaneously moved back towards the standpoint of Fichte (and of Schelling before the breach with Fichte). He now presented the whole system of philosophy from the standpoint of “consciousness.” It seems, too, that the introduction to the metaphysical “first part” of Hegel’s very first “encyclopedia,” which “constructed the Spirit as Idea,” was an informal one in which the themes of life-experience and logic were combined. In a cancelled opening statement, Hegel wrote: “I develop the need of philosophy [and shall] proceed in this way: first I

shall define in general terms the conflict upon which it is grounded; then I shall point out the universal forms of its resolution, and make the application of them to cognition, and point out the universal forms in cognition.”³⁰

As soon as he got on top of his new encyclopedic project, Hegel returned to his old pattern of lecturing on “Logic and Metaphysics” and “Natural Law” separately; so the abbreviated logical-cultural approach of summer 1803 was probably just a pedagogically necessary economy.³¹ The idea of one complete encyclopedic textbook persisted, however; and we have the half of it which Hegel managed to complete at this stage, before the “phenomenological crisis of the system” broke upon him in its full extent.³²

In this “compendium” we find no sign of a bridge between speculation and common sense. “The author of this manuscript,” says Pöggeler, “knows neither German nor grammar.”³³ But the sharp contrast between critical logic and speculative metaphysics has now almost disappeared. Instead, we are faced with a gradual and progressive modulation from negative criticism to conceptual construction. It is not surprising that an attempt has been made to interpret this draft textbook as the “logic” of the *Phenomenology* itself, but that attempt is mistaken, since the “logic” that runs parallel with the *Phenomenology* is the one born in the “crisis” that now follows.³⁴

The new pattern of a continuous progression from Logic to Metaphysics (which was probably implicit in the temporary reduction of “logic” to a minimum in 1803) is accompanied in October 1804 by a great attack on “formalism,” and especially on the formalism of “Schelling’s School.”³⁵ Schelling himself is exempted from blame, but Rosenkranz probably identified this attack as the beginning of the “breach with Schelling.” It is for that reason, I think, that Rosenkranz thought of the “phenomenological crisis” as beginning in 1804.³⁶ Actually, the birth of the *Phenomenology* in Hegel’s mind can hardly have come before January 1805, because the “system” on behalf of which he was so aggressive in October 1804 was one that he still confidently expected to publish in the spring of 1805.³⁷

Rosenkranz was not far wrong, however, even if Hegel did not yet know how great a crisis was upon him in the summer of 1804. In October, that same logician who rode roughshod over grammar and vocabulary in his half-finished textbook was telling his audience:

The truth should display itself to us in religion, of course, but for our culture faith is altogether a thing of the past; Reason, with its demand that we should not believe, but know what the truth is, has grown strong, that we should not merely have intuitive consciousness of the truth, but should comprehend it. The truth of his individuality, which the path of his existence traces precisely for him, the single individual is well aware of, but the consciousness of the universal life he expects from philosophy. Here his hope seems to be disappointed when instead of the fullness of life there appear concepts, and in contrast to the riches contained in the world of immediate experience the poorest abstractions are offered. But the concept is itself the *mediator between itself and life*, in that it teaches us how to find life in it and the concept in life. But, of course, only science itself can convince us of this.³⁸

The transformation of the imaginative awareness of the Absolute in religion into a properly conceptual self-consciousness in which the singular consciousness becomes the “consciousness of the universal life” is a description of the project of Hegel’s *Phenomenology* which is noncontroversial because it leaves all of the logical problems aside. But Hegel, of course, saw the problem as a logical one. The identity must not merely be experienced, but must also be able to demonstrate itself.

When Hegel finally addressed the problem of our experience of truth in these terms, another revolution occurred. “Logic and Metaphysics” coincided completely. The place formerly given to “Logic” was now given to the “science of the experience of consciousness”; and the “science of the pure concept” replaced “Metaphysics.” The whole complex of both of these new “sciences” could be expounded as “Logic,” because the “science of experience” exhibited the conceptual structure of pure science in a “shaped” (or embodied) form—and that is how Hegel presented it. We know that he used the text of his *Phenomenology* in his “Logic” class as soon as it began to come from the press; and he probably used the logical skeleton of it, with his first sketches, in his “Logic” course in the summer term of 1805. As soon as the book was out, he went back to announcing “Logic and Metaphysics”; and he treated the “science of experience” as a preamble.³⁹ We may well suppose that once he was free to work on the science of the concept as such, his lectures would again have become logical-metaphysical in the manner of 1804. But he was not destined to give any university lectures for ten years after the summer term of 1806;⁴⁰ and by the time he did so, he had given up the idea of a strictly parallel structure in the “science of experience” and the “science of logic.” So the “logic of the *Phenomenology*” can only be reconstructed by inference and conjecture.

It is very appropriate that the earliest surviving fragment of the new “science of experience” deals with the appearing of the Absolute in the “ethical order” of the Greek polis.⁴¹ It is also appropriate that it was written on a sheet that bears part of one draft of Hegel’s letter to J. H. Voss, since that letter contained Hegel’s undertaking “to teach Philosophy to speak German.” We can recognize the *Phenomenology* as his attempt to fulfill this promise, and if we look at it in this light, it is clear that the comparison of Hegel’s project with those of Voss (Homer in German) and Luther (the Bible in German) is no accidental one.

When the crisis comes upon him, Hegel gives up lecturing on his “encyclopedia” altogether. He lectures only on “Logic,” and—as Gabler’s recorded memories tell us—that meant mainly the “science of experience,” with only a very schematic “science of the pure concept,”⁴² and on mathematics and the history of philosophy. The course of winter 1805/1806 was Hegel’s first course on the history of philosophy, and the students were much impressed by its negative tenor (at least when Hegel arrived at the modern period). “Death himself has come among us,” they said, and for many of them it was a shock to see Schelling fall to the dark angel along with the rest. But they understood that this death was also a resurrection.⁴³

We have also a draft of part of the discussion of “absolute knowing” from the period of the lectures of summer 1806.⁴⁴ If we assume that it was a draft for the summer course, then the fact that it clearly implies a different articulation of the

movement toward “Science” from that which we find in the book itself has no reliable significance. We do not know how much of the book Hegel had managed to write out in full at that point or what shifts and shortcuts he may have been driven to by the limits of the lecture schedule, on the one side, and by the intellectual excitement of his project, on the other. According to his own confession, the excitement of writing the book caused him to lose control of its literary proportions.⁴⁵

In the end, the pressure of a deadline cut the book short too. It seems certain that the chapter on “Absolute Knowing” would have been longer and would have contained more material from the history of philosophy course than it does had it not been for Niethammer’s promise on Hegel’s behalf that the whole manuscript would be in the publisher’s hands by 18 October 1806.⁴⁶ Niethammer himself would have to pay the cost of what had been printed already at that date if Hegel did not meet that deadline. Hegel listened to the guns of the battle of Jena with the last installment of his text in his pocket. He did not dare to send it off, and he was in grave anxiety lest the previous installment (already dispatched) should be lost because of the military disruption of communications.⁴⁷ We ought, I suppose, to be happy to have chapters VII and VIII in any shape at all. But we must now turn to the question of just what it is that we have.

2. The Project of the *Phenomenology*

What we say about the origin of the project that Hegel fulfilled by writing the *Phenomenology of Spirit* must inevitably depend on what we think the project was. The matter of the book is so various, and even the apparent aims of different chapters or sections are so different, that if we are uncertain what the unifying project was, or if we think that there was *no* coherent project, we can look for the inspiration of Hegel’s first major work in a great many different directions. Scholars—especially German scholars deeply versed in the culture of the Revolutionary period—have done that. I have tried to be noncontroversial in looking for the origins of the “project” in Hegel’s own intellectual development, but obviously my survey presupposes that I have decided what his project was. The argument for my “decision” really depends on the plausibility of my account. My own view—after studying and laying out Hegel’s intellectual development as completely and coherently as I could⁴⁸—is that no thesis about Hegel’s project should be preferred to the one that I am about to advance unless it coheres with and provides answers to all of the exigencies that I have pointed to in the “genesis” of the book at least as well as mine does. (But many other theses may be valid complements to the one maintained here.)

I have nothing to add to the data that others have laboriously assembled. My hope is only that through the examination of the book itself, and of some of Hegel’s printed or reported statements about it, I can show which of our certainties are important and why some of the uncertainties do not matter much. In particular, I hope to show why the direct study of Hegel’s work, in the context of the earlier definitions, discussions and projects of Kant, Reinhold, Fichte, and Schelling which

have been plausibly connected with it, is bound to lead to insoluble puzzles and difficulties. Hegel's own project, I shall suggest, involved the overturning, the radical inversion, of the perspective of all the earlier suggestions that seem to have something in common with it, and may have suggested or inspired it.

It is best, perhaps, to begin with the puzzles and difficulties. I know that Rudolf Haym was not the first to argue that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is not one project at all, but two different enterprises muddled together.⁴⁹ But his trenchant critique became deservedly famous; and the terms in which it was expressed have the double virtue of being both clear to us and plausible to Hegel's contemporaries.⁵⁰ What he said (in 1857) was that we find in the *Phenomenology* the combination of a "transcendental-psychological proof" (of the reality of absolute cognition) with a "historical proof." He argued that the two "proofs" cannot be put together; and according to his verdict "the *Phenomenology* is a *psychology brought to confusion and disorder by history, and a history brought to ruin by psychology*."⁵¹

Everybody (including the essentially hostile Haym) assumed that it was the "transcendental-psychological" proof that mattered most to Hegel. Thus, some seventy-five years later, we find Theodor Haering—no hostile critic, but an enthusiastic admirer—claiming that in its "historical" aspect the book grew quite out of Hegel's conscious control while he was writing it.⁵² And after more than a century, we have G. E. Mueller—both an admirer and a critic, but above all an enthusiast—reviving Haym's thesis ("Hegel knew that he had written and mixed two different books"⁵³) and adding an extreme version of Haering's thesis: "After writing about half of it, he lost his original plan and began to pour all kinds of historical, contemporary and personal problems into the flow of his writings." But Mueller's own *positive* verdict was different: "One may see the *Phenomenology* as a great work of art, an immense world-historical stage play."

If we follow the course of Hegel's thought in his papers through the twelve years from January 1795, when Schelling upset his assumption that the "moral proof" was valid, to January 1807, when he wrote the last sentences of the great *Vorrede* for the *Phenomenology*, we find much evidence to support the view that Hegel brought two originally separate themes together. The "forms of Union" at Frankfurt became a "biography of God" in the "Natural Law" lectures at Jena.⁵⁴ We find all of it again in the *Phenomenology*, chapter VII (with the anticipatory discussions of the "Unhappy Consciousness" and "Faith" in chapters IV and VI). Yet Hegel's Kantian project of discovering "what it might mean to draw near to God" and so "satisfying the postulate that practical Reason governs the world of appearances" does not seem to be a historical one;⁵⁵ and the "First System Programme" contains both a "Kantian" project and a "historical" one.

When Hegel arrived in the Jena lecture-halls (and even on the literary scene in his *Difference* essay), he proclaimed that the Identity Philosophy needed a new logic, conceived and developed from a properly "objective" standpoint instead of the essentially subjective standpoint from which Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* and Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* were written; but also that "the One Universal Reason" manifested itself differently according to the "need" of differ-

ent times.⁵⁶ After 1807, the objective logic displaced the “history of the one Universal Reason.” That history appears as a kind of obbligate accompaniment to the *Science of Logic*, but it is clearly subordinate and illustrative, in the way in which the “transcendental psychologists” would like the historical “proof” to be subordinate in the *Phenomenology*. But *there* they are mistaken.⁵⁷

Hegel was able to make history subordinate in his speculative *Logic* precisely because he allowed it to be predominant in the lengthy formation of subjective consciousness for truly logical “objectivity,” which is the theme of the *Phenomenology*. In the *Phenomenology*, it is the “historical proof” that matters most; that is what is signalized by Hegel’s decision (reached quite late in the process of composition) to change the subtitle of his “first part” from “Science of the Experience of Consciousness” to “The Phenomenology of Spirit.” “The experience of consciousness” is necessarily a psychological experience of the singular subject, since only singular subjects are “conscious,” but the “phenomenology of Spirit” is the biography of God, the metaphysical substance who becomes “as much subject as substance” when He is comprehended as “Spirit.” The “experience of consciousness” *must* happen in a single lifetime; the “phenomenology of Spirit” *cannot* happen so.

We might remark that neither can become “Science” except through the recollection in a singular consciousness of a historical process that is necessarily not confined (or confinable) within a single lifetime. This is a way of saying that God cannot be “spirit” without man being “spirit” likewise—which is, of course, quite correct. But it is the difference of the standpoint (or starting-point) indicated by the title that is crucial. In the change of title, Hegel is proclaiming that it is not the comprehension of “self” but the comprehension of the whole social history of selfhood that is the topic of *The System of Science: First Part*.

He arrived at this conclusion late, because he naturally began by conceiving the approach to logical objectivity not historically, but logically. He had known from the first that there had to be a critical introduction to speculation, but there was no evident need for it to embrace any actual experience beyond the present philosophical consciousness of his own academic world.⁵⁸ In other words, he could start with Kant—which is what he did in his major essays in the *Critical Journal* until he was faced by Schulze’s “Scepticism.” In the realm of speculation (or “metaphysics”) he was certainly conscious from the first of the historical dimension of the “one Universal Reason”; but it was only in the recognized superiority of the Academics (and even of Sextus) over “modern” Scepticism that he encountered the “history of experience” as a serious problem for the first time.⁵⁹

Even then, the problem lay dormant (at least outwardly) for some years. About the time that Schelling left Jena in 1803, Hegel gave up the idea of a mirror relation between “speculation” and “reflexion,” which seems to have dominated his early thought about logic. He turned back to the models provided by Fichte and by Schelling under Fichte’s influence; and he began to develop the theory of “consciousness” as an independent *subjective* principle. But something volcanic happened in Hegel’s mind in the early months of 1805. The evidence for this claim is that he abandoned the fair copy of his “System of Consciousness” in the middle of

the "Philosophy of Nature"; and it is from this very moment that we have the first surviving fragment in his handwriting which unmistakably belongs to the thought-world of the *Phenomenology*.⁶⁰

We do not have much contemporary evidence of what was involved in this thought-revolution, except for the text of the *Phenomenology* itself. But there is enough in what remains to us of the so-called "Wastebok"—which can be securely dated between late 1804 and late 1806 through its evident connection with the *Vorrede* of the *Phenomenology*—to show that it was always Hegel's intention to write the *Vorrede* as part of his book. Hence we do not need to regard the Preface as an "afterthought," even though Hegel was forced by his legal commitments to present it to his publisher in that light. This is important, because it radically undermines one of the most important props of the view that Hegel lost control of the book while he was writing it. The Preface certainly became more necessary (and almost certainly longer) because of the intense pressure under which the final chapters of the book were written; and probably it was while he was planning (or actually writing) the Preface that Hegel changed his mind about the subtitle.⁶¹ But the text of the Preface incorporates thoughts and aphorisms that he began to write down at the time when the book was first conceived. The book is a unity, therefore, and we must try to comprehend it as such—not assume that the Preface is an attempt to put the mask of "Science" upon a runaway product of romantic "genius."

Given the fact that during the years before those notes and aphorisms were written at least two revolutions occurred in Hegel's relation to the philosophy of his time (from Kant to Schelling, including a host of intervening figures from the giant, Goethe, to the pygmy, Krug); and given that topics and arguments originally conceived to be part of "logic," "metaphysics," and "natural law" were all eventually incorporated in the *Phenomenology*, it is hardly surprising that we cannot fathom what the project of the book is when we apply to it the categories of the tradition that Hegel inherited. Before we try to put the pieces of the puzzle together for ourselves, it will be wise to consider how Hegel came to view his own struggles in these Jena years (with their great outcome) later on.

For this purpose, the *Encyclopedia* lectures are of little or no use, because in them Hegel returned to the concept of "Science" as a circle which could be entered simply by comprehending the immediately present philosophical world. His *Encyclopedia* contains a "Science" which no longer accepts the need or the duty to justify itself to common sense. It no longer requires the complete comprehension of "experience" (the embracing of all of its own scientific content in a sequence of concrete "shapes" or *embodied* concepts) in another "Science" as its "first part."⁶²

The *Encyclopedia* is a *complete* account of "philosophical science." It *can* stand alone without the companion piece provided by the "Science of consciousness." Whether it *ought* to stand alone we need not here discuss. For even in the Berlin years, the "Science of consciousness" retained in Hegel's mind its own completeness and validity, and he was still able to define its historic function, both for himself and for us.

Its function for himself Hegel defined in the biographical memories that he supplied to the anonymous author of the first *Conversation-Lexicon* article about him. "During this time [1806]," we read,

he was occupied to communicate the personal viewpoint which was divergent from Schelling's, and which had developed in him through unceasing research, in a comprehensive work of which the *Phenomenology of Spirit* was to contain the introductory part . . . Hegel, who had with Schelling, risen to the recognition of the Absolute, first diverged from Schelling in that he did not believe that he could *presuppose* the Absolute through an *intellectual intuition* in which subject and object coincide, but expressed the requirement instead that in Science the Absolute must be found along the *path* of Science, and hence as a result (if it is to be a true Absolute at all).⁶³

We have here a clear statement that the intuitive approach to philosophical cognition began to trouble Hegel as a philosopher quite early; and that the *Phenomenology* was for him the decisive divergence (*Abweichung*) from this whole tradition and the resolution of the problem of cognitive "immediacy" generally. Before he became a systematic philosopher, Hegel was a mystical intuitionist who believed that "philosophy must end with Religion."⁶⁴ When he transcended that boundary, he implicitly transcended the intuitionist standpoint as well.⁶⁵

What the *Phenomenology* was (or should have been) for its audience we can gather from a passage in the preface to the *Philosophy of Right* which, in spite of its notoriety, has never been fully appreciated:

As far as the individual is concerned, everyone without exception is a son of his time; and thus philosophy, too, is *its time grasped in thoughts* . . . as the *thought* of the world philosophy appears first in time, after actuality has completed its process of culture and has made itself ready.⁶⁶

Most immediately, the reference here is to the *Philosophy of Spirit* (and so to Real Philosophy generally). Real Philosophy is "its own time grasped in thoughts" in a quite evident way, since Hegel was well aware that both natural science and human society are forever on the move. He has already said in the present context, for example, that Plato's *Republic* is not to be read as an eternal Utopia because "it has essentially apprehended nothing but the nature of the Greek ethical life," so he can hardly suppose that what he says himself in the *Philosophy of Right* about the peasantry, the nobility, and the monarchy will always be valid in the societies of the future. On the contrary, his view is plainly that the future must solve its own problems when they arise. He only wants to say to philosophers that it is not their particular office to tell the world how to solve its problems.

But how can Hegel bar philosophers from solving the problems of the future—or even the problems of the present, because philosophy always comes too late—and at the same time maintain that philosophical logic is absolutely *first*? How can he say both that "philosophy is its time grasped in thoughts" and that (as he so misleadingly put it in his introduction to the *Science of Logic*) philosophical logic is

“the exposition of God as He is in His eternal essence, before the creation of nature and of a finite Spirit”?⁶⁷ This theological way of talking was misleadingly accommodated to *its* time, because it is plain enough that (in Hegel’s view) human philosophers can do logic. He has done it. Yet he and we are all children of our own different times. The implication is that “the eternal essence of God” is not “outside of time” in the way that God’s thought and action have traditionally been supposed to be.⁶⁸

We cannot mediate the problem of how logic is in time, unless we shift our attention from the “real philosophy” that comes *after* logic (in every sense) to the “real philosophy” that goes *before* “logic,” as a comprehension of the time in which it was shown finally that *logic itself is as much in time as out of it* and that it must come to be self-consciously “in” time in order to be properly “out” of it. This comprehension of philosophy’s own proper time, the demonstration that “actuality has completed its process of culture and has made itself ready,” is the project that is fulfilled in the *Phenomenology*. As far as our surviving records go, this “comprehension of time” was first achieved in the “Natural Law” lectures of 1802/1803:

Every single [human] is a blind link in the chain of absolute necessity on which the world develops. Every single [knower] can extend his dominion over a greater length of this chain only if he recognizes the direction in which the great necessity will go and learns from this cognition to utter the magic word which conjures up its shape. This cognition, which can both embrace in itself the whole energy of the suffering and the antithesis that has ruled in the world and all the forms of its development [*Ausbildung*] for a couple of thousand years, and can raise itself above it all, this cognition only philosophy can give.⁶⁹

Once we have accepted that the *Phenomenology* is a necessary preamble to speculative logic, we ought to know at once, by the simplest of immediate inferences, that it is neither “transcendental psychology” nor “transcendental history,” nor yet some kind of combination of the two, whether legitimate or illegitimate. It is itself “logic.” It is the logic of time—the explanation of how there can be (as there evidently is) an “eternal” (i.e. logical) standpoint within time. We *know* “intuitively” that this “absolute” standpoint exists; but we cannot take our stand upon that “intuition” because from Heracleitus and Parmenides to Kant and Fichte, no one has managed to formulate a consistent theory of human experience as a rational whole upon any intuitive basis. Instead of simply taking it for granted that eternity comprehends time, just as “possibility” comprehends “actuality,” we must start from the other end and ask *how time comprehends eternity*.

There is no intuitive answer to this question. It appears, indeed, to be counter-intuitive, and hence absurd. But it *can* be, and has been, taken as intuitive that “actuality” comprehends “possibility.”⁷⁰ There is a long tradition—from Parmenides to Spinoza and Leibniz in our Western European culture—which has sought to articulate our experience on the basis of this “speculative” intuition. Schelling, by returning to Spinoza and Leibniz in rebellion against Kant, was attempting both to revive this tradition and to use Kant’s critical theory to exorcise

the demon of deterministic necessity or “fate,” by which it had always, hitherto, been dogged.⁷¹

There were two great difficulties in Schelling’s intuitionism. One of them was quite new, the other was primordial (i.e., historically older than the “speculative” tradition itself as an explicit philosophical view). First, in place of the old demon of necessity and fate, there appeared a new demon (one that is as old as conscious life itself, no doubt, but new in this “speculative” tradition) of absolute scepticism and “darkness.” “Only the man who does not believe he holds actuality in his *hand* asks the question ‘What is possible?’” says Schelling, boldly overthrowing the Kantian conception of philosophy as the definition of “possible experience.” But only a page later, the perfect holding of actuality in one’s hand is admitted to be beyond consciousness: “The essence of man is acting. And the less he reflects upon himself, the more active he is. His noblest activity is the one that does not know itself.”⁷²

Quite apart from appearing to be “the dark night in which all the cows are black,”⁷³ this intuition of our freedom as incomprehensible raises, in its most dramatic form, the primordial problem of the whole tradition. There is a conflict of intuitions. All *ordinary* consciousness and thought, being rooted in utilitarian action and the need for practical decisions and choices, takes the opposite intuition (that *possibility comprehends actuality*) for granted. Kant’s philosophical project is one that common sense can understand and sympathize with, whatever verdict it may reach about his success. But how can ordinary consciousness be sympathetic with the certainty that we hold actuality “in our *hand*,” if at the very moment when we do so *absolutely*, we know nothing about it?

By reformulating the speculative problem as “how does time comprehend eternity?” Hegel made a tremendous advance, precisely because no intuition (except the intuition of time as the antithesis, the *Gegensatz*, of eternity) is available in this context. The two conflicting intuitions—that of “speculative science” and that of “natural consciousness”—are now neutralized and equal. Neither intuition is assumed to start with, and the project is to find a way to reconcile them. The argument has to go in a circle from the living experience, moment by fleeting moment, of the natural consciousness for whom the Psalmist said that “the days of our years are three score years and ten” (Ps. 90:10) to the moment of “absolute knowing” which, having recollected the whole story of experience and made a circle of it, is ready to expound “the eternal essence of God” and then to say how (as the natural consciousness always maintained) the real world of “our time” is comprehended in this “eternal” essence.

Thus, the unifying topic of the *Phenomenology* is “how eternity is comprehended in time.” The project itself involves a total inversion of the intuitive assumption of all of the “philosophers of experience” before Hegel, and (not counting Descartes) it is the “philosophers of experience”—those who assume the standpoint of “natural consciousness”—who enter into the argument of Hegel’s “science of experience” in an important way. But the history of religion is more important to the argument than is the history of philosophy, in any case, because it is in religion that the natural assumption is inverted for the natural consciousness

itself. It is Hegel's predominant concern with the actual experience of the natural (i.e. the nonspeculative) consciousness that makes it hard for us to see and understand what happens to Descartes, and to the philosophers of "experience" proper, in Hegel's argument.

Let us now finally examine (very briefly) Hegel's debts to the "philosophy of experience" in his own time. The very word "phenomenology" was coined (apparently) by J. H. Lambert,⁷⁴ as the name for the general science of how things appear to be but are not. Kant was impressed enough by Lambert's work to describe his own project in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a "*Phaenomenologia generalis*," the "purely negative science" that has to precede the actual reconstruction of "metaphysics."⁷⁵

The correspondence of Kant and Lambert was published in 1786. We cannot prove that Hegel read it,⁷⁶ but it is possible, at least, that when he announced "*Logicam et Metaphysicam s[eu] philosophiam speculativam praemissa Phaenomenologia mentis*" for the winter semester of 1806/1807 he was deliberately alluding to the Kantian model.⁷⁷

More important than Lambert and Kant (because we can be more certain that Hegel read it and pondered upon it, although in an extremely negative spirit) is the remark of Reinhold in volume 4 of his *Contributions* (1802): "*Phenomenology* has to lead *Nature* back to its ground in the essence, and hence to establish the pure principles of the *universal doctrine of Nature*. Phenomenology is *pure philosophy of Nature*."⁷⁸ Just as Hegel's *Logic* was a speculative fulfillment of the programme proclaimed by Reinhold and Bardili for the "reduction of Philosophy of Logic" (whereas their actual performance was the extreme limit of "formalism" in Hegel's eyes),⁷⁹ so his "*Phenomenology of Spirit*" was the "leading of the natural *consciousness* back to its ground in the essence" and "the establishment of the pure principles of the *universal doctrine of Spirit*." But the radical transformation of Reinhold's project is too obvious to need underlining. Here as elsewhere, Reinhold has only formulated a challenge to "speculative philosophy" from within the general standpoint of Kant's "formalism."

Vis à vis Kant and Reinhold, the crucial shift of emphasis in the "speculative" philosophers is from the understandable *necessity* of the "phenomenology of Nature" to the rational freedom of the "phenomenology of consciousness."⁸⁰ The conception of philosophical logic as a "pragmatic history of the human faculty of cognition" has been traced to the *Philosophical Aphorisms* of E. Platner.⁸¹ But it was Fichte who offered the first model of a "pragmatic history" inspired by Kant; and although Schelling's development of Fichte's theory (in the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, 1800) was certainly influential in Hegel's own working out of the logic of "consciousness," it was Fichte whom Hegel rightly recognized as the true pioneer in this field.⁸² "Only after the history of consciousness *do we know what we have in these abstractions*, through the concept: *Fichte's* contribution," he wrote in his *Wastebook*.⁸³

If we look at Hegel's *Phenomenology* we can see that, as far as he was concerned, the "history of consciousness" was what was still lacking. Fichte's *Verdienst* was to

have brought “these abstractions” (the transcendental subject and object) under the “concept” of self-consciousness. In the *Phenomenology*, Fichte’s “Ich = Ich” is invoked at the very dawn of “Self-Consciousness” as the formula for a “self” which only “knows,” negatively, that it is *free*. Because it will not *be* anything but this freedom, it goes straight to its death. After that first experience, the concept is *divided*, and eventually the finite moment achieves its “absolution” in the dawn of the “manifest religion” (the reconciliation of “Unhappy Consciousness” through the mediator).

Being thus brought to unity again, the concept of the self is reborn as the Cartesian thinking which has, in its known identity with God, the certainty of “being.” And this divine identity is described in the terms of Fichte’s “deduction of presentation” as the certainty of “being all reality.”⁸⁴ The explicitly Fichtean self finds, however, that it knows nothing absolutely in the universe which it certainly *is* except that same mortality which came to light in its first experience, before knowing began. The self that it *can* know is the one that creates its own world. So we begin again. Like Faust, the free self now “despises Understanding and Science” (just as Descartes and Bacon despised cultural tradition in their rational “observation”); but after a long career it finds itself in the hell of emptiness and futility, testing practical laws by means of the standard of formal consistency.

Only now do we begin to know what we really “have in these abstractions.” We go back to the battle of the blindly self-willed brothers Eteocles and Polyneices (whom we can now *name*), and we follow the evolution of God-given custom into the autonomy of “Conscience.” Here we meet Fichte’s Ego again, in the fully developed form that it had in Fichte’s practical philosophy; and the Spirit that emerges in the reconciliation of the acting with the judging conscience shows itself in the “Religion” chapter to be the “self-positing Ego” of Fichte’s *Science of Knowledge*.

All of this is the “experience” of a “self” who lives in Fichte’s world—a self who (according to the Cartesian standard of *self-certainty*) must, in fact, be Hegel himself.⁸⁵ But this self makes no Fichtean assumptions, and has no absolute “intuitions.” It merely *observes*; and what it learns, in the end, is precisely what the standpoint of philosophical “observation” is and means.⁸⁶ This observing consciousness leaves Fichte behind decisively when it leaves moral judgment to the valets and aligns itself with the *Weltgeist* in its evaluation of all the experience that it recollects.⁸⁷

This all-accepting and all-forgiving alignment with the *Weltgeist* is the logical standpoint, the eternal standpoint concretely established in time and now, at last, comprehensively understood. The logical proof of it could never have been formulated without the achievement of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. Only a child of Fichte’s time could have formulated it. That is “*Fichtes Verdienst*.”

But Fichte’s concept of the “free self” had to be derived from its *Gegensatz* in experience by “observation” in a whole series of ways before we could know “*what we have in these abstractions*”; and at every stage a different cycle of our intellectual tradition (concretely, of Hegel’s own “experience”) had to be comprehended.

The identity of the “sense-certainty” of Thomas Reid (and his German disciples)⁸⁸ with the standpoint of Kant’s “phenomenology of the understanding” could be shown and comprehended without going back more than twenty years. But “self-consciousness” explicitly introduces and presupposes the Roman world of the “Condition of Right” in which the religion of God as Spirit was first proclaimed and accepted. “Reason” is continuous with “self-consciousness” and brings us back from Descartes and Bacon to the present Fichtean age of which Hegel is himself a “son.” Chapter V, on “Reason,” is the one explicitly philosophical chapter in the book; the experience of the natural “Self-Consciousness” (in chapter IV) is in the “actual” world of State and Church before the Reformation.

In chapter VI, we traverse the whole period from Sophocles to Hölderlin’s *Hyperion*, and in chapter VII we take the widest sweep of all, going back to Zarathustra (or, in principle, to the dawn of the historical record of our culture in Mesopotamia and Egypt).⁸⁹ Chapter VIII relates to chapter VII in the same way that chapter V relates to chapter IV. It adds the distinctively “modern” philosophical inversion of the religious experience of our cultural community into individual consciousness. This is essential because all experience must be resumed (or recollected) as “science” in the self-consciousness of the philosopher Hegel, who is the independent “for itself” of his time. The moment of his spiritual recollection in which “God’s own infinitude foams forth for Him” is that same “now” which took itself to be infinitely rich at the beginning in sense-certainty. Infinitely rich it has finally proved to be; but its riches, preserved in the self-conscious “darkness” of memory, have now been organized and displayed through (and as) the comprehension of the Spirit’s *eternity in time*.

Hegel argued at Berlin that the *Weltgeist* is not an appropriate “hero” for an epic or a drama,⁹⁰ but it seems to me that his own (aesthetically very imperfect) achievement shows that—in principle—he was mistaken. The *Phenomenology* (like Goethe’s *Faust*) is a “human comedy” that can be compared with Dante’s great poem.⁹¹ But being a good philosopher did not make Hegel a good poet. At best, he is only erratically inspired.

Actually, this “comic drama” view of the *Phenomenology* does not make the *Weltgeist* into a properly individuated “hero.” The “hero” is the finite consciousness—Jacob wrestling with the angel. In the Art Religion, the “comic” consciousness emerges as the final resolution of a “tragic” situation; and in this *return* of comic reconciliation, the tragic sense that death and finitude must be accepted is not lost. It is the *Bildungsroman* image of the *Phenomenology*—popularized by Royce—that is properly invalidated by Hegel’s Berlin critique.⁹²

Notes

1. The complex history of this concept has been surveyed comprehensively and insightfully by E. Behler (1972).

2. See *Toward the Sunlight*, chapter I. See also the survey of Hegel’s intellectual development in H. S. Harris (1992).

3. See *Toward the Sunlight*, chapter II. The biographical summary here is partly based upon what Hegel himself told the author of the article about him in the *Konversations-Lexikon* of 1824. See F. Nicolin (1972).

4. That Hegel was noted as a “Jacobin” is reliably reported by Hölderlin’s biographer C. T. Schwab (G. Nicolin, report 13). It reflects the fact that Hegel was a member of the political “Club” inspired by August Wetzels adventures in Strasbourg (see *Toward the Sunlight*, 63, lines 113–114). The “Kopf ab!” story is mentioned as incredible by Erdmann, but it is not incredible at all when it is set in the context of everything else we know. “Lieblingswort” may be a slight exaggeration—Erdmann ascribes it to a “Coätaneus.” One thinks of the amiable Prelate Fink (or whoever else told Rosenkranz about the “Club”). See G. Nicolin, report 14.

5. This can be inferred from the righteous rejoicing over the fall of the “Robespierrotten” in Hegel’s first letter to Schelling at the end of 1794 (letter 6, *Briefe* I, 12; Butler and Seiler, 28). He really did believe in “Kopf ab!”—but, of course, it had to be the right head!

6. For a translation, see *Toward the Sunlight*, 481–507. The essay is also translated with some related pieces in Fuss and Dobbins.

7. Hölderlin, letter 136 (to Neuffer, 16 Feb. 1797), *G.S.A.* VI, 236. Schelling calls him a “Vertrauter Lessings” in a letter of 1795 to Hegel (letter 10, *Briefe* I, 18; see Butler and Seiler, 32).

8. See “Leutwein über Hegel” (Leutwein, 1965; or G. Nicolin, report 8).

9. For Hegel’s work at Bern see *Toward the Sunlight*, chapter III. The “Life of Jesus” is translated in Fuss and Dobbins. For the injection of the Categorical Imperative, see Fuss and Dobbins, 115. The “Positivity Essay” will be found in Knox and Kroner, 67–143. The German texts are in *G.W.I.*

10. See especially *Jetzt braucht die Menge*, *T.W.-A.* I, 99–101; Fuss and Dobbins, 101–103. The qualification “positive” is strictly required here, because this authoritarian faith was not the educational concept of Christianity that was powerful even among the pious in Hegel’s Württemberg—see L. Dickey (1987).

11. See letter 5 (Hölderlin to Hegel, 10 July 1794); and letter 8 (Hegel to Schelling, Jan. 1795), *Briefe* I, 9, 18 (Butler and Seiler, 24, 30–32).

12. For an insightful account of this theology, see L. Dickey (1987). There is, however, no evidence that Hegel was associated with this second group in the *Stift* or was directly and strongly influenced by the “Württemberg theology” (see M. Brecht and J. Sandberger, 1969). Dickey’s case on this issue is, at best, “not proven.”

13. I have not examined Leutwein’s writings myself; but D. Henrich (1965) has made the comparison easy for us.

14. See Hegel, *Briefe* IVa, 136 (entry 5); and Hölderlin, *G.S.A.* IV, i, 208. Schelling’s comment “For us too, the orthodox concepts of God are no more” (see note 18) is a deliberate echoing of what Lessing said to Jacobi (Jacobi, *Werke* IV, i, 54; Di Giovanni, 1994) about his own commitment to the *hen kai pan*.

15. Cf. letters 57 and 81 (*G.S.A.* VI, 84 and 120).

16. Letter 11 (to Schelling, 16 April 1795); *Briefe* I, 23 (Butler and Seiler, 35).

17. Letter 14 (to Schelling) 30 Aug. 1795; Butler and Seiler, 41, my italics. Compare especially O. Pöggeler (1973, 159). Heidegger anticipated my comparison of the *Phenomenology*

to Bonaventure's *Itinerarum Mentis ad Deum* (see Heidegger, 1970, 50–51; Harris, 1984, 106) which certainly highlights the prophetic aspect of this passage.

18. Schelling wrote to Hegel (letter 7, 5 Jan. 1795), "It is a joy to see how quickly they [Storr and his school] can pull in the moral proof on their string. Before you can turn round the *deus ex machina* springs forth, the personal individual Being who sits in Heaven above! Fichte will raise philosophy to a height at which most of those who have been Kantians so far will get giddy . . ." (*Briefe* I, 14–15; Butler and Seiler, 29). Hegel answers at once that Fichte's *Critique of all Revelation* is partly responsible for the Tübingen "mischief." This is where he describes the project (which he later says that he "once had") of "discovering what it might mean to draw near to God": "If I had time, I would try to determine more precisely how far—after the establishment of moral faith—we may employ the legitimate idea of God backwards, e.g. in the clarification of teleology etc. . . . This is the road people take with the idea of providence." Then he expresses his surprise about Schelling's *new* Fichteanism: "There is one expression in your letter concerning the moral proof that I do not entirely understand: 'which they know how to manipulate so that out springs the individual, personal Being.' Do you believe that we really cannot get that far?" (letter 8, end of Jan., 1795; *Briefe* I, 17–18; Butler and Seiler, 31–32).

At this, Schelling is a bit shocked: "I confess, the question surprised me; I would not have expected it from an intimate of Lessing; but presumably you only asked it, in order to find out whether it was *quite decided for me too*; for you it was certainly decided long ago. For us too, the orthodox concepts of God are no more" (letter 10, 4 Feb. 1795; *Briefe* I, 22; Butler and Seiler, 32).

It would appear from this exchange that Hegel at twenty-four generally talked like a pantheist mystic but still thought like a Kantian rationalist. Schelling's interpretation of the Fichtean Ego (which followed in letter 10) provided a resolution for this conflict.

19. See C. Jamme and H. Schneider (eds., 1984, 11–14); *Toward the Sunlight*, 510–512. For the justification of the date and interpretation here proposed, see H. S. Harris (1984). It is impossible to make noncontroversial statements about the "System-programme," because many students will not even grant the simple assumption that Hegel is its true author. So I have here stated my own position *as if* it were noncontroversial. The dating can only be tentative at best; but I do not think that the authorship ought *ever* to have been in dispute. Still, the long dispute did make us realize that we are dealing with a whole party of young radicals who viewed the "Kantian Revolution" in slightly different ways. It is the special merit of D. Henrich to have emphasized this, but see also the essay of D. F. Krell (1985).

20. One must regard all such assertions with sceptical caution. It is worth remembering that H. Renz (1977, 77) has claimed to find the origin of the *Phenomenology* in the tensions that can be detected in the "Life of Jesus."

21. For Hegel's Frankfurt period, see *Toward the Sunlight*, chapter IV.

22. This becomes the principle of moral science in the ten theses that Hegel defended at Jena in 1801 (Lasson, *Erste Druckschriften*, 503; N. Waszek, 1987).

23. The whole theory is set forth—although not systematically—in the fragmentary essay on the "Spirit of Christianity" (translated in Knox and Kroner; for Jesus as the "Beautiful Soul," see especially 232–247).

24. This development is not clearly visible in the Frankfurt texts as we have them, except for the fragment on "Love"—*welchem Zwecke denn*—which C. Jamme has edited (1982, 9–23). But Jamme says (1983, 279–280) that the development will become visible—with respect to the words *Vereinigung* and *Trennung*—as soon as the critical text of the first ver-

sion, and the revision made about a year later, is set before us. My own suggestion (*Toward the Sunlight*, 298, n. 2) that no important development would be found was a folly which I now find incomprehensible, since a major revision of a large body of manuscript clearly implied that there were new insights to express. (*Aufheben* is a term that Hegel borrowed from Schiller, and he began to use it with its double meaning in the revisions of 1798. See *Toward the Sunlight*, 306, but my interpretation there, and at 397–398, is mistaken, for the reason just mentioned.)

25. Compare O. Pöggeler's comments in "Philosophie und Geschichte" (1973, 340). I should never have recognized the whole sequence without Pöggeler's lead.

26. For a more detailed account of the development of Hegel's systematic thought at Jena, see *Night Thoughts* passim. Since *Night Thoughts* was published, Troxler's lecture notes on Hegel's first "Logic" course have come to light (I.P.V. Troxler, 1988) and the lecture-fragments from the "Introduction to Philosophy" have been carefully expounded by R. Pozzo (1989, chapter 4).

27. My hypothesis about this (*Night Thoughts*, 58n.) was confirmed by the early termination of Troxler's notes (1988, 77).

28. We have only the lecture announcement (H. Kimmerle, 1967, 53). The negative course of the "Logic" can be inferred from the outline that Hegel gave for the previous winter course (and from his procedure in *Faith and Knowledge*, which is plainly an "application" of his "Logic"). The parallel between "Logic" and "Metaphysics"—which can be inferred from the general structure of the *Identity Philosophy* as Hegel sketched it in the *Difference* essay and as he realized it in the *System of Ethical Life*—is supported by Troxler's lecture notes, as far as they go. I believe that I am expressing the consensus of current interpreters here.

29. Here we have to rely on the summary given by Rosenkranz (132–141; Harris and Knox, 178–186), together with some references in the *System of Ethical Life* and a few sidelights offered by Haym's quotations.

30. *G.W.V.*, 365 (Apparatus); see further the whole discussion in *Night Thoughts*, chapter V. (The German announcement calls this "outline of philosophy" an *Encyclopedia*. See H. Kimmerle, 1967, 54.)

31. Hegel had promised a textbook for the summer term of 1803, so he had no time to work on "introductory" materials, because the philosophy of nature was a new field for didactic organization on his part. But in the announcement for the next term, he once more specifies "Logic and Metaphysics" as the first part of his system, and he calls this first part "transcendental idealism." This language (which is never used again) clearly shows Hegel's consciousness that his standpoint has shifted away from that of the *Identity Philosophy* as described in the section of the *Difference* essay on "Schelling's System."

32. The manuscript forms the main body of *G.W.VII*; there is an English translation of the "Logic and Metaphysics" (Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 1986). Hegel promised an encyclopedic compendium in the summer of 1803. He promised it again in the summer of 1805.

33. O. Pöggeler (1973, 136).

34. See J. Heinrichs (1974). The "parallel" logic may never have been written out in any great detail, because another crisis overtook Hegel's logical speculation once the *Phenomenology* was written. Certainly, "the logic of the *Phenomenology*" is not now to be found in the manuscripts and books that we have. I agree with F. Chiereghin (1980, 173) that the *Phenomenology* is a logical theory of the appearing of philosophical logic; and his thesis about the

relation of the *Phenomenology* to the “Logic” of 1804 (1980, 330ff.) is more plausible than that of Heinrichs. But it seems to me that, already in Hegel’s chapter IV, the “syllogistic” movement is different from anything that occurs in the “Logic” of 1804. (For a debate about the “logic” of the *Phenomenology*, which is oriented, as it should be, around the relation of the book to the *Science of Logic*, see the articles of O. Pöggeler and H. F. Fulda in Fulda and Henrich, 1973, 329–425.) The “parallel” logic may never have been written out in any great detail, because another crisis overtook Hegel’s logical speculation once the *Phenomenology* was written. Certainly, “the logic of the *Phenomenology*” is not now to be found in the manuscripts and books that we have.

35. See Rosenkranz, 179–182; Harris and Knox, 254–257.

36. See Rosenkranz, 201–202.

37. This is clear—and the reasons why publication was urgent are no less clear—in Hegel’s letter to Goethe (letter 49, 29 Sept. 1804, *Briefe* I, 85; Butler and Seiler, 686). Compare further the letter to Voss (May 1805, *Briefe* I, 99; Butler and Seiler, 107). But what reveals most clearly the suddenness of the actual crisis is the fact that Hegel did not only announce the *encyclopedic* course (which he had been giving steadily for two years) for summer 1805; he was confident enough to announce the textbook as well. Then the textbook was abandoned half-written, while the encyclopedic course was not given. Instead, Hegel gave a course which he called simply “Logic” (compare *Hegel-Studien* IV, 54, with IV, 62). The conscious crisis came at some time between the submission of the announcement for printing and the actual commencement of the summer term.

38. Rosenkranz, 182; Knox and Harris, 256–257.

39. The announcement for summer 1807 says: “*Logicam et Metaphysicam, praemissa Phaenomenologia mentis*” (*Hegel-Studien* IV, 56). By that time, however, Hegel was editing the *Bamberger Zeitung*.

40. Kimmerle (1967, 76) is not quite so categorical about the non-occurrence of Hegel’s lectures for winter 1806/1807; but we ought to hear of them if they happened, and we do not.

41. *G.W.* IX, 437 (where the passages on opposite sides of the sheet are treated conservatively—and perhaps correctly—as two separate fragments).

42. H. Kimmerle (1967, 65–73, especially 71), or G. Nicolin, report 92.

43. Again Gabler is almost our only source (*Hegel-Studien* IV, 70). Hegel kept the “Jenaer Heft” of his “History of Philosophy” to the end of his life, but his early editors were not so careful, and it is now lost to us.

44. “C. Die Wissenschaft,” *G.W.* IX, 438–443. For the date and interpretation of this piece, see W. Bonsiepen (1977b) and J. H. Trede (1975).

45. See his letter to Schelling in May 1807 (letter 95, *Briefe* I, 161; Butler and Seiler, 80).

46. See Bonsiepen’s *Editorischer Bericht*, *G.W.* IX, 462.

47. See letter 76 (to Niethammer), *Briefe* I, 123; Butler and Seiler, 115. Hegel told Schelling that the last chapter was actually finished the night before the battle (letter 95, *Briefe* I, 161; Butler and Seiler, 80); and as he corrected the proofs he promised himself that in a rapidly following second edition everything would be better (*Briefe* I, 136).

48. See *Night Thoughts*, which provides all of the detailed background that is presupposed by the “bird’s-eye view” given here.

49. For short surveys of the history of *Phenomenology* interpretation, see O. Pöggeler (1961 and 1966). There is also a useful survey in Italian by G. Bedeschi (1967).

50. The first to criticize the book in Haym's way was probably I. H. Fichte in an article of 1844 (see O. Pöggeler, 1973, 335). Fulda and Henrich (1973, 21) say that Haym was only repeating the verdict of K. P. Fischer in a book of 1845. We do still read Haym, however, and he offers a valuable corrective to the many modern critics who discuss the problem in terms which have neither of the advantages that I have mentioned here. Thus, Flay, for example, distinguishes between "ontological" and "anthropological" interpretations of the *Phenomenology* (1984, 270, n. 8 and passim thereafter). This antithesis is not clear to me, and it would certainly not have meant much to Hegel's audience, but Flay will have to count me among the "anthropologists" if he still wants to maintain these categories after reading this preamble to my commentary).

51. R. Haym (1857, 232–245). The *verdict* is given on page 243. A recent view rather like Haym's is that of R. L. Perkins (1973). W. A. Kaufmann (1965, 144) has pushed Haym's view to the limit, but even T. W. Adorno (1963, 140–141; 1993, 124) says, "the butting in of the historical dimension is responsible for what Hegel's philosophy lacks in clarity." (For a properly appreciative view of Adorno's involvement with Hegel, see S. Jarvis, 1994. My own reactions are frequently irritable and cavalier.)

52. See T. L. Haering (1934).

53. Mueller (1971, 20) is repeated almost verbatim from Mueller (1968, 221). I have not noticed anything quite like it in Mueller (1959), but it may be there, nevertheless. The "stage-play" image (1971, 22) was Mueller's earliest (and best) judgment (see 1968, 224 and 1959, 203). The simple thesis that the *Phenomenology* becomes an intellectual tag-game (*Haschen*) is actually older than the less radical complaint of I. H. Fichte and Haym. It was advanced by Michelet in 1838—see the quotation in O. Pöggeler (1961, 257). Pöggeler (1961 and 1964) has put the case in the moderate form in which it is most defensible. One object of the present commentary is to show that he is basically mistaken. My position is much closer to that of Fulda (1965, 1973).

54. For the "forms of Union," see *Toward the Sunlight*, chapter IV; our report of the "Natural Law" lectures is in Rosenkranz, 133–41 (translated in Harris and Knox, 179–186).

55. See the passages cited from his correspondence with Schelling in note 18.

56. See Rosenkranz, 191–192 (Cerf and Harris, 10–11), "On the Essence of Philosophical Criticism" (*G.W.* IV, 117–119, 126; Di Giovanni and Harris, 275–277, 284–285), and *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 12–14; Harris and Cerf, 89–91).

57. Many commentators try to avoid any admission that chronological sequence is important in the first five chapters. See, for instance, R. Stern (1990), J. Roberts (1988), and S. Houlgate (1986, 176–178). If A. Kojève (1967, 176) were right about Hegel having no method but being just a mirror, this mistake would be impossible.

58. In his first semester of teaching Hegel announced and began to give an "Introduction to Philosophy." This was certainly concerned with the problem of "cleavage" (*Entzweiung*) in the general cultural consciousness of the time and with the "need of philosophy" to overcome this problem (see Rosenkranz, 179). The conception of philosophy as the answer to a cultural need is logically connected with the right of ordinary consciousness to demand and be given a "ladder" to the speculative standpoint (*Phenomenology*, Preface, *G.W.* IX, 23; Miller, par. 26). It seems unlikely that the "Introduction" of 1801 offered anything like a "biography of the *Weltgeist*." Hegel did always emphasize, however, that the "need" of different times was different, so the project of a developmental theory of cultural *Entzweiungen* was always implicit in his reflections about this "need."

59. See Di Giovanni and Harris, 313–354 for a translation of Hegel’s “Scepticism” essay; and M. N. Forster (1989) for a good critical account of Hegel’s views. (For the wider topic of the evolution of Hegel’s dialectic method, see M. Baum, 1986; also G. Varnier, 1990, and G. Gérard, 1982. These books will provide plenty of references to the other relevant literature, which is copious.)

60. We can date it reliably because it is written on the back of one of Hegel’s drafts for the important letter to J. H. Voss of May 1805. See *G.W.* IX, 437, and letter 55, *Briefe* I, 95–101. (That letter itself still forecasts the early completion and appearance of Hegel’s “system.” This had, of course, become by now an urgent professional and economic necessity. But the forecast does suggest that the thought-revolution was not then far advanced and that Hegel himself had not recognized how immense the preliminary task that it imposed would be.)

61. The subtitle was changed when the book was in proof, and the final “between title page” was issued together with the rest of the *errata* (see *G.W.* IX, 469–471). (The preface “On Scientific Cognition” was unquestionably designed and intended to serve for the *System of Science* as a whole with two “parts”; so Hegel could legitimately present it to the publisher as something that fell outside the terms of the contract that Niethammer had made on his behalf.)

62. At least, it pretends not to have any such need. H. F. Fulda (1965) has written an impressive book about the meaning and relevance that the *Phenomenology* retained during the Berlin years (in relation to the *Encyclopedia*). I find his results generally convincing and certainly very valuable. Our own concern, however, is with the significance of the *Phenomenology* as it was originally conceived and in its relation to the encyclopedic “system” that Hegel had drafted and was working on at that time.

The history of “Hegelianism” certainly suggests that the two “parts” of Philosophy as Hegel saw them in 1807 ought never to have been divorced, even if the first part is at least as hard to comprehend as the second, so that it is not a very convenient introduction to “Science” proper. (For the two “parts” of Philosophy in 1807, see the “Selbstanzeige” published in November 1807—*G.W.* IX, 447, lines 4–6; Kaufmann, 1966, 4–5—and the *Phenomenology*, chapter VIII, par. 805. Hegel speaks of a second volume containing the three “parts” of his *Encyclopedia*; but it is the two *volumes* that are parallel in his mind.)

63. See the article of Friedhelm Nicolin (1972, 113–22); the text is also printed in G. Nicolin (1970), report 500, 363–381. It has been translated by Clark Butler in *Clio* 13, 1984, 369–376. My citation is from Butler 370–371 (slightly revised). Discussion of the *Phenomenology* continues for two more pages, and the whole should be read and studied. But the author (fairly certainly J. A. Wendt) depends from this point onward on the Preface itself. I suspect that Wendt was using a copy marked by Hegel (or page references given by Hegel), but this cannot be proved. After the nearly direct quotations from the Preface, however, we are offered two paragraphs about the “method” of philosophy which it strains my credulity to ascribe to Wendt on his own. I shall give them here verbatim on the assumption that no one but Hegel would have dared to popularize the *Einleitung* with such authoritative freedom in a work of reference intended for the general public:

The method consists in this, that thinking cognizes the object in its determinateness, or in other words differentiated from other objects (the abstract moment); that it then recognizes the self-sublation of the determinations and their transition into one another (the dialectical moment, the dialectic of thinking), and finally that thinking recognizes the unity of determinations in their opposition, or the *positive* [element]

which is contained in that dialectical self-sublation, and in the transition of the determinations into one another (the speculative moment). Being, the immediate, is self-moving; it becomes, on the one hand, the other of itself (negation of the immediate), and so comes to its immediate content—it posits itself and distinguishes itself from itself, becoming the negative of itself. On the other hand, being, the immediate, also takes this way of being [*Dasein*], or its own deployment, back into itself, and this returning into itself is the coming to be of the *determinate simplicity*, which is the result of the first [immediate] simplicity, but becomes a new beginning once more.

In this way the method aims to express the original form of life itself in its development. For just as every object appears as a whole, as an *immediate* unity, and then goes apart into opposed determinations; but comes to a perfect unity through the sublation and resumption of the determinations into its unity—a perfect unity which is again the point of departure of a new life sphere (and through this bonding the “All” of things maintains itself); in the same way through the employment of this mode of development, science itself becomes the spiritually self-developing and conceptually self-grasping universe. But dialectic is the middle point of this method, in that, as Hegel expresses himself, it is the moving principle of the concept, and as the immanent progression it is the principle through which alone immanent interdependence and necessity come into the content of philosophy. (*Hegel-Studien* VII, 118–119; *Clio* 13, 1984, 372—the paragraphing is Clark Butler’s.)

The parallel between the forms of *life* and the exposition of “Science” seems to me quite bold for an encyclopedic survey article (which should properly err toward the side of “safety”). If J. A. Wendt did produce this interpretation independently, then it is certain, at least, that he submitted it to Hegel and that it received Hegel’s own *imprimatur*. The “stages” of the “method” come from the *Encyclopedia Logic* (§§79–82), but the explicit application of the method to concrete modes of “life” takes us back quite reliably to the *Einleitung* of the *Phenomenology*. The transition to the “System” itself is made only at the end of Butler’s next paragraph.

The unmistakable dependence of Wentz on the Preface and Introduction of an old book—which was by this time not easy to obtain—is a clear proof that Hegel himself still regarded the “science of experience” as a valid “introduction” to his philosophy and as the most appropriate presentation of it for a nonphilosophical public.

64. *absolute Entgegensetzung gilt*, Nohl, 348 (*T.W.-A.* I, 422–423); Knox and Kroner, 313.

65. In other words, when Hegel set out to be the *logician* of the Identity Philosophy, the doom of intellectual intuition was sealed. He was perhaps conscious of this by 1803 (and certainly by 1804—see K. Westphal, 1989, 167, and H. S. Harris, 1994).

66. *Philosophy of Right*, *T.W.-A.* 7, 16–18, Wood and Nisbet, 21–23. (There is a good discussion by R. Bubner, 1971.)

67. *Wissenschaft der Logik*, *G.W.* XI, 21, lines 19–21; Miller, 50 (J. McCumber, 1994, 351, n. 72, has pointed out that this is an echo of Spinoza’s *De Intellectus Emendatione*.) J.M.E. McTaggart took this passage as his guide. No one among his contemporaries would have said that his sense of time was “crude” (as J. C. Flay asserts [1984, 404, n. 38]). But he intuitively knew what the relation between time and eternity had to be, so he Platonized Hegel’s system accordingly and rejected the whole project of a “comprehension of time” as an over-ambitious error on Hegel’s part. Hence he is of no use to us.

J. B. Baillie understood the project. He says that Hegel

went so far as not only to make Experience a process of Logic, but to identify our knowledge with the self-consciousness of the Absolute Spirit. This did not, however, make it impossible for him to establish what was of such vital importance—the objectivity of knowledge. And this, it seems to me, Hegel has certainly accomplished by an analysis of Experience as profound as it is ingenious.

Stated shortly, his “proof” will amount to this: That knowledge may be shown to be absolutely objective it is necessary to show that the reality within which knowledge is found, namely, self-conscious life, is the Ultimate Reality of Experience. (1901, 364).

But Baillie himself rejected the identification, calling it “absolutely groundless” (340) and “the *proton pseudos* of his [Hegel’s] philosophy” (343). He was right in saying that Hegel’s argument involves “the tactics of pure agnosticism” (344). The identity of “what is independently true for all” with “the self-consciousness of the Absolute Spirit” means that all talk of that self-consciousness as if it were independent of finite knowers is logically meaningless. I grasp my own self-consciousness as “the self-positing of Spirit” when I comprehend that positing myself as “human” involves recognizing my membership in the universal community of humanity. If the “self-positing” of C. Taylor’s “self-positing Spirit” is supposed to involve anything more than this, then that “more” is logically meaningless (or in other words, the logical structure of our concept of “rationally cognitive self-consciousness” does not enable us to see how it can mean *anything*). Taylor is, of course, at liberty to ascribe belief in a logically nonsensical mode of “self-consciousness” to the historical Hegel. But even if that is correct, the point is of no philosophical significance. The logic of Hegel’s position is clear, and if Taylor is right then we must forgive Hegel (as we do Jacobi) for not grasping it. The fact that Baillie (who did, like Jacobi, believe in a nonsensical form of “absolute self”) could still grasp the logic of Hegel’s position so well argues (in my mind) that it is Taylor who is mistaken. *He* needs our forgiveness, and Hegel does not.

68. J. C. Flay (1989) expounds Hegel’s new concept of the *eternal essence* of time very well, and M. B. Okrent (1980, 1982) shows how the *Phenomenology* should be seen as a “massive transcendental deduction” (1980, 48). (He ought not to speak of “possible experience,” however, as he does there. Hegel’s “science” is concerned with the comprehension of our actual world.) The *locus classicus* for *God’s* point of view as conceived in our tradition is, I think, Boethius’ *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, book V.

69. Rosenkranz, 141; Harris and Knox, 185–186. Haym (1857, 165) quotes from the same context: “Through Philosophy Reason gets its living force and Nature gets its Spirit back.” The connection between the *Phenomenology* and Hegel’s earlier patriotic-revolutionary dream of a new philosophical religion for a “free *Volk*” has not been as widely recognized and acknowledged as it ought to be (see Harris, 1981).

70. Just what this inversion means is not intuitively clear, and I do not pretend that it is; but I hope that the commentary itself will show that the emphasis is right. Hegel was tortured all his life by the difficulty of explicating the category of “actuality.” See G. Baptist (1990, with the “Reply” by D. Chaffin).

In viewing the *Phenomenology* as the necessary comprehension of the philosopher’s own time we find the only reply that can be made to the criticism first voiced by Kierkegaard, and succinctly expressed by M. Merleau-Ponty: “This last Hegel has understood everything except his own historical situation; he has taken everything into account except his own existence, and the synthesis he offers is no true synthesis, precisely because it pretends ignorance of being the product of a certain individual and a certain time” (1964, 64).

The comment of G.R.G. Mure (1965, 183) is slightly misleading: “The philosopher interprets the past as a process sublated in result, and so as a present which is in a sense timeless, but not as a present in which the future, too, is sublated.” The future is sublated *appropriately*; that is, as a *free* project. What it logically *is*, is logically sublated. Mure speaks as if it were *real*—like the past. But it is not. (See further, J. F. Hoffmayer, 1992.)

71. The tradition of a “God’s-eye view” which begins in Boethius comes to its logical climax, I think, in the *Monadology* of Leibniz. It is plain enough, in the *Monadology*, that necessity swallows up freedom. As Hegel shows in “the Moral World-View,” Kant’s attempt to invert Leibniz is inconsistent with the admission of any “God’s-eye view” at all.

72. *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (1797 and 1803), *Werke* II, 12–13; Harris and Heath, 9–10. Compare also the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, *Werke* III, 350–351 and 600–601 (Heath, 12, par. 3, and 209).

73. It is not fair to take this view without further investigation, because Schelling’s intuition of this supraconscious unity is only the gateway to his philosophy. Philosophy proper *begins* here, as he protested when the “black cows” (or “gray cats”) quip was first made against him. (Hegel, as I have shown elsewhere [H. S. Harris, 1987, 1990] wanted to turn that quip back against other foes, not to employ it himself against “science at its first beginning.”)

74. See his *Neues Organon* (Leipzig, 1764), vol. I, *Vorrede*; vol. II, 220. (I owe all of my information about Lambert and his influence on Kant to the recent essays of Bonsiepen [1977b], Bubner [1969], and Behler [1972].)

75. Letter to Lambert, 2 Sept. 1770: *Akad.* X, 96–99; Zweig, 59.

76. And it does not matter much, as I hope to have shown. The opposition between *phenomena* and *noumena* in Kant is the fundamental *Gegensatz* that Hegel’s *Phenomenology* has to overcome. His work is crucially (though negatively) determined by Kant, whether he knew about Kant’s most comprehensive use of the term “phenomenology” or not. (He certainly knew and had studied Kant’s usage in the fourth chapter of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*—*Akad.* IV, 554–565; Ellington, 118–134—but there is no analogy that I can see between that and his own use. The valid analogy there is with his use of *Schein* and *Erscheinung* in Chapter III).

77. *Hegel-Studien* IV, 55–56. Kant’s words to Lambert were:

A quite special, though purely negative science, general phenomenology (*phaenomenologia generalis*) seems to me to be presupposed by metaphysics. In it the principles of sensibility, their validity and their limitations, would be determined, so that these principles could not be confusedly applied to objects of pure reason, as has heretofore almost always happened (2 Sept. 1770; *Akad.* 10, 96–9; Zweig, 59).

78. *Beiträge*, *Heft* 4, Hamburg 1802, 110. (I cite from Bonsiepen, 1977b, 129 and 225). Reinhold probably was influenced by Kant’s usage in the *Metaphysical Foundations* (see note 74). In Reinhold’s development of the Kantian usage, an analogy with the relation of Hegel’s work to Schelling’s “philosophy of Nature” does become apparent; but the shift from the sphere of Nature (and of cognitive understanding) to that of Spirit (and rational cognition) is crucial. (For the probable influence of the *Metaphysical Foundations* on Hegel, see K. Westphal, 1996b.)

79. See H. S. Harris (1988).

80. We can see the novelty of Hegel's reaction to Reinhold very clearly, by comparing that of Novalis (who seems to have generalized Kant's usage in the *Metaphysical Foundations*, quite independently of Reinhold). Novalis writes: "The ordinary doctrine of Nature is necessary *Phenomenology—Grammar—Symbolism* [*Symbolistik*]. We see Nature, as also perhaps, the world of Spirits, *en perspective*. To the *understanding* imagination pertains the business of *marking* [*Bezeichnen*] in general—of signalizing—phenomenologizing—The linguistic signs are not specifically distinguished from the rest of the phenomena" (*Allgemeine Brouillon*, Samuel, II, 691, no. 943, probably written early in 1799).

81. W. Bonsiepen (1979) gives a reference to the third edition (Leipzig, 1793, 19). The first edition appeared in 1776.

82. Near the end of part II of the *Wissenschaftslehre* (1794), Fichte says: "The *Wissenschaftslehre* is to be a pragmatic history of the human spirit" (*Werke* I, 222; Heath and Lachs, 198–199). At this point, the primordial *fact* of consciousness has been established, and "our perception can quietly follow after the course of events. . . . This is the point at which two quite distinct series [of reflections] are tied together, and at which the end of the one is joined on to the beginning of the other." Philosophical reflection and ordinary reflection can now coincide. But the conclusion that follows is the one with which Hegel's fifth chapter ("Reason") opens: "that all reality . . . is brought forth through the imagination alone" (*Werke* I, 227; Heath and Lachs, 202).

83. *Hegel-Studien* IV, 1967, 13. The following discussion is more fully developed in my "Fichte's *Verdienst*" (H. S. Harris, 1995). See also O. Pöggeler (1973, 294–296).

84. Compare note 82 and Fichte's own comment on Kant's doctrine that what necessarily appears is *not*: "[the act of imagination] does not deceive us, but gives us truth, and the only possible truth. To assume that it deceives us amounts to the instituting of a scepticism which teaches us to doubt our own existence" (*Werke* I, 227; Heath and Lachs, 202). It is Fichte himself who links the *Wissenschaftslehre* to a Cartesian foundation here.

85. From here to the end of this section, the text is a nearly verbatim transcript of the last pages of my "Fichte's *Verdienst*" (H. S. Harris, 1995). See also O. Pöggeler (1973, 294–296).

86. A close study of what the standpoint of "absolute knowing" is solves the much-debated question of how "the Absolute is with us from the start." Naïve philosophy students who read Hegel's *Einleitung* know what it is to *observe* without "adding anything" (any critical judgment). We who live in the "age of Reason" know how to behave "absolutely knowingly" even though we do not have an adequate comprehension of what we are doing. (The *natural* self-consciousness of chapter IV does not have the Absolute *bei sich* in this way. The "*Bildung* of actuality" must be complete before "we" can have it; it is only through "*Fichtes Verdienst*" that we are able to be *speculative* observers at all. What we observe is the motion of "the Concept." Without "*Fichte's* contribution" we would not know how to recognize it.)

87. We can, with some measure of justice, say that this was "*Schelling's* contribution"—see, for instance, the *Bruno* (1802), in which the "identity" of Giordano Bruno with "Bruno-Schelling" is comprehended, or the *Ideen* (1797, 1803), *Werke* II, 20 (Harris and Heath, 16): "Leibniz belonged to the few who even treat science as free work. He had the universal *Spirit of the World* within him." But in this form the doctrine was by way of being a Romantic commonplace. It was Hölderlin's "intuition of Union" that inspired Hegel's own discursive exposition of the "biography" of the *Weltgeist*.

88. Like the life and death struggle of Eteocles and Polyneices the *Gestalt* of "sense-certainty" becomes definitely identifiable when the movement of the Science of Experience completes the relevant "circle." See *G.W.* IX, 303, lines 19–30; Miller, paragraph 558. (But

Thomas Reid's actual view of our perceptual knowledge was not as simplistic as my reference to him suggests. See K. Westphal, 1989, 135–136 and 154, n. 18.)

89. G. E. Mueller's "immense world-historical stage play" is the necessary content of the "science of experience"; and since Hegel is the author, it has to be the stage-play that *his* experience enables him to mount and direct. But his particular prejudices and impressions—and particularly the limitations of his historical knowledge—do not matter. We have to regard his part in "Science" (as the agent who brings it to birth) with the same indulgence that "absolute knowing" extends to all action. As Hegel says in the last sentence of the *Vorrede*, "the share which falls to the activity of the individual in the collected work of the spirit can only be small." His scientific effort was to forget himself, and remember only what we must *all* know and remember. We must do likewise in our interpretation of what he achieved—and whatever further "experience" we bring to it, we are bound to recognize that Hegel's achievement was not "small" at all. It is a positive achievement, not just a negative one. Those who insist exclusively on the "introductory" relation between the *Phenomenology* and the *Science of Logic* lose sight of what is most important in the book. Writers such as Kenley Dove (1970, 1982), William Maker (1981), and Richard Winfield (1984) appreciate how Hegel used "Fichte's contribution" to resolve what he saw as problems about the Kantian critical logic, but they do not recognize the most distinctive "contribution" of Hegel himself: the scientific concept of "experience."

90. *Aesthetics* II, Knox, 1064–1065.

91. W. Desmond (1992b, 281–283) is very good on the comic aspect of the *Phenomenology*. But he does not remark on its resemblance to the *Comedy* of Dante (which is the best reason for regarding it as a "gay science"). The comparison with Dante probably began with R. Haym (1857, 234). But see also G. Shapiro (1975 or 1980 at n. 7); cf. Q. Lauer (1984) and J. P. Butler (1989). A. Kelessidou-Galanos (1983), however, maintains that the *Phenomenology* is "the Yes of Hegelian reconciliation with the tragic as history." That, too, is a valid claim, since we are led to accept the "death of God" and to be reconciled to our own death.

E. L. Jurist (1993) wants us to think of the *Phenomenology* as inspired by ancient tragedy; but his arguments are very weak. Most of his parallels apply to comedy as well as to tragedy; and the parallel with Greek epic (especially the *Odyssey*) is better than that with the drama generally. Admittedly, it is hard to think of a "highway of despair" that compares itself with the stations of the Cross, and ends at Golgotha, as a comedy. But these Christian metaphors point us toward the best literary parallel. The Crucifixion is a prelude for the Resurrection, and the *Phenomenology* (which is the prelude to "speculative philosophy") is best seen in literary terms as the *human* comedy that replaces Dante's vision.

92. W. A. Kaufmann (1975) gives an accurate overview of Hegel's uses of "phenomenology," but he is concerned to argue for the open-ended ("poetic") conception of Hegelian phenomenology that is illustrated in his own work and in that of R. C. Solomon. It seems to me to be a valid intuition that led Cai Zong-Qi to suggest that Whitman's "Song of Myself" is "a poetic version of Hegel's dialectic phenomenology" (1987, 318). (The question of influence here is one for the specialists to settle. The poem appeared in 1855 in *Leaves of Grass*.) The more ambitious thesis of Brian Johnston (1975) about Ibsen's last twelve plays must, alas, be rejected (see M. Westphal, 1985b). But even intellectual adventures of this kind seem to me more enlightening than the results produced by some modern literary critics, such as H. Sussman (1982).

Chapter 1

The Preface (i): Hegel's Outline

(a) *How Hegel Regarded the Preface*

According to the announcement that Hegel wrote for his publishers, the Phenomenology was the first of two projected volumes.¹ It sets forth “knowing as it comes into being.” This “first science of philosophy” was to be followed by a second volume containing “the system of Logic as speculative philosophy, and the two remaining parts of philosophy, the sciences of Nature and of Spirit.” We can fairly infer that Philosophy has four parts, three of which are sciences of the reality that is the content of human experience; the “system of Logic as speculative philosophy” comes in the middle and provides the formal theory of the whole.² The Phenomenology is peculiar because it contains the historical science of how both “logical knowing” and “real science” came to be. We might say that it is the “real science” of knowing, the science that sets forth just how “speculative knowing” came to be part of our real world.

After Hegel had completed his manuscript and delivered it to the publisher, he set to work and wrote an essay headed Vorrede (Preface) which was obviously intended as an initial presentation of the “System of Science” as a whole.³ What the announcement says about the Preface is that the author has here said “what seems to him to be the need of philosophy at its present standpoint.” In addition, the Preface deals with what philosophy does not need—“the mischief of philosophical formulas”—and with “what philosophy and its study mainly depends on.” (As we shall see, this refers to a certain discursive method of presentation.)

Along with the Preface, Hegel sent his publisher a Table of Contents. For the book itself, this Table only organizes the eight chapters into a triadic pattern containing three, one, and four chapters respectively; and it supplies the headings “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness” for the first two parts of this triad. For the Preface, however, Hegel provided a detailed analysis of the argument, together with the general topic: “On Scientific Cognition.”

(b) *How We Should Regard the Preface*

The most important thing in the announcement was the title “Phenomenology of Spirit,” which was new; and the most important page issued with the Preface was a new “between-title” which replaced the earlier subtitle “Science of the Experience of Con-

sciousness." *Let us meditate first, therefore, on the problem of how an introductory "science of the coming to be of knowing" should begin.*

By calling his book The Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel made it into an epic story about God. There is a tradition, from Homer's Iliad onwards, that the epic begins in medias res. The epic of conscious experience must do that, if only because actual self-consciousness finds itself in the midst of a present world. But in an epic poem, the poet must, in any case, begin by invoking the Muse. Through this invocation, the reader learns what whole it is that is to be isolated from the midst of things. For there to be an epic consciousness, the sense of a wholeness that is located within a wider world-context must exist. The Iliad begins with the "Wrath of Peleus' son Achilles" as its announced whole.

In religious consciousness, both the epic wholeness and the wider context become absolute. Here we must go to the root of things, to their true beginning. Thus Milton's invocation goes to the beginning of the human story; and his reader knows from the Bible that the story of man's creation and fall exists in the context of the absolute beginning of the world itself. The beginning, for the poet, is where the designated human action begins. For the prophet, the beginning is where God's action began; the beginning of human action is subordinate to that.

The philosopher must combine the roles (and the standpoints) of the poet and the prophet. But also, unlike either of them, she must consider where the audience stands. For the philosopher, that is a necessary beginning point too.⁴ She cannot (like Homer) simply begin where the topic begins—or simply begin with God, where everything begins. The philosopher must begin consciously now and here, as one who speaks to us, the audience.

According to our religious tradition, the appearing of the Spirit began at Pentecost. This moment is as clearly fixed as the moment when Agamemnon put shame upon Achilles and the wrath of the son of Peleus began. But from the philosophic standpoint, our religious tradition is provincial. God did not first appear then, nor did his human seekers there emerge from the earth, like the "sown men" of Thebes who sprang from the dragon's teeth. If Pentecost is the beginning of something, then the philosopher must show what it is that begins there, and for that she must begin somewhere else. The philosopher must begin by justifying her own activity. She cannot, like the poet and the prophet, assume that everyone knows what she is about.

For the poet, then, there is only the beginning of his story. For the prophet, there is the beginning of God's story and the beginning of ours. But for the conceptual historian of spirit as the unity of God and man, there are three beginnings: the beginning of our story (here and now), the beginning of the historian's story (in the academic world of 1807), and the beginning of the story of Spirit itself (the beginning of the philosophic Pentecost).

In the actual composition of his book, Hegel naturally began with his own situation. From there he proceeded to unfold the main story of Spirit; only at the end did he turn back to the problem of his readers' beginning in the midst of life with their formed attitudes and their culture appropriate to the world as it stands (i.e., about as far from the consciousness of identity with God in the Spirit as they could be). But Hegel's concluding solution for their problem was, of course, the beginning that he placed first—the Preface "On Scientific Cognition."

This Preface is often regarded as a sort of afterthought, because Hegel presented it to the publisher in that light. But it is more likely that he always regarded it as an essential part of his project and that he intended to write it from the very first. The chief evidence for this view is that he put into it many of the remarks and aperçus that he had been jotting in his "Wastebook" from about the time when he first began meditating on, and making sketches for, this projected "Science of the experience of consciousness." As far as his publisher was concerned, Hegel had to represent the Preface as an afterthought in any case, because his friend Niethammer had made a binding commitment to pay for everything that had already been printed if he did not supply the whole manuscript by the middle of October 1806. Hence, he could hardly produce this bulky addition in February 1807 without insisting that it was something quite separate from the book that he had contracted to produce.⁵

Actually, the Preface is not intended to introduce the "Science of the Experience of Consciousness"—as the book was still called when the drafting of the Preface began. "On Scientific Cognition" is a general preamble to Hegel's System as a whole. That is shown both by the heading that Hegel gave to it in his own analysis and by the placement of a between-title between it and the body of the work. The first part of the "Science" introduced by this Preface was the "Science of the Experience of Consciousness," and the first part has its own "Introduction." The heading "Introduction" was supplied only in the Table of Contents. It is clear that Hegel saw no need for a heading until he added the Vorrede for the whole system. The "between-title" distinguishes between the Preface and the Introduction, directing us to refer the Vorrede to the System der Wissenschaft as a whole and the Einleitung to the Wissenschaft der Phänomenologie des Geistes.

It is clear that the heading "Scientific Cognition" embraces the "Science of Logic" as well as the "experience of consciousness." As I have said, the announcement licenses us to think of the 1805 System as consisting of three "real" Sciences (Phenomenology, Philosophy of Nature, and Philosophy of Spirit), with the formal "Science of Logic" in the middle, but we can also rightfully think of the System as having two main parts—"Logic" and "Real Philosophy"—each of which was subdivided: Logic into the theory of appearance and the theory of reality, and Reality into Nature and Spirit. This is how Hegel treated the System in his lectures. But his last-minute decision to change the between-title and call his logic of appearance "the Phenomenology of Spirit" indicates a different perspective. It emphasizes the identity of the beginning ("Phenomenology of Spirit") with the end ("Philosophy of Spirit")—and so draws our attention to the circularity of the whole. It also indicates a heightened consciousness of the tripartite character of the "System"—Logic, Nature, Spirit. As "the Phenomenology of Spirit," the first part ceases to be simply the logic of appearance and is recognized to be both the "logic" and the "real philosophy" of appearance at the same time. It belongs to the philosophy of Spirit just as much as it does to logic; and it forms a conceptual bridge between them.⁶

This double perspective upon what he had done was brought home to Hegel—I take it—while he was writing the Preface. For it was only then that the change of title was made. In comparison with this thought-revolution which the writing of the Preface precipitated, the question of when Hegel first conceived the project of inserting a Preface for the system as a whole is not very important. It must always have been clear to him that

*the writing of his general preface had to be left until the first part was complete (at least). He had to have the whole circle of "Science" as clear in his mind as he could make it.*⁷

*What may make it seem difficult to claim that the Preface was first conceived as an integral part of the "science of experience" is the apparent argument of the Preface itself. The Introduction, which is written from the philosopher's point of view and presents the concept of "experience" and its "motion" straightforwardly, is plainly essential for the comprehension of how the main argument is marshalled and developed. The actual beginning of the book, with the sense-certainty that "Now it is night," has cosmic overtones of the Spirit moving upon the face of the waters in the primal darkness, and of the Logos shining in the darkness that did not comprehend it. But the discussion "Of Scientific Cognition," which was added only after some months of pondering upon the completed text—and after actually using the text (with its methodological and objective beginnings) as a basis for oral instruction—begins by seeming to proclaim itself, and everything like itself, to be logically superfluous.*⁸

*"Prefaces," says this preface which contains so much hard thinking and so much that is not in the book itself, "are trivial, philosophically useless things—and even misleading because they give us the idea that we can discover all that we need to know about the book without reading it."*⁹ *But if that is all that Prefaces are good for, why did Hegel give us this one when he had already written a proper methodological Introduction? The fact that it is as different as it can be from the sort of reflective summing up that ordinary prefaces of this positive type offer has only increased the tendency to use and study it on its own. The man who wrote it—and who pokes fun at Fichte, the perpetual preface writer (whose efforts are themselves not ordinary summaries and reviews)—must have foreseen this danger. Why then did he accept the fate that he begins by characterizing with such contempt?*¹⁰

The answer (if I too may be allowed to make a proclamation "from the end") is to be found in the essential difference between the situations of the poet, the prophet, and the philosopher as author. The epic poet does not pretend to give us more than his vision. He may claim exalted authority for it—as when he begins with "Wrath, sing, Goddess, of Peleus' son Achilles." But even when his topic is the prophet's story—"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree . . . sing, heavenly Muse"—it does not matter if we do not heed him. Of course, it matters to this later poet that we should heed Moses. For the prophet invokes no muse. He tells us what God did "in the beginning" and since then; and he tells us this on the authority of God himself. The philosopher can claim no such authority. We can read a philosophy book idly or not at all (especially if the author's way of writing makes it virtually impossible to read it idly). Yet the matter is of the same absolute import; and because the philosopher accepts the status of one human being among all the rest, because she claims no privileged status or access to a higher realm, it matters to her (it must matter, as it need not to the poet) that we should listen.

We have a paradox here. The philosophical truth is absolute; but we have to hear it from one who is like ourselves. In this sphere, all particular situations are equally contingent. The philosopher, addressing her peers, will begin with this problem of how someone

who accepts the finite human status can claim to say what is absolutely true—because that was precisely the problem that philosophy faced at the moment when the Phenomenology of Spirit was conceived. The philosopher and her peers, however, are not “in the midst of things” in the way that the rest of us are. When she writes a book, she must take account of how we, the literate audience, are in medias res.¹¹ Yet neither her situation nor ours is of any concern to philosophy as a systematic Science. For philosophy itself it is only the pure structure of “being in the midst of things” that can be a possible starting point.

The use of qualifiers such as “trivial,” “not significant,” “essential,” “necessary,” or “absolutely valid” is relative to the position that one is in. This is a logical—that is to say, an “absolute”—truth. Philosophy itself becomes trivial and insignificant as a topic of cultured conversation—almost anything is apt to be more interesting. For philosophy, the most urgent concerns of life—the actual death of the thinker herself, for instance—are mere contingencies that are not its proper business. Thus, if one is a philosopher who writes a book about the actual transition from the ordinary standpoint of temporal existence and its urgencies to the speculative standpoint of conceptual truth and its necessities, then the starting point (all of the logically possible starting points) must be both trivial and essential, both necessary and contingent, both insignificant and absolutely valid. For the journey itself, indeed, the starting point will be both trivially vital and vitally trivial, insignificantly absolute and absolutely insignificant. As a problem, at least, the absolute must be with us at the start (par. 73); but we cannot be under the illusion that the consciousness we have of it at the start is as good as (and in that strong sense, the same as) the awareness we want to achieve.¹²

Hegel did not discover the futility of prefaces. Except for the writings of poets and prophets, most serious works have prefaces; and quite often the preface is of the negative variety in which the author simply warns us that no preliminary survey of the results is possible (or, at any rate, no useful survey is possible). The Vorrede of the Phenomenology is unique, because after saying this, the author proceeds to write a positive preface. He gives us an overview of what the book is about, and of the results at which it arrives; and he does so, moreover, in such a way as to demonstrate that a positive preface need not be futile or superfluous. Even those who have read the whole book (slowly and meditatively) many times return to the Vorrede with the sense that one has in reading a major poem, of always finding something new in it. We all expect that we may come to comprehend almost any part of the book sooner, or better, than we shall ever comprehend the Preface.

This is no excuse for treating the Preface as if it really were a poem. Many readers do that, and writers who are already serious readers of the text encourage them to do it.¹³ They all think that in so doing they are honoring it and its author. Hegel, however, would not have agreed. He was writing the preface to a work of philosophy, and he held that the sense of a philosophical work ought, at all costs, to be logically determinable. Poems are not properly propositions or complexes of propositions. (What prophecies are, I shall not here inquire.) But philosophy is the highest “scientific”—that is, systematically or logically organized—employment of propositional language and its structures. There may be a deep truth concealed in, and conveyed by, the perceived inexhaustibility

of significance in Hegel's Vorrede; but we must seek to see clearly (and hence be able to say precisely) what that deep truth is; and even if we remain dissatisfied with our own insight and our efforts, we must not misrepresent the author's intent. To have written an intellectual poem without meaning to do that would be an ambiguous achievement and a dubious ground for honor.

Of course, saying that the sense must be logically determinable—even in the Preface—is not the same as saying that it is determinate. One object of Hegel's negative exordium is clearly to demonstrate that fact. Prefaces are not determinately useless, but the truth they state is not final. The appearance of finality (reinforced by the psychological fact that for the author this is typically her final statement) is always misleading; and in philosophy—the final science—it is especially dangerous. Nevertheless, the preliminary statement of the truth in Hegel's preface is peculiarly necessary, because the argument of a systematic theory of experience is so different from the arguments into which we continually enter in the normal course of experience.¹⁴ As long as we go on talking about this difference, from the side of these ordinary arguments, we must continually reaffirm the invalidity and the consequent uselessness of what we are doing (as viewed in the philosophical perspective). But since this difference is the first thing that must be grasped, this dialectical, double-edged use of language is the most valid and useful preparatory discipline to which we can be subjected.

The best way to keep a firm footing in this linguistic quicksand is to study all of Hegel's three beginnings together.¹⁵ But we can have no hope of understanding the book at all if we do not take up the challenges that the Preface throws at us. The Phenomenology is an "introduction to philosophy"; and it is a practical introduction, a very strenuous intellectual exercise book. If we think that it is enough to notice that Hegel first says that prefaces are superfluous for scientific treatises but then writes a preface, while continually reiterating that his object is to contribute to science; if we think that the only response that is called for is to remark upon the irony of this, as if it were merely a literary ploy, and we were only meant to see and say how contradictory life is, then we have certainly missed the point. The reader for whom the present book is intended must ask why Hegel begins like this. For that is the philosopher's task—to comprehend the contradictoriness of life. We may have to go on for some distance—even to the end of Hegel's book—before we find an answer;¹⁶ but we should be looking for one, and we should not be satisfied with ourselves or with the author until we find one.

(c) The Justification of the Preface

After this general preamble, let us begin now to examine the text more closely. First, we shall *analyse* the argument of each paragraph, as clearly as it can be stated in a language appropriate to the "natural consciousness" of our world; then we shall comment on the paragraph and *explain* the argument as fully as we can.¹⁷

1. It seems that prefaces are no use for philosophy, since they can only be dogmatic and not systematic. Philosophy comprehends the particular within the universal, so one might think that the particular course of the argument can be forgotten when we

reach the general results. Even a “dead” science like anatomy shows that that is a bad model for knowing; also it shows how the unity of method and result is crucial for philosophy.

The most important point here is Hegel’s insistence that the “results” of a science—whether it be philosophical or empirical—cannot be separated from the process (the *Ausführung*, or “execution”) by which they are reached.¹⁸ But we should notice that Hegel begins at once with the contrast between ordinary consciousness and systematic thought. These are the two poles that are to be linked and united in his book; and the preface is the typical device by which systematic thinkers and writers make a bridge between ordinary empirical consciousness, with the random and disorderly thought that it occasions, and the methodically ordered “science” that any systematic treatise aspires to propound. Hegel’s whole book is, in this perspective, a “preface” to Philosophy, so to begin the book with a “Preface” is slightly paradoxical.

From the first, however, Hegel implies that his Preface does have a use, even though its function is not the ordinary one. His case against philosophical prefaces, compelling though it may seem, is not really so. The first paragraph is devoted to making the case seem as inescapably compelling as possible, precisely because if the “results” of philosophical science *could* be stated independently, there would be no need for a “science of experience.” But Hegel’s use of *scheint* warns us that the argument is not really conclusive.

It *seems* that—even more obviously than other sciences—philosophy has no use for prefaces. The particular science that Hegel compares with philosophy is anatomy, which is the absolute paradigm of the *Understanding* at work, for it involves the dissection of a *dead* body. Hegel himself had followed a course in anatomy at Tübingen; and he is far from despising what can be learned through this analytical approach;¹⁹ but it is the extreme of abstraction, as opposed to the concreteness of a science of *living experience* (which is what we are explicitly embarking on here). Hence, when he points out that a “general picture” (*allgemeine Vorstellung*) of anatomy is not what a serious student wants, he is putting the case against “general pictures” of *philosophic* truth as compellingly as possible by implication.²⁰

Of course, the mention of *anatomy* here has also a symbolic function. Our project is the rational comprehension of human *life*, and, in particular, the comprehension of human *understanding*. Understanding is a distinctively human capacity—a mighty power that comes to grief only when it seeks to understand itself. As an activity, it is not subject to its own canons; it cannot be *understood*. What will finally emerge from our attempt to *understand* ourselves is the pseudo-science of phrenology, which seeks to discover the ultimate ground of our living activities in our bones. This folly is itself a crucial turning point in the “science of the experience of Consciousness.” At the climax of this present volume, we shall have to comprehend (as best we can) the deep truth that makes it so important. But phrenology *is* a pseudo-science. There is nothing in it except the sheer vanity of the human understanding which has finally overreached its scientific employment *com-*

pletely. The proper understanding of bones, by contrast, is the science of anatomy; and if there is a deep truth in the proposition “the being of the spirit is a bone” (pars. 343–344), then it is clear that the science of anatomy will be one of the most important boundary marks of our inquiry. “The Thing itself,” *die Sache*, τὸ πρᾶγμα,²¹ is what we have there before us in anatomy—although death has reduced it to a *Ding*. The immediate *being* of humanity faces us on the dissecting table and in the plates of Vesalius (whereas the annotations of Gall only wrap Yorick's skull, which is in itself the great exemplar of our finitude, in a mist of hyperbolic pride).

2. Truth does not advance in philosophy in the same way as in empirical science. Philosophical truth evolves like a plant—all of its stages of growth are necessary to it. [Kant's] view of the history of philosophy as an endless dialectic of contradictory views is mistaken.

Having set up the antithesis between natural consciousness and philosophy in paragraph 1, Hegel develops it into a contrast between the two kinds of knowledge and truth in paragraph 2. In ordinary life, we habitually use a logic of two mutually exclusive alternatives: *true* and *false*. If my opinion, my *Meinung*, the picture of things that is “mine,” as Hegel likes to suggest—using the sort of punning etymology that Plato developed in the *Cratylus*—corresponds with the state of things in the world, then it is *true*. Otherwise it is *false*. My knowledge increases through the elimination of “false” opinions and the substitution of “true” ones. But philosophical knowledge does not accumulate like that at all.

In the empirical sciences, this process of increase through the subtraction of false beliefs and the addition of true ones is an important aspect of cognition, but it is not the whole story. The “general picture” of anatomy as “being acquainted with the parts of the body as viewed in their nonliving thereness (*Dasein*)”²² is misleading with respect to what scientific knowledge *is*, but it is not empirically inaccurate. One cannot become a scientific anatomist without learning to recognize the bones (which is what I take *Kenntnis* to mean in Hegel's usage here and, typically, elsewhere).

But if one offers to define one's philosophical position for *recognition* (as if it were the thigh bone), the misleading effect is much more serious than that produced by anatomical dissection. For “what scientific knowledge is” is precisely what philosophy is about, and conflicts or disagreements about this are not like empirical mistakes or disagreements. If they were, then philosophical cognition would not be possible. Even the correct identification of a plant is different from the recognition of bones. To be able to identify a plant reliably, one must be acquainted with all the phases of its growth. If the philosophic truth *grows* in this way, then Kant's view that the endless quarrels of philosophers demonstrate the futility of the enterprise is like a declaration by one who is used to bones that leaf, bud, flower and fruit cannot all be the same plant.²³

It is still only a bare assertion, of course, that this is what philosophic cognition is like. It is just a dogma, and Kant will not be answered until a convincing demon-

stration of its truth is produced. But already, even while stating the case against philosophical prefaces, Hegel has begun to give us the “general picture” that we need, which only a preface can give us. In detailing what is mistaken or misleading about the “customary” use of prefaces, he has already found the occasion for the right use.

3. Defining “my position” against others is dodging the real problem. The “Thing itself” is not truly embodied in its goal but in its achievement; and only result and process together are the actual whole. *Defining* fixes the *limit* of the thing. Hence it is outside it. To judge something solid is easy, to grasp it more difficult, to do both in displaying it is the hardest.

Paragraph 3 continues this two-sided argument. To those who think of their philosophizing as an activity of personal self-definition (and this includes not only Reinhold, but also Fichte),²⁴ the *Selbstdarstellung* that they are able to write in the preface (and has not *Hegel's* Preface always been acclaimed and studied as a marvelous example?) becomes the most important thing in the book. But this is only a way of avoiding the real object of philosophical inquiry, like the modern bypass roads around cities to which the traveller does not wish to go. Those who acclaim the *Vorrede* and encourage their students to study it as Hegel's great self-portrait for the history of philosophy gallery are turning the Preface itself into a mummy or a fossil.²⁵ When we seek to do justice to Hegel's distinctiveness in a comparative survey that keeps all the philosophers separate and defines their points of view, we are doing philosophical *anatomy*.

If we have grasped the positive point of Hegel's initial reference to anatomy, we shall not make the mistake of thinking that doing this is useless. Rather, we shall recognize that it is a necessary *beginning* in the study of the history of thought. If we think that it is the whole business of the history of thought, however, we shall be almost as badly mistaken as the phrenologists. What matters in philosophy is not the personality expressed, but the *thing done* (and the problem or “need” of the community that is identified and resolved by the doing of it). *Definition*, which is the supreme achievement of the understanding, is the delimiting of things in their *finite* aspect. For philosophical inquiry, this is only the solid earth upon which the ladder of thought must be firmly placed.

We must recognize, therefore, that Hegel himself did not intend his Preface to be used and studied in the way in which he himself used and studied conventional prefaces, and we are bound to admit that he has contrived one which is difficult to use in that way. This preface gives us only what we need in order to begin the book. It is a seed that germinates in the mind, so that we must *tarry* with the moment as Faust—having left the schoolroom behind—swore that he never would.²⁶ The whole book should be understood as a tarrying with the “here and now” of actual experience until its *true* fulness of content has been *dargestellt* (“displayed” in the Analysis).

4. [Prefaces *are* useful, however, because] the *Bildung* [of individual or community] begins from getting acquainted with universal principles, working up to the thought

of the Thing, and developing techniques of argument. This beginning must make way for the seriousness of real life. Then, after experience has been conceptually comprehended, general acquaintance keeps its place (in cultured conversation).

Finally, Hegel comes to the justification of his Preface. The *Phenomenology* is a work of *Bildung* (formation, education), a work that forms our rational consciousness by showing us the formation of rational consciousness from the seed to the fruit. Even now, Hegel does not abandon his double-edged emphasis—he simply reverses the order. First, he explains the proper function of the general propositions that are the preface to a scientific comprehension of life. Then, sarcastically, he alludes to the “appropriate” place that they eventually assume in the conversation of those who keep up with all the “good books.” In this latter guise, they are, of course, a snare and a delusion. Their real function is in the “laborious emergence from the immediacy of *substantial* life.”²⁷ This is the first reference to the main theme of the Preface, the transition from social substantiality to social *subjectivity*. Cultured conversation—which is about as insubstantial as the life of the spirit can become—is the phenomenal *show* of social subjectivity, the surface-play of intersubjective communication which, in itself, affects nothing, but which expresses the effect of a long and painful social transformation from the time when certain “general principles” were proclaimed as God’s law and the later time when a man was put to death for asserting the absolute validity of the point of view of philosophy; that is, for asserting the right to search for the truth within himself and his fellow citizens.

It is instructive to notice that the process of *Bildung* is the formation of human understanding itself. A *serious* judgment is very different from the understandable judgment that can be given in a “serious” conversation. We shall study the *Bildung* of the Understanding in the chapter called “Reason,” because it is actually Reason which is forming itself all the time; but already in the “general picture” provided by this Preface we learn that the transition from unself-conscious Reason (Reason as Understanding) to rational self-consciousness (self-conscious Spirit) is the main topic of our study. Hegel’s book is the serious conversation in which our ordinary acquaintance with, and judgment about, the formation-process of our culture has its “appropriate” place. But unlike the desultory “conversation about the aim [of life] etc.” (in par. 1), it will be *methodical* (not *historisch*) and completely self-aware (not *begrißlos*).

(d) *Truth Is Properly a Scientific System*

5. *The element of the True is the Concept, and its true shape the scientific system:* To achieve the true shape of truth, to make philosophy into *Wissen*, is my goal. *Wissen* must (logically) become *scientific system* (*Wissenschaft*); but this necessity appears in history only when the time is ripe. So we must show that this is so (and in doing that we shall achieve science).

This is where the Preface proper begins. Now that its function has been made clear, and distinguished sharply from the conventional views and uses of “general

pictures,” the positive statement of Hegel’s general point of view can be given.²⁸ The “conversation” begins with a precise statement of the “goal” (*Ziel*). Hegel’s first thesis is about the true *Gestalt* in which truth “stands forth” (*existirt*). The priority given to this theme (the development of which continues until the end of par. 16) forms a link between the Preface and the Introduction.

The word *Gestalt* is used to emphasize the *concreteness* of this “pure form” of Science with which we are concerned; and this first statement of the thesis is the occasion for a polemic against “formalism” in philosophy generally. The “absolute knowing” that we shall reach will have a “shape” because it has a conscious *content*. It will be the “shape” of the whole “science of experience” comprehended by the philosophical “consciousness.”

This is not yet the “science of absolute knowing” itself. The achieved *goal* of science, the “absolute knowing” in which philosophy moves from desire to fulfillment, and becomes *sophia* (Aristotle’s “theoretical wisdom”), is a *pure form* that evolves into a system of pure forms. It is all conceptual and does not have a *Gestalt*, a *shape*, at all—except the shape of the thinker who is its “being for self” and the book that is its being-in-itself. The task of the studious reader is to become its “being in and for itself.” But if the achieved goal is separated from the process of its appearance—which is a cycle of shapes, a circle that begins and ends with the disappearance of *shape* as such—then “science” becomes an abstract formalism. Similarly, the *sophia* of Aristotle ceases to be the “best and most complete” virtue whose exercise is *eudaimonia*, unless it is understood to contain all the practical virtues that are below it. (We should always remember this analogy when we are studying Hegel’s logic. The embodied logic of the *Phenomenology* is how “the Concept mediates between itself and life”; and the Aristotelian conception of *sophia* as “complete virtue” applies to Hegel’s “absolute knowing,” because “through Philosophy we learn to live.”²⁹)

Only the “science of the experience of consciousness,” therefore, can bring us to the recognition of the true *Gestalt* in which truth *exists*. “*Existing*” is what consciousness, and only consciousness, makes possible. The objects of consciousness, including other embodied consciousnesses, are simply “there” until we take account of them as *existing* things or persons. The “shapes” that are to be comprehended in the one circular shape which connects at the point where consciousness both is and is not must “be there,” dispersed in history, before this “true shape of truth” can *exist* at all. If the shapes of truth that are there in the historical consciousness of the community can be collected into this circle, then several distinct goals will have been achieved. First, Kant’s “dialectic of pure Reason” will have been overcome. The maturity of the cycle of pure speculation will be exhibited in relation to its necessary earlier phases. Philosophy will not only exist—it has done that all along, for even the moment of Sense-Certainty is a *philosophical* position³⁰—it will also be seen to “be there.”

But it will still be something different from *sophia*. *Sophia* has only been brought closer, because *its time* is now shown to have come. Its realization will be the pure form that is a circle of forms (the “Science of Logic”), not the circular

“shape of the existing shapes.” But since this circle is a science too, the implicit goal of *sophia* itself must finally be to display its comprehension of the conscious life that has brought it into being³¹ (just as the “complete” Aristotelian virtue must exercise all the virtues that led up to it). By creating the science of the *Gestalten*, we demonstrate that it is now time for philosophy to become a science—and we illuminate what scientific system is. Thus, we do, indeed, bring philosophy closer to being *sophia*.

Hegel distinguishes here between the “external necessity” for philosophy to become Science and the “inner necessity” for this, but he also insists that the two “necessities” are the same: the “external necessity” is simply the “inner necessity” of philosophical logic’s manifesting itself in the outer record of our cultural experience. What led Hegel to conceive the project of a “science of appearing knowledge” was precisely his recognition that all of the “shapes” are there in the record. The time when *philosophia* can become *sophia* “presents (*vorstellt*) the *Dasein* of its moments” outwardly in a “shape” that corresponds to the way in which philosophy displays (*darstellt*) them as pure concepts. But we have to set aside all the accidents of personality and motive in order to recognize this universal shape.

The parallel that holds between the “science of experience” and “speculative science” is clearly visible here. Hegel is going to contribute (*mitzuarbeiten*) to the bringing of philosophy nearer to science; he is going to *help* turn *philosophia* into *sophia*, by turning the *Vorstellung* (presentation) of the moments in the time that is now ripe into a *Darstellung* (explanatory display). This “display,” being a “science of experience,” will be a demonstration of the *external* necessity that is compelling philosophy to become a speculative science of *internal*—that is, logical—necessity at this juncture.

We know (from par. 805) that in 1807 Hegel believed in some sort of direct identity of “inner and outer.” He says there, “to each abstract moment of science there corresponds a shape of the appearing spirit *überhaupt*.” There is no reference to this “correspondence” in the *Science of Logic*, but the status of the *Phenomenology* as a “science” is still maintained. It seems, therefore, that in the end only a weaker form of identity between “external” (phenomenological) and “internal” (logical) necessity is valid.³² The “science of experience” is the display of how “external” necessity becomes “internal” when we comprehend the need of the time completely as the requirement that philosophy should now become science. The arrival of the logical insight that our time is the time for this gives us the “science of how Spirit appears” as the first contribution to the achievement of this goal. That first contribution is the aim of Hegel’s present enterprise.³³

6. This claim conflicts with a prevalent *Vorstellung*—that the true is immediately known (as the *being* of love, not [as we maintain] *in* its centre).

To say that the true shape of truth is scientific *system* is to say that truth exists in the *conceptual* element. The antithesis of “faith” and “knowledge” will be mentioned in the next paragraph—and the establishment of this broader historical and

cultural context (which will become an important theme of the second half of the book) confirms the natural assumption that Jacobi and Schleiermacher are the primary targets of this polemic against religious intuition.

But Hegel says that the view he is opposing is as widespread as it is overweening (*eine so grosse Anmassung als Ausbreitung in der Ueberzeugung des Zeitalters hat*). The critical editors Bonsiepen and Heede are right, therefore, to look beyond the two obvious figures. They point also to Eschenmayer and Görres. In order to follow Hegel's argument, however, we need not concern ourselves with figures whom he never publicly discusses. *Faith and Knowledge* provides us with a sufficient commentary on the explicit polemic of paragraphs 6 and 7.³⁴

But there is an *implicit* polemic here that is more important, a polemical stance that strikes against the Hegel of *Faith and Knowledge* as much as it does against Schleiermacher. "The element of the Concept" is opposed to the immediacy of intellectual intuition, just as it is to the immediacy of sense and feeling. The Hegel of *Faith and Knowledge* (and even more clearly the Hegel of the *Natural Law* essay)³⁵ was committed to an *intuitive* ideal of speculative wisdom. And inasmuch as he is attacking his own earlier views, Hegel is also criticizing Schelling. Schelling himself was puzzled about the claim that "truth has the element of its existence in the *Concept* alone." In his first comment on the *Phenomenology* (the only sympathetic response that he was ever to make), he wrote to Hegel: "so far I cannot grasp the sense in which you oppose the *Concept* to the intuition. By the *Concept*, however, you cannot mean anything else but what you and I have called 'Idea'—the nature of which is precisely to have one side, from which it is *Concept*, and one from which it is intuition."³⁶

What Schelling says shows that he is conscious that Hegel does mean something different—only he cannot tell what it is. I can only say what it is, at this point, in a logical way. No other direct approach to "the *Concept*" is possible, for "the element of the *Concept*" is Hegelian Logic pure and simple. Hegel does mean here to oppose *Concept* to intuition. The "Concept" is the topic of the *Phenomenology*, but it never *appears* properly; it never becomes what Schelling and Hegel called the "Idea," because no *Gestalt* is adequate to it. At the end, the "shape of all the shapes" is the chalice of Spirit from which all of them foam forth in charity, and what is shaped there is the experienced content. The pure *Concept*, which is the "chalice," is not a shape (except metaphorically, and the metaphor comes from *religious* experience).

The *Concept* is a pure "form." In the *Science of Logic* it becomes the form of forms. Only in the Real Philosophy does it emerge finally as the "Idea." Schelling is right, therefore—or at least I am willing to agree with him—that in the end Hegel "cannot mean anything else." But Hegel wants to distinguish sharply between the conceptual processes that start from sensible intuition and imaginative visualization and move away from that starting point into their own realm of pure logic; and the conceptual processes that start from pure logic and move back towards the intuitive *realization* of the *Concept* as an "Idea."

That there is a purely conceptual realm and that purely conceptual activity is

radically different from the intelligent organization of sensible and imagined materials (the business of “understanding”); that the understanding itself could not operate without “concepts” (which are not Lockean “ideas” and are not reducible to them)—this is one main theme of the book. To argue about it beforehand, therefore, is not likely to be useful. All of us, whatever our view of the “true” relation between concepts and things, think mainly in words—especially when we are reading philosophy books. The “independence” of conceptual processes and the conceptual realm is sufficiently well established, by that fact alone, to make the investigation of Hegel's views possible. I believe that we can in the end come to an understanding of what he is saying even if we disagree with it. I give his Concept (singular) a capital letter to signify its Platonic status and to remind us of the Platonic background of all of Hegel's conceptual discussions. In particular, the Concept is not a thought-process or a thought-instrument in any singular brain; it is the shared world-concept in the context of which we all think and communicate successfully.

The absolute “intuition of the Universe,” which Schleiermacher calls “religion,” is here said by implication to be “the being of the divine love.” We reach it at the end of the book, when the chalice “foams forth to God his own infinitude.” At that point we are (each of us) the self-conscious Concept. That “foaming” is our *experience* of the divine love as a being which we can enjoy intuitively. But philosophy—or rather, *sophia*—as a “science” is something else. By this distinction, Hegel does justice to the ideal of his earlier years. This book is his casting of accounts with it. And if I am not mistaken, his language here—the view that the divine love has a “centre”—pays tribute to Boehme as a principal source of the inspiration of the philosophy of Identity. The great central arch of the *Phenomenology*—from the “struggle for recognition” to “evil and forgiveness”—is a movement from the “dark centre” to the “light centre” of the divine being (as Boehme called them); the arch of the Religion chapter returns from the “light-centre” to shine at last in the darkness of singular self-certainty. But all of this movement is only a philosophical prelude to systematic speculation, not the activity of *sophia* itself; and that activity, when we do arrive at it (in the *Science of Logic*), is conceptual and discursive, not intuitive.

7. Our culture has now passed beyond the immediacy of the world of Faith. It has even passed beyond the opposite extreme of Protestant subjectivity. It is aware of its loss of living reality. But it now demands that philosophy should restore the *feeling* of the Divine Life, instead of developing it to the level of conceptual self-consciousness.

There is an ambiguity about the range of the “more general context” that is here intended. When Hegel speaks in this way about Spirit being now “beyond the immediacy of faith,” it is natural for us to think of the medieval period as “the age of faith.” Indeed, at the beginning of *Faith and Knowledge*, Hegel speaks of the antithesis in just this way, contrasting the philosophy that was the “handmaid of faith” with modern autonomous speculation. This would seem to be the most reli-

able guide we could ask for to his meaning here.³⁷ But, in fact, this line of interpretation creates a difficulty because it does not square perfectly with the body of the book. “The immediacy of Spirit’s faith” is here equated with “the substantial life that the Spirit formerly led in the element of thought.” That faith was a “certainty of reconciliation” and of “the universal *presence* [*Gegenwart*] both inward and outward of the *Wesen* [i.e., God or the absolute Truth]”; and in chapter VI, this “substantial life” and the immediate presence of “truth” (both inward and outward) is found only in the consciousness of the Greeks.

All the same, it is the history of the Christian faith that Hegel is summing up here. What he says corresponds perfectly to the ideal evolution of the universal religion as he sketched it in his “Natural Law” lectures. Christianity comes there to be a “beautiful” religion in Catholic Christendom. This aesthetic reconciliation and enjoyment of “presence” is virtually ignored in chapter VI, where the emphasis falls upon the alienation of thought from being. But it is this “sublated” Greek inheritance that Hegel’s speculative revolution will enable the modern Christian world to recover.³⁸

It would be straining the truth rather out of shape to claim that Hegel conceived himself to be the restorer of a “Catholic” experience.³⁹ In fact, we have a statement from Hegel’s own mouth concerning what he now expects from philosophy that is close enough both in time and in spirit to the present passage to be unimpeachable. In what was almost certainly an introductory lecture given in October 1804 Rosenkranz reports Hegel’s argument as follows:

as far as possible [philosophical terminology] should be wholly brought back to the *mother tongue*. Hegel speaks first of how we make the study of philosophy more difficult, partly because we make demands on it that ought not to be made, and partly because we terrify ourselves with pictures of the demands that philosophy makes upon us, and which are too hard for us to meet. The truth should present itself to us in religion, of course, but for our culture faith is altogether a thing of the past. Reason, with its demand that we should not believe, but know what the truth is, has grown strong—that we should not merely have intuitive consciousness of the truth, but should comprehend it. The truth of his individuality, which the path of his existence traces precisely for him, the single individual is well aware of, but the consciousness of the universal life he expects from philosophy. Here his hope seems to be disappointed when instead of the fullness of life there appear concepts, and in contrast to the riches contained in the world of immediate experience the poorest abstractions are offered. But the concept is itself the *mediator between itself and life*, in that it teaches us how to find life in it and the concept in life. But, of course, only science itself can convince us of this.⁴⁰

We should notice that the recovery of a substantial sense of community—like that of the Greeks—is still envisaged as the goal of philosophical endeavor in the text that we are now studying. But there is a necessary order of cultural development that must be comprehended; and the most that philosophy can contribute does fall short of the full recovery that is sought. All the same, as Hegel says in the

next two paragraphs, what philosophy can achieve goes far beyond any merely immediate experience.

The world of the Universal Church had a “substantial life” in God which is portrayed in Dante’s *Comedy*. Dante and his readers took it to be a life in the “Beyond.” But in chapter VI, Hegel treats the Beyond as the “element of thought” that is merely one *side* of the “world of Spirit in self-estrangement.” And in Catholic Christendom, what Hegel calls “the universal consecration” is the “universal presence” of the divine *Wesen*. In the 1827 *Encyclopedia*, Hegel treats the movement from dogmatic pre-Kantian “metaphysics” to Jacobi’s “immediate knowing” as a “circle,”⁴¹ but that is only an “unconscious” return. The circle of Spirit’s appearing has to overcome this alienation between thought and presence. Religious feeling never achieves the perfect reconciliation with the real world of objective social existence that Hegel ascribed to the Greeks, and he is here talking about the reaction against philosophy rather than about philosophical revolution. Philosophy appears only as the “cold march of necessity” which is outside the whole circle of Christian Romanticism.

For the moment, then, Hegel is attacking the romantic religious enthusiasts rather than propounding his own view of the circle of the Spirit. The diatribe against “edification” and “ecstasy” here is perfectly in tune with *Faith and Knowledge*. For the catchwords “beautiful,” “holy,” “eternal,” “religion,” and “love,” Bonsiepen and Heede refer us generously to Eschenmayer, Görres, Jacobi, Friedrich Schlegel, Schleiermacher, and J. J. Wagner.⁴² Jacobi and Schleiermacher are undoubtedly being attacked, and they are still important enough for us to remember them. But there is another writer who is more important than Eschenmayer, Görres, and Wagner—both to us and to Hegel—and that is Herder. The *edifying* aspect of Herder’s *God: Some Conversations* is obvious enough, and in spite of their radical disagreement about Spinoza, Hegel classified Herder with Jacobi in *Faith and Knowledge* (which must have bewildered them both).⁴³ The fact that Herder, like Schelling and Hegel, was a defender of Spinoza (thereby “sustaining and extending the wealth of the substance”) only confirms the general pattern of the attack. Hegel is interested in his own earlier self—and hence in those with whom he has sympathized, and to whom he is indebted.⁴⁴

8. This world used to be just an image of the other one. The eye of the spirit had to be turned forcibly to this life, and it took a long time. Now we need the awareness of Heaven again, and the measure of our loss is the immediate contact that is accepted as enough.

Confirmation that Hegel is concerned only with the circle of *subjectivity* (i.e., the circle of the *thinking* consciousness of the Church in the “Christian-Teutonic” world) can be found here.

The final (philosophical) phase of the long story of the Unhappy Consciousness is here contrasted with the intermediate (religious) phase—in the world of the Universal Church. In Catholic Christendom, there was a “thread of light” to lead us to

Heaven out of the labyrinth of this world. Since we know that Hegel read Dante, and the evidence suggests that he never did read widely in medieval philosophy and literature, it seems reasonable to identify this “thread” with Dante’s pilgrimage in the *Commedia* (and even, perhaps, with his vision of Jacob’s Ladder). That thread was broken by the Enlightenment, which taught us our bourgeois values and made us worldly once again—to the point at which the “philosophy of subjectivity” became ascetic in Kant and Fichte, and the “mouthful of water” represented by Schleiermacher’s religion of feeling was all the comfort that the Spirit, thirsting in its mundane desert, could conceive of. *Faith and Knowledge* thus provides a complete gloss for everything in this paragraph except the *violence* of the awakening.⁴⁵

Hegel’s suggestion that violence was needed to bring our attention back to the things of this world is an echo—and an inversion—of Plato’s Myth of the Cave. Plato’s philosophers have to be forcibly liberated at the beginning of the journey to the other world. The violence of the Hegelian return to this world can only refer, I think, to the social upheavals and wars of the Reformation. The *Phenomenology* is a return to Heaven that follows in the footsteps of Dante. But Heaven is now recognized as the spiritual aspect of *this* world; and again (as in Plato’s myth) the philosophical liberation must be accomplished by force. Hegel’s book is the self-consciousness of the Revolution—and especially of Napoleon.⁴⁶ The philosophical Pentecost comes to a world that has been harshly reminded that the “pursuit of happiness” is not enough.

9. One can get *this* contact any way one likes. But science is comprehension, not edification.
10. This immediacy is certainly not higher than developed *Wissenschaft*. In despising determinacy it becomes merely capricious. Self-surrender to God in a trance brings only dreams.

We can see from *Faith and Knowledge* (and we shall find confirmation in the text of the *Phenomenology* itself) that the religious appeal to “feeling” is to be thought of as the first spark of a new spirit, not as the last spark of an expiring one. The eudaemonism of the Enlightenment extinguished the old faith (for which philosophy was a handmaid). The new faith of Kant and Fichte is a self-consciously philosophical one. Hegel is now attacking Jacobi (and Herder too?)⁴⁷ with the weapons of Kant’s irony—for it was in Kant’s attack on Swedenborg that the comparison of the religious enthusiast’s wisdom to a mere dream gained general currency and notoriety.⁴⁸ But his nearest target (and the one he is most urgently concerned about) are certain supposed “friends” of the newest idealism, such as Eschenmayer and Görres. His reference to the “centre” and the “depth” alludes once more to Boehme; and here his irony has a redemptive purpose. For, although Hegel had already attacked Boehme’s *Trübheit* (obscurity) in his lectures, he does hold that the truth is there in Boehme’s “depth.” What is more, Boehme really struggled for the definition (*Horos*) which he could never achieve in an imaginative image (*Vorstellung*). Hence, those who exalt this vagueness and rejoice in the darkness of this depth are

not his true followers.⁴⁹ It is only when we grasp the redemptive aspect of this polemic that we can understand the transition to what now follows.

11. Our present time is one of birth and transition. Lightmindedness and boredom are symptoms that the long decay of the old, and the slow maturation of the new, world are about to end in a new dawn.

Hegel went out to watch Napoleon ("this world-soul") riding to review his troops on the day after the battle of Jena.⁵⁰ At that moment, the book was finished but this Preface was still unwritten. Napoleon is the historic maker of the new world which Hegel hopes his own book will illuminate like a sunrise. Even the "intimations of an unknown [God]" in writers such as Eschenmayer, Jacobi, Görres, and Wagner (who are all included in the anathema of par. 10)⁵¹ are acceptable to Hegel as "signs of the times"—just as the altar "to the unknown God" was acceptable to Paul when he preached at Athens.⁵² The slow crumbling of the old world has been going on for several centuries. Hegel points this up very neatly by using the metaphor of daybreak again in the body of the book. He speaks of the transition from "Self-Consciousness" to "Reason" as emergence into "the spiritual daylight of the present" (par. 177). We cannot date this "stepping-forth," because it is a matter of the way in which *several* turning points in the history of Western culture (Luther, Bacon, Descartes, Kant) are viewed and interpreted (separately and together) in the spiritual daylight of the Hegelian sunrise.⁵³

12. But only the immediate Concept of a new world is born in the sunrise. Just as the acorn is only the concept of the oak, so the intuitive Concept of the new Science must *develop* from its first beginning. Science has a long cultural history which it must recollect; and in the recollection every moment assumes a new meaning.

Napoleon was, for Hegel, the sunrise of a new spiritual day in the actual world. But Hegel foresaw that the building of a new social world would take a long time; the whole heritage of traditional institutions would have to be revalued and reconstructed, because the Revolutionary idea of a clean slate was a mistake.

The world of actuality surprised Hegel by moving in an unexpected direction, but he never supposed that the "Restoration" could really be what its official representatives claimed it was. For in the new world of the Spirit that began with Kant's supposed clean slate, Hegel had himself carried out the necessary revaluation and reconstruction of our intellectual tradition. Kant was the Robespierre of the Spirit; and (already in 1807) Hegel aspired to be the Napoleon of the new spiritual world. "Science, the crown of a world of the Spirit, is not complete in its beginnings." The positive beginnings of the new Science—its *Grund*, or foundation—were laid by Schelling's speculative philosophy of Identity. But this was only part of a "wide-spread upheaval of culture." Hegel's book seeks to comprehend the whole upheaval (which stretches back in time to the establishment of the Roman Empire and the proclamation of the Christian Gospel). It reabsorbs the whole story of the cultural revolution produced by Christianity into the "simple *Begriff*" of the Absolute

Identity; and by showing how in “this simple whole those cultural shapings develop themselves, and take shape afresh, but in their new element, and in the sense that has come to pass,” it makes the spiritual acorn of that *Begriff* grow into the oak of a new spiritual culture.

(e) *Against Formalism: First Round*

13. *The principle is not the completion—against Formalism:* The content for the development of the newborn concept is present in memory. The way that the new scientific world-view still contains all of it must be articulated for our general understanding, so that it no longer seems to be esoteric.

Hegel’s analysis places the heading “The principle is not the completion, against formalism” here, even though the proposition is explicitly asserted in paragraph 12. He is going to show us how the “formal” absorption of human experience and knowledge into the new spirit as a pure Concept is inadequate and unconvincing. What is needed is the demonstration that the Concept has developed out of the cultural world that finds it esoteric. The “acorn of thought” has come to maturity upon a cultural oak tree that is still present in memory. If we are presented with a “philosophical Science” that cannot (or at least does not) give any articulated account of its relation to its own history, then the very presence of all the earlier forms of thought in memory becomes confusing. As the universal self-consciousness of a new spiritual world, speculative Science ought to be accessible to everyone, since it is methodically developed from the most familiar and homely concepts in our native language.⁵⁴ But its relation to all of the older forms of knowledge and consciousness needs to be articulated. The physical oak tree is puzzling to one who does not remember its growth, because its earlier stages (and its other seasonal states) are *not* present to intuition. The spiritual tree is puzzling because all of its earlier stages (and its other states) are *equally* present, so how can we know that this logically articulated system of conceptual relations with ordinary names is the final, or mature, state? Science itself must take us by the hand and lead us from our ordinary concepts in their ordinary usage, through all the forgotten and remembered phases, back to those same concepts in the philosophical system. As a new discovery, the system still belongs to the fortunate few who have discovered it, but it is just this possibility of universal communication to all who possess ordinary understanding that makes it Science proper.

In this commentary, I have looked forward to the emergence of Hegel’s *Science of Logic* as the “newly appearing shape” of the spiritual world, and this is systematically correct in that this Preface is explaining why Hegel’s Science of Logic and Reality needs the lengthy “Science of Experience” as its introduction and “first part.” But at the moment when this Preface was written and published, the only “Science” that stood uncomprehended before the educated general consciousness which needed to understand it was Schelling’s Identity Theory, and especially his Philosophy of Nature. It was Schelling’s Philosophy of Nature that was being

degraded (and in a certain way, popularized) by the new formalists.⁵⁵ The “Science that is not complete in its beginnings” is *Schelling's* Science; and when Hegel returns to this theme in paragraph 14 it becomes unmistakably clear that the claim of this part of the Preface is that (by making the relation between our cultural tradition and the new Science *understandable*) the *Phenomenology* is “unveiling” Schelling's Absolute and fulfilling its “simplicity” with all of the particular spiritual content that belongs to it.

14. At its first appearance *Wissenschaft* is vulnerable to criticism, but the criticism is only valid as a demand for proper development. Enlightened empiricism and religious insight need to be brought together; and the struggle for comprehensive science should not be given up.

In paragraph 13, Hegel says that Understanding (*der Verstand*) is *das Denken, das reine Ich überhaupt* (“thinking, the pure Ego generally”). Now he introduces the declared partisans of *Verstand* and *Vernunft*. It is significant that in this straightfight relationship he sides decisively with *Verstand*.⁵⁶ But that will come as no surprise to the careful student of the preceding paragraphs. Reason (*Vernunft*) is the power through which we have intellectual intuitions or “intimations” of the absolute truth. Without it, “Science” (in the form of the Identity philosophy) would never have come to birth. But only the achievement of a discursive, understandable form can show that intuitive insight really is “*intellectual* intuition.” For several years, Hegel had been unhappy about intuition as the foundation of speculative knowledge. He was only able to accept it as the beginning, because he could see how to regard it as a goal. It is not the moment of intuition but the *circle* of discursive cognition that is the *reality* of *Vernunft*; and even that circle now becomes only the necessary first step through which the system of philosophy proper gains a starting point that is not intuitive but already discursively comprehensive.

Hegel's discomfort about the intuitive character of the Identity philosophy was evident already in the *Difference* essay—and it is in the *Difference* essay that we first find the parties of *Verstand* and *Vernunft* arrayed against each other just as they are here.⁵⁷ Even there, Hegel insists that we must do justice to “the unscientific effort” of empirical inquiry. At that stage, he cannot help being more on the other side, but he is visibly striving towards the “true middle.” Here again, he is striving towards the middle, but now his starting point is the Understanding, the common ground between speculative and ordinary experience; and that common ground is not an intuition but a mass of discursively developed (though disorderly) representative concepts.

Speculative Science begins with Schelling's intuition of the Absolute Identity. This is the rebirth of *Vernunft*—and there are many self-declared partisans of the Absolute Identity who are ready to join with religious enthusiasts like Jacobi in decrying all the claims of empirical science. Eschenmayer (who was a notable contributor to the formulation of Schelling's Philosophy of Nature in its early stages)⁵⁸ had become a leader of this party with his *Talks on the Holy and History* (1805).⁵⁹

But unless the justified demands of the understanding are met, the “force of truth” (which “Science” has, even in its “first beginning”) becomes the mere bluster of “formalism.” The truth of the new philosophy in religious terms silences many empiricist critics, but their silence is not always conviction. The pious proclamations are boring, and they make no difference to any of the real problems of life. One important element in Hegel’s indignation against the religious enthusiasts is his sense that they bring speculative Reason into disrepute by making it useless.

15. The party of rational intuition can take over the empirical data quite easily. But a monotonously automatic application of *a priori* categories is not genuine science. What is needed is the evolution of the Idea through a self-defining sequence of shapes.

Hegel has attacked the *mystical* degeneration of speculative Science into the *Begeisterung und Trübheit* (inspired obscurity) that takes itself to be “higher” than Science already in paragraph 10; so the Eschenmayer mode of “immediate rationality and divinity” is not his target here. It is not the escape from discursive thought into intuition that is troubling him now, but the adoption of the wrong logic—the merely formal logic of finite Understanding—in one’s supposedly “speculative” discourse. This paragraph is concerned with the degeneration of speculation into pseudo-science through the adoption of a logically mechanical method of absorbing or subsuming real content under the Concept. Already in the *Difference* essay, Hegel accused Fichte of taking Lockean empiricism over mechanically as his “philosophy of nature.” But in the preamble to his systematic course of winter 1804/1805 he attacked the followers and imitators who were reducing Schelling’s philosophy of nature to a formalism of the same kind. He very explicitly exempted Schelling himself from this charge, pointing out that Schelling was no prisoner of forms because he was continually changing them.⁶⁰

When Hegel sent his book to Schelling he made the same distinction; Schelling accepted it, but commented that no distinction was indicated in print.⁶¹ Schelling had some right to feel aggrieved about this, but it is not a good reason for us to doubt Hegel’s sincerity, because the naming of names is plainly inconsistent with the project of the book. Hegel wanted to tell the story of the appearing of Spirit and the emergence of Science. The view that personalities were significant in Science was an error of the antispeculative thinkers which he was determined to avoid. We have some right to feel sorry about this on our own account, because we could often be much surer of what Hegel means if he would give us a name upon which to hang our interpretations. But it is not a problem in the case of Schelling. If the grounds for distinguishing his work from that of those who turned his philosophy of nature into a clockwork toy are not always plain, that only illustrates the difficulty of recognizing Science when it appears “veiled in its simplicity” (par. 13). By urging that Science does not deserve a death-dealing blow “as it first begins,” Hegel is making the only distinction between Schelling and his “school”—and the only apology for the former—that is *conceptually* possible and permissible. By say-

ing that criticism of the *beginning* is “unjust,” he is saying that his own criticism is not aimed at Schelling. We cannot doubt that he is striking at the “essence” (*Wesen*) of the “formalism” that he is talking about, and further that he is confident of the justice of his cause.

Can we identify any of the “divine rationalists” who “drag a mass of material, specifically what is already familiar and in order onto their land, and seem to possess everything else that knowledge is already done with, as well as being master of what is still not brought under rules, because they deal especially with the exceptional phenomena and curiosities”? In his lectures Hegel said that “*Schelling's Ideas* must be very clearly distinguished from *the use that his school makes of them*”; and in his letter to Schelling he spoke more generally of “the banality (*Plattheit*) that makes so much mischief (*Unfug*) with your forms especially, and drags your science down to a cold formalism.”⁶² The same language about “the philosophy of nature, which has made mischief with the terminology of Schelling,” occurs in the lecture of October 1804. This shows that “Schelling's school” actually means a class of writers whom both Schelling and Hegel take to be epigones of the new philosophy of nature. They are not necessarily students or associates of Schelling himself, but they have taken over *his* “forms,” or his “terminology.”

Given this loose interpretation of “Schelling's school,” it is not difficult to identify some of the writers whom Hegel has in mind. For Hegel wrote down his opinion of the natural philosophy of J. Görres and J. J. Wagner in his *Wastebook* thus:

Just as we have had a Genius-Period in poetry, so it seems at present to be the *philosophical Genius-Period*. A bit of Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen and Hydrogen kneaded together and stuck to a page written up by others with Polarity etc., fired into the air with a wooden tail of vanity and rockets,—this (they suppose) displays the Empyrean. Thus Görres, Wagner and others. The crudest empirical fact with the formalism of “stuffs” and “poles,” trimmed with reasonless analogies and befuddled bright ideas.⁶³

Here, then, are two of the thinkers who have “subjected everything to the absolute Idea, which therefore seems to be cognized in everything, and to have matured into science discursively laid out.”

We have not yet finished with this paragraph, but it will be best to consider the rest of it in context with the next one.

16. This formalism is offered as absolute speculation. But it is just like the empiricist formalism which *refutes* speculation by appeal to the possibility of imagining a different order of things. Consigning everything to the Abyss of formal identity is just losing it in a dark night where all cows are black. We shall only escape formalism when we can show what absolute cognition is. So we will give a preliminary outline here.

The method of the pseudo-scientists who are attacked in paragraph 15 is to let the Absolute encompass all the finite science of the Understanding through a “shapeless repetition of One and the Same which is only externally applied to the varied mate-

rial.” This is a clear reference to the Identity-formula of Reinhold and Bardili; so the specialists in “oddities and curiosities” are categorized by Hegel as adherents of Bardili’s project for the “reduction of philosophy to logic.”⁶⁴ Hegel compares the reduction-programme to a bucket of paint and calls the result of “dipping every material in this resting element from outside” a “monochrome formalism.”

Reinhold and Bardili belong to the “party of Understanding” themselves. Hence it is quite legitimate for Hegel to compare this reduction of speculative idealism to formal logical identity with the directly opposite sceptical empiricism which appeals to the mere fact that we can imagine things otherwise as evidence that there cannot be a necessary structure in our experience. The great proponent of this view was the Hume who woke Kant from his “dogmatic slumber.” Against Hume’s view, the speculative defence was the doctrine of the absolute priority of the “productive imagination.”⁶⁵ But this defence itself can be turned into a *formalism*. Fichte had already employed it in that way, in his refusal to follow Schelling toward the philosophy of Identity.⁶⁶ Schelling, in his struggle towards an adequate philosophy of nature, was striving to resist and obviate this degenerative tendency. Schelling and Hegel had both of them “denounced and despised” the formalism of Reinhold and Bardili in the *Critical Journal*.⁶⁷ But the formalism which Schelling reprobated also in Kant and in classical mechanics⁶⁸ had arisen again in the new philosophy of nature.

The “dark night in which all the cows are black” is the *Urmahre* of Reinhold in which all empirical truth is lost to sight. The “monochromatic formalists” of natural philosophy are drowning what ought to be a “self-originating, self-differentiating wealth of shapes” (par. 15)—as we shall see them originate and differentiate themselves in the *Phenomenology*—in the dark night of the formal identity of “ $A = A$.”

It was a bold but perilous stroke on Hegel’s part to cite the proverb here, because several critics of Schelling’s Identity-Principle, the speculative $A = A$, had been making this joke against *him* for a number of years. If we can trust Schelling’s student and friend Henryk Steffens, it was Friedrich Schlegel who began it; but he confined his jibes to personal conversation.⁶⁹ The great ironist Jean Paul was the first to use the comparison in print. In his *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (1804), he wrote:

For what is the alleged construing in physics and philosophy but an ugly confusion of form and matter, of thinking and being, which never really transforms itself into that identity which is so easy to secure in the dark abyss of the Absolute. For in the night all differences are—black; but this is the proper night, not that of seeing men but of men born blind, which abolishes the antithesis between darkness and light in the higher equation of non-seeing.⁷⁰

Jean Paul was commenting on Schelling’s own use of the metaphor of “night.” In his *Bruno*, Schelling makes Bruno (“the man of the darkness”) say:

Recall then, that we do indeed posit absolute infinity first in that supreme unity, which we regard as the holy abyss from which everything emerges, and into which

everything returns. With respect to that supreme unity, the essence is also the form, and the form the essence; and the timelessly present and infinite finite is not opposed to this infinity, but strictly conformed to it, neither limited by nor limiting the infinity. We posit both as one thing . . . In this way the universe sleeps in an infinitely fruitful seed as it were, with the profusion of its shapes, the wealth of life and the fullness of its developments, endless in their temporal past and future, both endless for the finite, but here side by side unsundered, under one common cloak.⁷¹

This may have been what set Friedrich Schlegel's wit to work;⁷² in any case, we find Schelling trying to explain himself better in his very next publication:

The majority see nothing but empty Night in the essence of the Absolute, and cannot cognize anything in it; it disappears before their eyes, coinciding with a mere denial of distinction, and is a purely privative essence for them, and hence they cleverly make it into the end of their philosophy . . . so I will here show more definitely how that Night of the Absolute is transformed into Day for cognition.

Only in the form of all forms is the *positive* essence of the Absolute Unity cognized, but that the absolute form is embodied for us as the living idea of the Absolute, so that our cognition is in it, and it is itself in our cognition, and we can see as clearly in it, as we do in ourselves, and we behold everything in one light, in contrast to which every other, but especially our sensory cognition is the deepest darkness. . . . This eternal form equal to the Absolute itself is the Day, in which we comprehend that Night, and the marvels buried in it; this form is the light in which we cognize the Absolute clearly.⁷³

Jean Paul claimed, as we can see, that for the blind man the "absolute" difference between darkness and light is no difference at all; and about that Hegel agrees with him. But Hegel would never have taken up the quip of Friedrich Schlegel—whom he disliked—and used it in print against *Schelling's* Absolute Identity. The quip was aimed at Hegel himself as much as it was at Schelling. It was incumbent upon Hegel, therefore, to show that Schelling's defence was valid. The *Phenomenology* is his own attempt to show ostensibly that the "form" of the Absolute Identity is, indeed, "the light in which we cognize the Absolute clearly."

He does say here, however, that Schelling's own response is inadequate. Schelling himself has called the Absolute Identity both an "abyss" and a "form"; and Hegel here adds the claim that "the cognition of the absolute actuality" is not yet "completely clear about its own nature." As a pioneer, Schelling could not help being naïve. It was natural for him to speak of "the holy abyss from which everything comes forth, and to which everything returns."⁷⁴ But he cannot escape from that abyss himself, unless he can show us the way from the night of all finite cognition to the daylight of the clear cognition of the Absolute; and his tragic fate was to be surrounded by (and almost lost to sight among) formalist disciples who justified everything the critics said. It is small wonder that Schelling was bitter when Hegel made his own criticism by combining the words of the complaint with those of the response. But that is how the Spirit makes its appearance.

(f) Hegel's "General Picture" of the Phenomenology

17. *The Absolute is Subject* (as well as substance). Substance is already the identity of thought and being; but [Spinoza] was condemned as atheist because he submerged the self-conscious aspect. And the opposite view [Leibniz] is really the same substance-concept. Thirdly [the Identity Philosophy] sets out from the intuited unity of thought and being, but it is questionable whether it does not fall back into an inert substance theory.

It is clear enough that Hegel regards the *Phenomenology* as an essential part of the defence of "Science when it first begins," because he ends his first attack on "formalism" by announcing that the "general representation" of the "science of experience" which he is about to give will make the following attempt to expound that science easier to grasp. If his "Science" were not intended as the *remedy* for the formalism which has been regenerated in "the philosophy of the recent time" (i.e. by those who "formalize" the Identity Philosophy) it would have been more appropriate to begin paragraph 17 with this declaration. Instead, Hegel appends this comment to his first discussion of formalism and further notes that after this "general representation" the Preface will be devoted to "getting rid of some *forms*, whose customary use is a hindrance for philosophical cognition." His "Science of experience" is meant to be the remedy for "formalism" of *all* kinds. But the formalism reborn in the speculative tradition comes first; and the Preface returns to it as soon as the "general representation" has been offered.

Having given an "untrue outline" of his doctrine of the "true shape of truth," Hegel now proceeds to sketch the "true shape" itself in an untrue outline. The very first of the "customary forms" that will have to be disposed of is identified here at once. The assumption that the object of absolute cognition is an abiding *substance* is a mistake. "The Absolute is to be apprehended and expressed *not* as *Substance*, but just as much as *Subject*." Hegel's language is peculiar. He does *not* say "not *only* as Substance," but he does say "*just as much* as Subject."⁷⁵ As we shall eventually see, what this means is that the Absolute must *negate* itself absolutely as Substance in order to bring itself into existence as the self-conscious whole of the Spirit that is *just as much* Subject. The substantiality that is implied by the "just as much" is logically dependent on the subjectivity. The substance upon which subjectivity itself logically depends is the one that is *simply negated*. The present paragraph deals with the pre-Kantian forms of substance philosophy in which the necessity of that simple negation is not adequately grasped and not fully accepted.

First comes Spinoza. Since his one Substance is "cause of itself" and "God," it is implicitly a subject, but the accusation of atheism rested on "the instinct" that self-consciousness had only "gone under" in this concept—it was not properly preserved. This God has no "other" in whom he can recognize himself. Like the "Light-Essence" in chapter VII, he is not a "self" but a "Substance" in which "self-consciousness" or "the Subject" "merely vanishes."⁷⁶

Spinoza is easy to identify here, and we know how Jacobi's *Letters on the Teaching of Spinoza* brought Lessing's "dead dog" to life again in the philosophical dis-

cussion of Hegel's own time. But whose position is the "counterpart" that "holds fast thought as thought"? The formula "thought as thought" recurs continually in Bardili's *Outline of Primary Logic* and in Reinhold's *Contributions*.⁷⁷ But in their work, a *formula* is just what it is. They are formalists unworthy to be set against Spinoza. The philosopher who held fast to "thought as thought" was Leibniz. His is the philosophy of subjectivity as substantial. The world is a preestablished harmony of active monadic subjects, representing themselves truly to themselves. But all of them are created mirrors of the infinite, self-sufficient, and unchanging activity of God. Thus, in the end, we have the same "undifferentiated, unmoved substantiality" presented as a totality of self-cognitive *logical* activity. The identity of God with "extension," which was so shocking in Spinoza, is now mediated and downgraded from its position of equality with "thought," because (according to Leibniz) extension belongs only to our finite mode of representation. But Substance is not negated as a concept, so we still have a philosophy of *necessity* rather than of freedom.⁷⁸

The Identity Philosophy, which is certainly the *third* position referred to here, arose from a conscious effort to transcend this opposition and arrive at a true synthesis of Spinoza's "Substance" with the *Monadology* of Leibniz. But because of Schelling's reliance on intellectual intuition, the original primacy of Substance is not negated explicitly, as it should be. Intellectual intuition, which is a common theme or element in the whole tradition from Spinoza onwards, must be shown to be only a *moment* in the total process of subjectivity that *constitutes* Substance.

Hegel's own present effort is described here, by implication, as the genuine achievement of this goal. Spinoza *defined* intellectual intuition; Fichte showed that it cannot be objectively realized, but must be the goal of subjective striving; Schelling resolved this antinomy implicitly, and thus showed how intellectual intuition is achievable in principle; but only the *Phenomenology* will show how this achievement of the new post-Kantian rational speculation can avoid the fate of falling back into the "inert simplicity" of the dark night in which Fichte and Schelling are indistinguishable from Reinhold and Bardili.

In Fichte and Schelling this "intellectual intuition" remains a *postulate*. We lay claim to it, inasmuch as we *assert* that we are aware of living and moving in God. But this awareness is immediate; so it cannot successfully distinguish itself from the finite modes of immediate awareness. In the *Phenomenology*, this intellectual intuition finally presents itself to us as the "absolute knowing" which first *distinguishes itself* from all finite modes and then preserves its own distinct status by unfolding into the active thinking of the *Science of Logic*; and all the time, its identity with the *scientia intuitiva* first logically characterized by Spinoza remains apparent.⁷⁹

18. *What this is:* Living substance is self-actualizing, i.e., it sets itself up as *other* in order to know itself as subject. This *self-restoring* substantiality (passing through the simple negativity of subjective thinking) is *true* being—a circle that is only actual as self-produced.

If we think of the whole process as the *creative* self-constitution of the subjectivity that is substantial, then we can see how *freedom* is essential to the divine life, and consequently how finite selfhood, temporality, and history are necessary to the being that is intuited as logically eternal. The “absolute knowledge” that we are seeking is the intellectual intuition or “intuitive science” that the absolute substance has of itself as its own self-causing activity. This intuition must be absolutely negative of everything that is not itself, because it is self-*creative*, self-positing. It is not difficult, logically, to see why this “pure thinking” is called “simple negativity,” since this logical conceiving of the totality as “substance”—or what eternally *is*—is a *free* (or spontaneous) activity.

The “sameness” that perpetually restores itself is the sameness of *freedom*. The principle of identity as “self-restoring equivalence” is the watchword of Reinhold and Bardili in their “reduction of philosophy to logic.” But it is obvious that Hegel is referring to something more substantial (in every sense) than our capacity to generate logical tautologies *ex nihilo*. Neither Fichte’s self-positing Ego nor the Absolute Identity of Schelling properly satisfies Hegel’s definition of *das Wahre* here. The circular progress that removes the presupposed character of its beginning by returning to it as the final goal, the philosophy that is *in this sense* “presuppositionless,” is his own systematic thought. We should take careful note that the Preface is here instructing us to study the *Phenomenology* itself as a circle.⁸⁰

There are intimations of several fundamental themes of Hegel’s thought in this short paragraph. An exhaustive commentary would scarcely be possible and would certainly be largely superfluous, but a few points deserve to be noted. First, there is the distinctively Hegelian doctrine of double negation, which instead of returning us to our thesis (as it does in the familiar calculus of propositions) leads first to the establishment of a more comprehensive universe of discourse and then to the comprehension of that wider universe in a more general concept. This is here offered as the pattern of how Substance becomes self-conscious. Self-conscious Substance is the “necessity” of the negation of necessity by freedom. In this higher “necessity,” a *community* of free beings is posited. Substance being by definition the self-sufficient category, its advance to self-consciousness is necessarily a “doubling by division” (*Entzweiung*); and the higher category that we arrive at through the second negation is that of “self-recognition in the other.” The application of this logical procedure to the concept of “intellectual intuition” takes us from the God of Aristotle (or of Spinoza) to the Triune God of traditional Christian doctrine.

I have put this theological point first because Hegel begins to speak of “God” explicitly in the next paragraph. What is claimed in terms of logic, however, is that a self-thinking substance must necessarily be a community of rational equals within the natural order who recognize themselves in one another as a spiritual community that transcends that order. This is Hegel’s concept of “Spirit.” In the body of the book, we shall come to it rather sooner than we shall encounter the dogma of the Trinity.⁸¹ Here it is called *die Reflexion im Anderssein in sich selbst*, “the reflection within the otherness into [or within] itself.” The other-being arises from the first negation (not-me); that I am reflected into myself in it is the consciousness arising

from the negation of that negation. Thus, the “I that is We” or the “We that is I” is generated within the *total* or *universal* concept of “self recognition in the other.”

19. Divine knowledge is the interplay of divine love. But the loving must comprehend its own opposite, the suffering, patience and labor of human experience. Logically it is untroubled, but this peace is abstract. The form of its realization is as important as its logical essence (since it belongs *to* the essence).

It is very probable that Hegel has Spinoza's doctrine of the intellectual love of God in mind here (as the editors of the critical edition suggest). But Spinoza emphasizes that human participation in the divine love requires an effort of self-transcendence that is extremely strenuous.⁸² It would never occur to him to speak either of God or of the philosopher as *playing*. In 1807, the word *Spiel* would make every cultured reader think of Schiller. In his essay “On Grace and Dignity” (1793), Schiller spoke of “the *God* in us who plays with his own image in the world of the senses. Hence the mind (*Gemüth*) is melted (*aufgelöst*) in love.” That is the sort of edifying discourse which Hegel has in mind here.⁸³

Spinoza is the source of this concept of the divine life “*in itself*”; and we should remember that his God “is not affected by any joy or sadness.”⁸⁴ The intellectual intuition of Spinoza's pure (formless) *essence* is possible—indeed, it is the goal at which the *Phenomenology* terminates—but it is not the true goal even of the *Phenomenology*. The “essence” must not be severed from its “form,” because truth cannot be sundered from the whole movement by which it comes into being. The movement is circular, and the truth is properly the circle that it makes, rather than the moment when “intuition” becomes perfectly “intellectual” (which is the moment when the circle closes upon itself and becomes complete). Spinoza spoke of *scientia intuitiva*; Fichte and Schelling were bewitched by the intuitive character of this ideal.⁸⁵ Hegel's constructive doctrine of thought as double negation takes us from *Anschauung* to *Erkennen*, from intellectual intuition to science proper. The *Phenomenology* seeks to reach the moment of “all passion spent”—the moment when God's infinity “foams forth” in a “play of love with itself.” But that is just the point at which the thoughtful remembering of the long road of suffering and commitment, of love and hatred, of hard work and patient endurance—a remembering that must *linger* with all of the emotions and must work hard and patiently—finally becomes visible as the *science* of the experience of consciousness.

There are two other writers who are probably alluded to in this paragraph: Boehme and Hölderlin. The group of Boehme students among the natural philosophers and religious thinkers associated with the Identity Philosophy would hear the echo of Boehme's doctrine of the transition of God from the “dark center” to the “light center” through seven “qualities.” The life of God in the climactic phase is a *Liebesspiel* of these seven qualities.⁸⁶ Boehme is certainly not guilty of neglecting the “seriousness and suffering of the negative.” Hegel will praise him later for his “supreme and most strenuous effort” to “grasp evil in the Divine Being” (par. 777). But there is no room in Boehme's theological perspective for “the patience and the labor” of human self-conception in history.

Hölderlin's *Hyperion* portrays the "seriousness, suffering and labor" of the *human* negative. But it falls short of true "patience," and it can easily be read (or misread) as beginning from an ideal union with God (or Nature) in which there is no suffering and returning to a union in which the suffering and labor is drowned and forgotten. The ideal union is represented and embodied in Diotima; and when she restores Hyperion's sense of natural harmony at one point, he says to her: "I am become thy equal and divinity plays with divinity now, as children play with one another."⁸⁷

20. The true is the whole, the self-actualization of the essence. The Absolute is the end—result more truly than it is the beginning. Thus absolute cognition cannot be intuitive. Mediation is essential.

The first sentence of this paragraph is perhaps the most famous sentence in Hegel—although, like other tags that have become too familiar, it is often misquoted.⁸⁸ It is even more frequently misused or misunderstood. Much of the ink spilled on it has gone to waste. As I have tried to show by anticipating the doctrine of this paragraph in commenting upon paragraph 19, Hegel is trying to make a logical point about what it is that can properly be called "true," and about what it means to know something "truly" or to know that some claim is "true."

Of course, he is talking about "God" (who came upon our scene as "Substance" and who is now given his official philosophical designation as "the Absolute"). But he is only applying the general logical doctrine that he has been offering and illustrating from the beginning to this ultimate case.⁸⁹ The doctrine does not lose its many functional or relative applications simply because of this "absolute" one. Thus, there is a "truth" of anatomy, even though anatomy itself cannot give us the truth of life; and the "true" oak tree is the mature tree with ripe acorns on it, rather than the ripe acorn that is beginning to germinate in a suitable location. Yet even the mature tree is not "the whole" that is the proper object of science.

The *concept* "oak tree" is only scientifically satisfied by the *whole* of the cyclic process from the germinating acorn to the mature tree with acorns ready to fall—and, of course, the physical environment, the weather cycle, and ultimately the "free mechanism" of the Solar System are implicit in this whole. Hegel himself offers the example of "all animals" as opposed to the *true* science of "life"; and his real concern is to argue that we must go right through the "science of the experience of consciousness" to discover what "absolute knowledge" is. Even then, it is not the *final* intuition that is "true"—although it is closer to the truth than any initial definition. Only the whole *science* grasped from that climactic moment is "the true," properly speaking. All that Hegel is saying here is that what is "true" *cannot* be immediately intuited. The transition "even just to a sentence" *can* generate a "whole" that is true.⁹⁰

21. Mediation is the coming to be of immediacy. Reflection is a necessary moment of absolute knowing; it separates truth out as a "result," but it also completes the circle

of the true whole. Human Reason makes itself into what it is, and is then peacefully reconciled with its embryonic nature.

Far from advancing a view according to which all true knowledge involves participation in a beatific vision, Hegel is setting himself firmly against those who proclaim this mystical view of "Reason" and despise the finite efforts of the understanding. The circle of finite experience, which he wants to describe in this book, *unites* the immediacy of finite sense-experience with a new version of the beatific vision; for the "foaming of the chalice of spirits" is simply Dante's final vision of the Rose in Paradise stripped of its other-worldliness. Paragraph 21 makes clear both that the circle which is to be described is the circle of human *selfhood* and that the beatific vision is only properly achieved by achieving self-possession in the realm of the finite. What is important is the comparison of the beginning-point and the end-point of the circle.

The beginning is with the theoretical ego of "sense-certainty."⁹¹ This is something that can be described in Kantian terms as a "pure intuition"—or perhaps better as a "pure intuiting." For it is first the intuition of what Kant calls the "inner sense," the intuition of *time*; but it is not the intuition of time as a *form*, not the intuition of a pure succession modelled by the number series in arithmetic. It is the intuition of "real time" in its negative aspect, the intuition of *fleetingness*, of *passage*, of the perpetual flow of the present moment into the past. It is not the time that is spoken of comfortably as "an hour ago," "May 4th, 1982," or "time t , $t + 1$, etc.," but the time that Augustine finds so difficult to handle, the time that is so powerfully evoked in Orwell's *1984*, the anywhen that is nowhen, the "now" that is always "no longer."

The crucial point is that it is *out of our control*. When our experience is reduced to this, we have become *nothing* in a very obvious and ordinary sense. But the "nothing" that we consciously become is also our *freedom*.⁹² For it is out of this whirlpool of absolute helplessness that all of our control and organization of experience is born. Out of the inevitability of the flux of "becoming," we build our sane and stable world of *reflection*, beginning (logically) with "days" and "moons," with "1983" and " $t + 1$." Orwell's *1984* presents us with the awful suggestion that we can build a world that drowns us again in the whirlpool of "now"; but the science of experience looks to the goal of the "self-conscious freedom that is at rest in itself," because it *possesses* its world, not just as a fact but as a life-process, in the way that the scientific observer possesses the concept of the oak growing in her field.

22. We could express this by saying "Reason is purposive action." Teleology is a discredited Idea, but we need to recover the Aristotelian sense (the form that is the *end* because it is the beginning). The rational self-concept is a self-actualizing form.

The achievement of organized selfhood, self-possession as a rational being in a rational world, is a *purposive* activity. At the level of Hegel's scientifically "enlightened" culture, in which men are manipulating the natural world—and women and

children, too, have begun to be herded into factories to operate machinery driven by the harnessed energies of nature—this is obvious enough. The wind or water mill, the stationary steam engine, and the spinning jenny are purposive (*zweckmässig*)—not to speak of the microchip or the ICBM. But these products of reflection are examples of external teleology, or of a purpose imposed on nature by an external intelligence. *Self*-making is not like this. If the whole process of experience is to be viewed as a circle that goes through this moment in order to return to the possession of a self that was always “implicit” (always naturally there and able to live in harmony with its world), then the crucial meaning of the proposition, “Reason is *zweckmässiges Thun*,” is that the natural life, the life of the unselfconscious Substance (of which our first awareness is the cycle of day and night, which gives us our first way of organizing the primitive flux of sensation) is itself a purposive activity. This is the principle of *internal* teleology which is such a noteworthy feature of Aristotle’s natural philosophy—although he was certainly not the first to formulate the concept in the Western tradition.

But if we are asked to affirm, with Aristotle, that all spontaneous motion, all self-moving, is purposive, we refuse to do it. The most convinced present-day disciple of Aristotle will concede (at least) that to maintain that fire or smoke rises and stones fall because they are seeking their proper “place” would be rather comical.

When Hegel argues that the metaphysical desuetude of the concept of *external* teleology must not be allowed to deprive us of the Aristotelian concept, he is not affirming any such absurdity as that. His clear assertion that external teleology is now discredited carries the important implication that there is no Newtonian Clockmaker or Clock-Regulator, and his own philosophy of Nature was Aristotelian. But Hegel’s God is Aristotle’s God only after he has undergone his Incarnation in his human family. The process of double negation here lifts us right out of the context of natural philosophy within which both the Aristotelian and the Newtonian views were embraced.

The proposition “Reason is purposive activity” states what is logically implicit in the project of self-comprehension. We can only liberate ourselves from the flux of sense-immediacy because we primitively (or naturally or implicitly) *are* the project of self-comprehension. Whatever may be “true” about the “big bang” (or the ultimate nature of matter and/or energy), Aristotle (not Newton) was right about organic nature. All organisms have the *goal* of self-preservation—a fact that Kant acknowledged by calling the organism a *Naturzweck* (natural end or purpose). But the human goal of self-comprehension demonstrates its existence by negating this purpose, by being ready to sacrifice organic existence for the sake of a freedom that is higher altogether.⁹³

In this paragraph about Newton and Aristotle we have the key to the mystery of why the phenomenology of self-consciousness begins with the life-and-death struggle. The “purpose” of Nature is *only* the maintenance of equilibrium; for the rational organism, this is the *negation* of its own purpose, because (for the singular organism) the equilibrium of nature is just the peace of death. In the self-preservation of the species, the living thing must die. The goal of Reason as spirit is to

recover (or “return” to) the equilibrium of nature in a higher sense—to achieve the “immortality” of self-consciousness.

23. The propositions of our religious tradition assert that the Absolute *is* subject, because “God” is a subject-name. That is how they are advances over “Being is.” But the movement of our cognition is thus determined as external to what is known, so that the substantial being *cannot* become a real subject.

In paragraph 23, his Hegel develops the claim (made in par. 17) that the Absolute cannot be successfully conceived by “the opposite view which clings to thought as thought.” He is now dealing with the God of the post-Kantian idealists, not with the “thinking substance” of Descartes and Leibniz. His argument is that until this God acts and moves, it is *nothing*. There is only an empty name which serves as a marker to establish a “fixed point” upon which the movement of our knowledge (as an *external* reflection) hangs meaningful predicates.⁹⁴

To assist us in identifying the sources of Hegel's paradigm propositions about God, Bonsiepen and Heede have pointed to the prominence of the proposition “God is the Eternal” in writers such as Görres and J. J. Wagner; to Fichte's identification of God with the moral world-order in the essay that occasioned the *Atheismusstreit*; and to the same writer's exposition of God as love in the newly published *Way to the Blessed Life*.⁹⁵ Certainly, they are right to put the “Moral World-Order” first, for this is the only one of their references that Hegel certainly intends us to identify.

As for “the Eternal,” even Andrew Jackson's proverbial predilection for the oath “By the ‘tarnal!” is more relevant to Hegel's use of the example than the pious outpourings of such *Kuhpockenzeitälterchen* as Görres and Wagner.⁹⁶ In the body of Hegel's text, “the Eternal” appears as *das Unwandelbare*, “the Unchangeable” (see pars. 208–228); it refers especially to the Judaic “intuition” of God as the eternal subject. The crucial text is in the gospel of John, where Jesus comes near to being stoned for saying, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”⁹⁷ Similarly, the assertion “God is Love” directs us instantly not to Fichte, but to John's assertion (I John 4:8): “He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God *is* love.” Between these two New Testament definitions, Hegel has inserted the Fichtean “moral world-order.” This anticipates the evolution of Christian consciousness in his text, from the Unhappy Consciousness, through the dialectic of rational enlightenment to the Moral World-View, and from there to the spirit of Christian charity (see par. 671).

“God” is the name of the Absolute as *subject*. Spinoza came too close to “speaking as the ancients did.” His “God or Nature” is the “Being” of Parmenides' poem, or the “One” of Plato's *Parmenides*. The Christian theological tradition, logically organized in the three stages indicated (Eternal Law, Moral Order, Love), represents a great advance over the *objective* logic of the ancients. But the subjective theology of Christianity is quite without logical development. How unchangeability, justice, and mercy can all pertain to a “fixed point” of subjectivity remains

a mystery. In the Epistle to the Romans (7:9 and 8:2) the identity is *presented* as a moving sequence: "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died . . . the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." But when Kant strips the form of presentation away and tries to read the riddle in its purely conceptual significance, the eternal God in whom the law of nature, the law of justice, and the mercy of love are all harmonious becomes unintelligible, because no developmental sequence is conceivable in the *eternal* subject.

Somehow, Paul is right (and Hegel intends to show us how), but "in the way (*Art*) in which this movement [of our knowledge] is constituted (*beschaffen*), the movement cannot belong to the subject." The assumption that the absolute subject is a *fixed point* is therefore mistaken, and the theology of this type of Eternal (or "Unchangeable") Being is only "anticipation." Far from being the effective realization of the concept of the Absolute as subject, it makes the concept impossible, because development and movement can only belong to our external reflection upon it. Subjectivity, as self-movement, belongs to human selfhood; hence it is only through the Incarnation that the Absolute can properly become "Subject."

24. It follows that *Wissen* is only actual as *Wissenschaft*. Any first principle contains its own refutation which should be developed *from* it. This kind of refutation is a positive advance because it develops the principle. Genuine development is a negative procedure, and genuine refutation is progressive. The principle is *only* the beginning.

From this criticism of our ordinary religious consciousness, and of both the traditional theology of external reflection and the latest mysticism of intellectual intuition, Hegel draws the conclusion that he has already stated as his first principle (par. 5). Thus, even in his initial sketch, he claims to have made a circle already; and we can see why he needs to make this claim, for he now argues that "a so-called basic proposition or principle, if it is true, is thereby already false too, just because it is the basic proposition or principle." He does not want this dialectical falsity to afflict his own "basic proposition." We are bound to admit, however, that it is much easier to see how the dialectical conclusion about truth and falsity follows from what he has said than to see how his initial assertion can be derived from it.⁹⁸ The desired conclusion seems to follow only in virtue of a postulate that there *is* absolute truth (or absolute knowledge).

But paragraph 23 has shown us that knowledge of God as the absolute subject cannot be actualized in a simple subject-predicate proposition. Real subjectivity cannot be a fixed point (like the grammatical subject of a consistently understandable proposition), because subjectivity is a process of *self-constitution* which starts from "pure becoming" or the consciousness of negativity (or flux). Hence, it does follow from the proposition "The True is Subject (as much as it is Substance)" (par. 17) that "knowledge is only possible as a scientific system"; and it is still only a postulate that there is absolute knowledge, since that proposition was advanced dogmatically.

Moreover, the dialectical character of this proposition (the fact that *if* it is true it is *ipso facto* false as well) is evident upon its face.⁹⁹ But when we consider the three propositions about God which are used to overthrow the propositional concept of the “subject,” we can see at once that the *dogma* is not simply Hegel’s own personal insight. These three propositions spell out the evolution of our religious experience in its essential moments. Historically, our God appeared first as “the Eternal” (Substance, the Law); then he appeared as Love (Subject, the Spirit); and finally he has appeared as the “moral world-order” (the rational community). It is this last appearance that has made the contradiction of substance and subject *explicit*. In the systematic exposition the three terms must be put in their logical order (the order in which Hegel gives them from the first). The eternal substantiality of God must be shown to be the *beginning* of the truth that is fulfilled in his loving subjectivity, and the middle term is the recognition that absolute subjectivity itself is not singular but communal.¹⁰⁰

(g) “Spirit” as Science

25. That the True is actual only as a developed system is what “The Absolute is Spirit” asserts. Hence our religion says “God is Spirit.” Spirit is the substance that becomes self-conscious subject for itself (not just in our view of it). We *observe* the self-generation of content that is spiritual being. But when the self-generating process knows itself it is the *Begriff* developed into *Wissenschaft*.

Hegel confirms our reading of how the conclusion that knowledge is actual only as system *follows* from his argument by *uniting* it with the proposition about God which he wants to assert as fundamental. But instead of calling this position a *Satz* (proposition) he calls it a *Vorstellung* (imaginative presentation). He wants us to regard it not as a dogma of propositional theology, but as a metaphor from our religious experience. Bonsiepen and Heede are right, therefore, to refer us to John 4:24: “God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” But Hegel’s curious formula “in der Vorstellung welche das Absolute als *Geist* ausspricht” (“in the presentation that expresses the Absolute as *Spirit*”) actually points to the Spirit as the complete and final “uttering” of the Logos. We should think, therefore, of the moment when Jesus promised that the Father would send “the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, in my name” (John 14:26); and, above all, we should think of the fulfillment of that promise at the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–12).

This is the *Aussprechung* that turns the *Vorstellung* into the “most sublime concept.” It is as “the spirit” that the Absolute is actual (*wirklich*). The religious *Vorstellung* comes to its conceptual actualization slowly. When Jesus (who asserts his own identity with the Father several times in John) promises the coming of the Holy Spirit in his place, the Trinitarian concept of God is fulfilled in principle. But this God who descends at Pentecost is a “being in and for himself” who exists as an object of consciousness. He comes from outside, from above.

This objective existence is that of the absolute substance. The disciples assembled at Pentecost do not experience their identity with God in the way that Jesus did. For the Church, the Spirit continues to operate in history as a *transcendent* power. But as such it is not truly spirit. For we have to admit that it is “for itself” (as the communing of Father and Son) only “for us” (i.e., in our imagination); it is not yet “for itself” on its own account, for it does not recognize itself in us, and we do not recognize ourselves in it. Its being as a subject is in Heaven—that is, it is a *projection* that we make on the basis of our recognition of the spirit in history (which is where “its spiritual content is generated through itself”). Thus, we recognize it as a *substance* (*causa sui*), but its subjectivity remains a transcendent postulate until the appearing of the spirit in history becomes at last its appearing *to itself*.

This happens when we finally recognize that real time, the element of our self-constitution, is the “pure concept,” the objective element of the *Dasein* of the Spirit. Our comprehension of this is the Spirit’s recognition of itself. Thus, when philosophy (the *love* of wisdom) becomes “science,” the Spirit knows itself as Spirit, for we finite spirits, as logical scientists, have now achieved self-cognition in it in the way that Jesus claimed to know and be known in and by “the Father.”¹⁰¹

Only a community of knowers can constitute the presence of the Spirit to itself as science. The identity of Jesus with the Father was not “science,” because Jesus was mortal. Thus, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (as “science of the experience of consciousness”) is the explication of how the three seemingly disparate theses (that truth is actual only as system, that the substance is essentially subject, and that the Absolute is Spirit) are really one and the same.

Because of Hegel’s own reference to the *Vorstellung* of God as Spirit in our religious tradition, I began by explicating his argument in terms of the evolution of Trinitarian dogma. But Hegel’s declared topic is *scientific* cognition. His main concern is with the transition from the religious mode of experience to the philosophical (or rational) conceptualization of the same. In the “scientific” terminology of the rationalist tradition to which he adheres, this is the transition from *imaginatio* to *ratio*. Because this transition has to be made in the universal consciousness of the community, however, the *Phenomenology* is rather more concerned with the history of religious experience (and less concerned with the history of philosophy) than is often assumed. If the composition of chapter VIII had not been so hurried, the balance might have been adjusted somewhat. For it is only there that “scientific cognition” really comes into its own.

26. *The element of Wissen* is self-cognition in otherness. This conceptual soil is the *substance* of spirit. So Science presupposes that we self-consciously exist in this element; but we have a good right to ask for the ladder by which to get into heaven where it is. Self-consciousness is first the certainty of existence as an atomic centre—quite opposite to the scientific consciousness of the identity of self and world. Everything is inverted in the scientific view of it. But for the ordinary consciousness its self-certainty is actuality. So unless Science can actualize itself in that certainty, it will remain a “substance” in the Beyond.

In claiming identity with “the Father,” Jesus achieved “pure self-cognition in absolute otherness” through an intuitive leap. “I and the Father are one,” he said; “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Almost, he was stoned for it, when he used the Father’s own words. Yet the name “Father” implies the possibility of this leap, and from 1797 onwards Hegel was explicating the religious experience of “love” as the actuality of it.¹⁰² For several years, he expounded religion philosophically as the highest mode of human experience because he regarded the intuitive leap to the awareness of living, moving, and having one’s being in God as the *sine qua non* of all speculative insight.¹⁰³

In ordinary consciousness, theoretical awareness is for the sake of practical control. The “antithesis” between consciousness and its objects arises from the concern with controlling or being controlled; no matter how much “self-control” we have, or how much control we are consequently able to exercise over our environment, what we desire and what we fear *controls us*. “Science” transcends this relationship; it *inverts* control into *freedom*. When Jesus claimed identity with “the Father” (who created everything and has *absolute* control), he was not claiming to *control* anything. He was not claiming even to control his own thinking, to be the divine architect of his conceptual world. Rather, he was adopting a noncontrolling attitude towards experience; and in so doing he ceased to be controlled by it in any practical sense.

I have used the example of Jesus because Hegel introduces his theory of “science” in the context of the Christian *Vorstellung* of God as “Spirit,” and because it was through long meditation upon Greek religion, and upon the experience of the religious “founders” Moses and Jesus, that Hegel’s concept of philosophic science was shaped. But from about the middle of 1803 onwards, he had begun to believe that the leap could be replaced by a ladder of explanatory discourse. The opacity of ordinary worldly experience can gradually be transformed into the *transparency* of conceptual cognition; this intellectual transparency corresponds directly to the physical *aether* that “posits itself” as the antitheses of light and darkness, of gravitational force and inertia. When Hegel calls “pure self-cognition in absolute otherness” the “aether” of science, he is not using a metaphor, but only stating his fundamental position in objective or natural terms.

The physical aether is, in principle, quite unavailable to the senses; it is a purely conceptual entity with a strictly theoretical status and function.¹⁰⁴ The *experience* of it is an intellectual one. We formulate the concept as the fundamental explanatory frame of our physical science on the model of our experience of pure thought, the activity of intellectual construction itself. Similarly, Hegel’s concept of “Spirit” is the intellectual frame for his theory of what that intellectual activity is and how it is possible. It is axiomatic, therefore, that all attempts at scientific thinking must go on within this frame; but equally it is a necessary truth that we cannot be scientifically conscious of the frame as such until our attempt at scientific thought has achieved at least the methodological success of our realizing just what we are trying to do, and understanding that our effort at pure theory-construction is quite distinct from the *practical* processes of sense awareness which guide and aid us in our struggle for survival as living organisms.

The “standpoint of consciousness” is, primitively, our reflective awareness of our biological situation (with its unending cycle of need and satisfaction, of temporary bondage and temporary liberation). But our “natural consciousness” is not a “biological” consciousness (or “state of nature”); Hegel’s educated readers have gone through the whole process of *Bildung* except for the final inversion of “educated common sense” from its practical orientation to the contemplative orientation of “Science” proper. First, then, the process of *Bildung* itself must be adequately “recollected”; after that the “standpoint of Science” will invert the essentially instrumental relationship of the observer with her world. For “Science,” it is the conceptual structure of experience that is permanent and hence “real”; the content is subjective and transient.¹⁰⁵

From this point onwards Hegel’s discussion in the Preface moves out of the religious context. Only as we approach the end of the Preface does he return to the topic of God’s status as a “subject” (par. 62). For the present, the focal problem becomes that of making the scientific intellect self-conscious. The one echo of the Christian religious problem in paragraph 26 is the reference to the aether of pure scientific thought as a *jenseitige Ferne* (“a remote beyond”) in which consciousness no longer possesses itself. Jesus preached the coming of a Kingdom which is “within.” But even before he died, the Kingdom was “far off” for his hearers; and it has never ceased to be so.

The heaven of science, by contrast, is nowhere but here, and the entry into it cannot involve any loss of self, because it is the realm of pure self-cognition. It is precisely the “element of self-certainty”—the subjectivity that *takes itself to be a fixed point* and inverts the logic of conceptual understanding in order to manage its *external* world—that is to be transformed into the “aether” of Science, the absolute continuity in which there are no fixed points. The transformation can happen only because all theoretical awareness (however formal and abstract) is essentially just this continuity; and the fixing of points only reveals the *independence* of the self-conscious subject. This independence is the first appearance of the unself-conscious freedom that is the goal of spiritual self-consciousness.

To ask this self-asserting, self-distinguishing point to recognize itself in the continuum is like asking it to walk on its head. Indeed, that is literally what the natural consciousness is being asked to do, for what is required of it is that it should *think out* why it is structured the way it is and reflect upon its own reflective character. Here again, Hegel has picked up one of the jibes of the Jena tea tables about the idealist philosophy, and made it into a banner for his own enterprise, because it expresses exactly what logical science requires natural consciousness to do.¹⁰⁶ From the achieved standpoint of logical science, the world of reflective consciousness is an *inverted* world. Scientific consciousness turns it back the right way up (so that it has the conceptual structure of human theoretical consciousness as its foundation instead of being merely an instrumental imposition upon the biological life and the organic environment that is naturally given). This “inversion of inversion” is another way of expressing the speculative theory of thinking as double negation.

The most important point of all is that “Science” should not be identified with the “standpoint of Science.” Both of the “standpoints” (that of the natural consciousness as well as that of “Science”) are part of Science, which is itself the process of *converting* the natural consciousness to its own standpoint. The construction of the ladder is at least the first part of science.

Science is the *absolute* self-consciousness, the absolute transparency of experience to itself. We have already claimed dogmatically that this is “pure self-cognition in absolute otherness.” But let the key to absolute self-consciousness be what it may, when we set the achievement of self-conscious substantiality (or “transfigured essentiality”) as our goal, we implicitly concede the right of the self-conscious individual to stand by whatever *Wissen* she has (or takes herself to have). Individuality, the subjectivity that asserts itself as a fixed point, is the absolute form of all *Wissen*. This is still true in the philosophic consciousness of “absolute knowing.” The *certainty* that one knows something is “unconditioned being.”¹⁰⁷ In constructing the ladder, the logical scientist performs the conscientious duty of recognizing the right of self-conscious subjectivity in all of its shapes. He takes the shapes and arrays them as a series of steps in which the transitions are logically mediated. That is to say, there are valid reasons for every step, even though the transition is not *compulsory* for anyone except another logician interested in forming a consistent concept of how objective reality—the self-causing substance—can be conceived as self-consciousness. The ladder is supplied *for a natural self-consciousness that wants to understand what logical science is*; logical science itself does not exist properly (or as a consistent mode of self-consciousness) until it can provide the ladder for all who truly want it. “Wanting to know” is what distinguishes “phenomenal knowing” from “natural consciousness” (which obeys the urge of self-preservation).¹⁰⁸

27. *Elevation into this element is the Phenomenology of Spirit*—the first part of the System of Science. The immediate phase is sense-knowledge (sub-spiritual). The rest of the path is a long journey that will be quite different from any of the current “introductions to philosophy.”

“This coming to be of *Science as such* (or of *knowledge*) is what this *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as the first part of the system of science, sets forth.” In the revision of 1831, Hegel deleted the remark that the *Phenomenology* is the first part of the “System of Science.” By then, he had been teaching “the *Encyclopedia* of the philosophical sciences” for years in *three* parts: Logic, Philosophy of Nature, Philosophy of Spirit. In the second edition of his *Encyclopedia* (1827), he began with a brief review of the history of thought under three headings. First he examined the degeneration of naïve speculation into dogmatic metaphysics; then the elevation of empiricism into critical philosophy; and finally the cult of immediate knowledge (especially in Jacobi and Schleiermacher). In his final review, he reverses the course of his discussion and returns from immediate knowledge to the lost speculative standpoint. In 1831, when he deleted the claim that the *Phenomenology* is the “first

part of science," he clearly meant to defend the position that the Berlin *Encyclopedia* is a self-sufficient whole.

Yet in the *Encyclopedia* itself, he admits that his introductory review is inadequate. He remarks that its "merely historical and argumentative [*räsonnierend*]" procedure is a serious fault, and he specifically refers to the publication of the *Phenomenology* as "the first part of the system of science."¹⁰⁹ He points to the difficulties that arise from the project of letting immediate consciousness develop to the standpoint of philosophical science, and especially to the facts that we cannot follow the development in its logical abstraction and that we must deal with a great deal of concrete content that belongs *systematically* to the encyclopedic science of spirit. For this reason, the exposition of the *Phenomenology* is more complicated than that of the logic itself (so that it can hardly be recommended as a *pedagogical* introduction for the latter).

The implication that the *Phenomenology* remains an adequate account of what philosophy is, and even that the "science of consciousness" is a genuine philosophical science, is clear. Why else should Hegel refer to the book in this way? It was no longer widely known or read, and if he had decided by 1827 that the project was in some way mistaken, he could easily have said so, thus saving those of his hearers whose enthusiasm led them to acquire and study his earlier book from falling into a highly plausible misconception. Instead, he both apologized for the inevitable faults of a more elementary kind of introduction and planned to reprint this first book, without the claim that it is the first part of science, but with the still explicit declaration that it is the *proper* introduction to philosophy.¹¹⁰

In the present paragraph, Hegel emphasizes the crucial transition from sense experience to thinking consciousness, and he warns us that with this dawning of self-consciousness there is still a long and laborious way to travel. In his Introduction to the work (par. 77) and in the announcement, he calls the stages of this laborious journey of the Spirit (in history) "stations." The fact that the *Phenomenology* closes with "the Calvary of the absolute spirit" puts it beyond doubt that he has the "stations of the Cross" in mind. He might well have underlined the difference between his work and other current introductions to philosophy by comparing it with the devotional treatises of the scholastic tradition (such as Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God*). Since he had already given his first course on the history of philosophy, he probably knew a little about these works; but I suppose he did not want his book regarded as a devotional work—or at least not as a devotional work of any traditional type.¹¹¹

What other introductions to philosophy Hegel had in mind we cannot (for the most part) be certain. The "founding of Science" (*Begründung der Wissenschaft*) was a concern of Reinhold's, and readers of the *Difference* essay would recognize here a hit both at him and at Bardili's *Outline of Primary Logic*.¹¹² But many of the Kantian epigones were preoccupied with the same project; and Hegel (who certainly did not imagine that all potential readers of this book would have read his earlier essays) meant his readers to think of any and all of them. As for the "conducting" (*Anleitung*) of the unscientific consciousness to science," the most promi-

nent author of this kind of introduction was Fichte. The *Vocation of Man* aims to "attract and excite the reader, and rip him out of sensibility into the supersensible."¹¹³ The "Sunclear Report" provides the reader "not any single *philosophical concept* . . . but a *concept of philosophy*." The reader does "not set foot outside the territory of ordinary common sense, onto the soil of philosophy, but he has arrived at the common boundary of the two."¹¹⁴

The most interesting question concerns who it is who begins without *any* introduction and shoots absolute knowledge out of a pistol. Fackenheim thinks that the reference is to the first promulgation of the Identity Philosophy in Schelling's *Darstellung meines Systems* of 1801. This is certainly a most plausible hypothesis.¹¹⁵ "Science at its first beginning" (par. 14) does not know how to present itself in relation to the ordinary commonsense consciousness. The *Phenomenology* is intended to meet this need.

It is clear that Hegel was troubled by the problem of *introducing* the Absolute from 1801 onwards, and this was the problem of his new "logic" from the first (as distinct from the "metaphysics" of the Identity Philosophy).¹¹⁶ The *Phenomenology* is the final outcome of a long struggle with the two problems (originally quite distinct) of how to make the transition from Kant's "critical logic" to "intellectual intuition," and how to display the "biography of God" in the history of human religious experience. In the *Phenomenology*—after the birth of Spirit proper through the initial transition from sense to intellect—these two problems coincide. The "biography of God" is the content, and the logical transition is the form that works itself out "behind the back" of the evolving religious consciousness. If this view is right, then the conceptual evolution of Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* may perhaps have been the model for Hegel's "critical logic." He probably brought the great topic of the "biography of God" with him to Jena. But it was not alien to Schelling's own concerns, for we can see it clearly in the essay on the "Relation of Nature-Philosophy to Philosophy."¹¹⁷

28. The problem has to be approached as a universal one. We must consider the *Bildung* of the *Weltgeist*. Here every stage is realized as a concrete whole. At each successive period, culture is at a definite stage (past heritage and future goal are blurred). Earlier dominant moments remain in the later picture like an underpainting. Personal *Bildung* runs through this evolution of culture, only in silhouette (hard labor can become a children's game). Education is just the appropriation of the historical reality that the universal spirit has painfully achieved; and this is just how the substance itself becomes self-conscious.¹¹⁸

Since his science presupposes a great historical process as the condition of its possibility, Hegel is bound to compare the way things happen in history with the way they are grasped in science. But also, since the historical process has produced a consciousness that is ready for science but does not have it, Hegel must compare the way things have historically come to be with the way they are comprehended in the ordinary consciousness; and, finally, he must compare the two comprehensions. The referential ambiguity of the word *Geist* makes this paragraph hard to

follow; but the main argument is clear enough. The primary topic is the formation of the scientific consciousness of the *universal* individual, that is, of the *Weltgeist*.¹¹⁹ The main division here is into the two *particular* forms: the uncultured and the cultured. But since cultural formation is a process, this is a relative division.

The universal individual goes through all the phases of the process; hence, if we make a section in the process at an appropriate point, we shall have a *particular* world-individuality: “a concrete shape to which the whole *Dasein* of one determinacy falls as its lot.”¹²⁰ Every stage, dominated in this way by one defining moment of the evolution towards fully scientific self-awareness, carries the less developed stages that constitute its own past within it in vestigial forms. The earlier concrete shape is now “veiled”¹²¹ and is present as a “simple shading” (*einfache Schattierung*—it is perhaps best to think of the *underpainting* of a completed picture).

Hegel compares the that way each cultural stage possesses its own past to the way in which someone beginning to study the calculus, for example, must continually call to mind things learned long before in elementary algebra. That $(x + y)^2$ is $x^2 + 2xy + y^2$, while $x^2 - y^2$ is $(x + y)(x - y)$ are part of the mathematician’s *automatic* consciousness now, for if they are to serve as ready instruments, forms that can be recognized in (or applied to) complex formulas and cases, they have to be automatic responses in themselves. But when the student was learning them, they were exciting, and she had to linger over them. Otherwise, they would never have become automatic, and the calculus would remain beyond her grasp (as it is, for the most part, beyond mine).

This comparison mediates the transition to the level of singular consciousness. What the community has gone through and made automatic for itself we as mortal individuals can largely acquire without effort. The road is now all graded and level. In his own educational theory and practice, Hegel was generally more Roman, more discipline-conscious, more apt to emphasize drill, and to say that sparing the rod was spoiling the child. But here he is more Greek and does better justice to Plato and to Schiller. Children need drills (*Übungen*); but they soak up the fruit of experience (*Kenntnisse*) like sponges; and even the drills can lead to, or can become, *games*. The prior education of a good philosophy student—one who will be able to appropriate the “Science of experience”—cannot even be compared with an underpainting; it is only a *silhouette*.¹²²

Finally, this easing of the process of history for the singular consciousness, this acquiring of our own ethical substance, not brush stroke by pondered (and ponderous) brush stroke, but like the simple drawing of a silhouette (which one can then fill in or decorate for oneself as one pleases), is the *means* for the crucial advance of the social whole from substance to subject. It is the educated individual who can see and say what has happened generally and what is now happening specifically to her; and the lingering process of recollecting the historical experience of the World-Spirit, thereby appropriating and taking possession of one’s own social substance, is *identical* with the coming to reflective self-consciousness of the “Substance” as the “Universal Spirit.”¹²³

(h) *Scientific Recollection*

29. Phenomenological Science lingers over each moment of the path of development in order to achieve insight into what knowing is. All the stages have only to be remembered not achieved. But the conversion of the recollected-in-itself into being-for-self must be described.

Unlike ordinary education, with its easy assimilation of painful cultural achievements, phenomenological Science must not only display the “shaping” of what has sunk into being the “property” of the mature culture as a distinct moment in its development; it must also display the movement of culture through which this transformation happened; and it must display it “in its full detail and necessity.” Everything must be *lingered over*—studied and appreciated in the way that we lingered over the factoring of $x^2 - y^2$ when we first learned it in algebra. None of the earlier steps can be employed as automatically as we can substitute $(x + y)(x - y)$ when we meet “ $x^2 - y^2$ ” in more advanced problems. The philosophical phenomenologist must experience the *Bildung* of the *Weltgeist* in the way that an artist copies a painting, not in the way that someone makes a silhouette to send to a faraway friend.

The copying student in an art gallery is not Rembrandt, but she does have to value the underpainting, to linger with it patiently as the artist did. Hegel says that since the “*Weltgeist* as Substance has had the patience . . . to undertake the monstrous labor of world history . . . the individual can certainly not grasp its own substance with less.” This is an odd statement in two ways. First, it asks for what is *physically* impossible, if we take “the individual” to be the human philosopher. For no matter how patient she is willing to be, nature does not grant her enough time to equal the monstrous labor of the world-spirit as substance.

One could infer from this that Hegel only means, on the one hand, that the philosophical observer must be as patient and determined *as possible*, and on the other hand, that her work is never complete. There is always room for a more careful, more insightful interpretation of our historical experience. This is true enough, and I am sure that Hegel would not deny it. There is even a sense in which he certainly means to assert it (for it is a consequence of his view that every age needs its own philosophical comprehension).

But it is doubtful that he means to assert it here, since the second paradox about his statement is that *logically* it is a tautology. The labor of the world-spirit makes the substance of the world-spirit, and it is only conceivable as *labor* because the goal of “substance” is to comprehend itself, to be “subject.” Thus, the labor of the “substance” must by definition equal the labor of the “subject.” It is on this equality that their identity is based. In any phase of its evolution, *the World-Spirit is what it knows itself to be*. “The individual” is the self-conscious expression of that knowledge.¹²⁴

I followed the structure of the German and called the individual “it” in translating Hegel’s assertion (about “it grasping its substance”) above, because, in the

evolution of this self-knowing substance, we find first a knowledge that belongs indifferently to everyone; then a knowledge (and a corresponding ignorance) that belongs to all free men and, inversely, to their womenfolk; and finally a knowledge that belongs both indifferently to everyone (as religious consciousness) and specifically to someone (but without distinction of sex) as philosophy. In this final state what the someone knows must correspond to what everyone knows, in the sense of being recognizable by everyone who is willing and able to make the effort. It is for *everyone in that category* that the phenomenological ladder is needed.

From this logical identity we can infer the empirical sense in which the labor of the philosopher (as world-subject) must equal that of the *Weltgeist* as “substance.” The identity of the philosophy expounded with the universal religion will be apparent to everyone in the relevant category if the ladder constructed embraces everything in the *communal memory* fairly. Hegel is not required to know more history, or better history, than his educated contemporaries; he is not required to linger over improving the factual content or deepening the appreciation that his own time has of any previous time. His task is to set what everyone knows about the history of our culture—or what every educated person agrees that one ought to know—into an order that reveals its philosophical significance *for us*.¹²⁵

By our standards—or, in other words, by this same standard as it applies to the comprehension of our time—Hegel’s knowledge of Asian culture was extremely deficient. But in the *Phenomenology*, he does not make any use of what he knows (or believes) about any culture east of Iran.¹²⁶ The interaction of the Greeks with the Persians (and of the Israelites with the Egyptians) is an important part of *our* cultural heritage; but Master Kung, Lao Tze, the Vedas, the Buddha, and the Bhagavad Gita did not affect the evolution of Christian culture before it came to philosophical self-possession.

We shall find that it is quite possible to differ from Hegel’s evaluations. Usually, this only shows that he has “lingered” over his data effectively enough to make us linger likewise. To find matters over which he has not lingered, but which would seriously affect the logical evolution that is proceeding behind the scenes, *may* be possible. But until we ourselves have lingered long enough over what he offers us to appreciate properly what he was trying to do, that question cannot be decided.

For the moment, at least, we can leave criticisms of that kind aside. We need only to consider the respect in which the task of lingering with the historical record is different from that of our earlier education. Someone had to *write* the history that we learned in school (or in private reading). What was there originally as a world of events (*das Dasein*) had to be transformed into the *Ansichsein* of conscious memory. What we have learned is in our minds as an *Ansich*. We can remember it when we need it, because we have read it. But now we want to make it “be for us”; and this “being for us” is not the reenactment that we can (perhaps) perform when we read our books—or which film-makers can perform for us (at least in a fragmentary way). We want to *take possession* of our history in its full conceptual significance, to know what it really meant—that is, to know how it has made us into what we are, in the world that we actually inhabit. There are several stages in this

“appropriation,” and the initial ones must actually have been completed by those who wrote the history that we learned, which we now have as an *Ansich* in our memory. Knowing what happened in history is quite different from making it. For this reason, the conception of historiography as “thoughtful reenactment” involves a dangerously ambiguous metaphor. History exists for thinkers in a way quite different from the way it exists for agents; and it has to exist in both ways in order to be “history” at all. Hegel is beginning here already to give a short (and fairly commonsensical) account of the transition from “fact” to “thought.”

30. *The transforming of what is represented and familiar into thought:* Sensible being is already overcome. *Vorstellung* and acquaintance is what survives. The internalized content is still representative. But it is *familiar*; it has no living interest. “Knowing” means being concerned with its *universal* meaning.

As Hegel says at the end of paragraph 29, the philosopher’s task of equalling the labor of the world-spirit is not properly as laborious as the substantial realization of human culture, because the labor of thought is already accomplished *an sich*. He wrote in 1807 that “it [the content] is already property [*Eigenthum*] of the individuality.” This is ambiguous because “the individuality” can be either the “particular individuality” of the time or the singular individual mind of the philosopher. Hegel’s claim applies to both, because I can only learn the history that is in my school and play books.

Because it is universally known (and its objective effect was universal), the history in the books is more accurately designated as my “substance,” and in 1831 Hegel clarified his meaning in that way. He rewrote his claim thus: “Being already something mental, the content is *property* of the Substance.”¹²⁷ All philosophical meaning is implicit in a *recollected* heritage; my labor is lightened because the historians have already done the most burdensome part of my task. History is not what happens unconsciously, but what is known to happen—but my books and teachers have already produced a radically “abbreviated” representation (*Vorstellung*) of that. What remains is only to *think out* the meaning of what has already come to me as a *Vorstellung*. *Vorstellung* and *Gedanke* are two modes, or species, of *Gedankenbestimmung*; and recollection (*Erinnerung*) is the primitive form in which experience is preserved in memory as Lockean “ideas” or “representations” (*Vorstellungen*).

But all three terms (*Vorstellung*, *Gedanke*, and *Erinnerung*) are dialectically labile. *Erinnerung* is ambiguous, because it means not only the recollecting of what is preserved within the mind, but also the *inwardizing* movement through which what is reflectively a dead “property” (an abstract memory that we possess) becomes alive and concrete for us, or in other words, it becomes a real element in our spiritual selfhood. To linger with a familiar memory in a philosophical way is to give it a new status. To “recollect” something in this way is to resurrect it into a life whose “ground” is not simply the memory of the past that we all have; the living energy of our “recollection” is the *thought process* through which the *Vorstellungen* in our memory-banks become thoughts (*Gedanken*), concepts (*Begriffe*), and Ideas (*Ideen*).

Once more, however, this description of the process of *Erinnerung* is dialectically ambiguous. For, as we have said, a *Vorstellung* is already a kind of thought, a *Gedankenbestimmung*. If, for a commonsensical beginning, we accept the Lockean picture of the mind as furnished by “experience” with “ideas” (simple and complex) which are images of the things actually perceived by the senses, then we have to recognize at once (as Locke did) that our “ideas” are representative of whole classes of perceived things. This creates great problems for Locke about “abstract ideas”—each of which must somehow be a singular “idea” yet represent actual “things” that are all different. They are different even in the respect designated by the “abstract idea”—the many ways of being “colored” provide the simplest example.

Hegel uses *Vorstellung* for any and every piece of mental furniture that is conceived in the Lockean representative way.¹²⁸ But any representation that has to serve in a dialectical (or internally contradictory) way is also a *Gedanke* proper, by virtue of its dialectical range of reference. Locke’s “abstract ideas” are *Gedanken*, because they are explicitly supposed to embrace a range of “distincts” (or “opposites”); and virtually all other Lockean ideas, except the very simplest and most completely determinate ones, such as “this precise shade of red,” must do the same.¹²⁹ The contradictory character which attaches to the *Gedanke* as a *Vorstellung* will be overcome only when we realize that pure thoughts are not to be conceived as *representative* sign-functions at all. Then we shall arrive in the sphere of the *Gedanken* that are truly *Begriffe*.

But this advance is a steady progress in the direction of greater *abstraction*. It is the sphere of “Understanding” that is founded upon the supremely “abstract” ideas—those that give Locke the worst trouble, such as “force” or “power.” This is the Hell of pure thoughts, where all life and freedom is frozen into eternal death like the sinners in the ice at the bottom of Dante’s *Inferno*. It is this Hell of abstraction into which everything must be cast before it can be resurrected by the saving action of philosophical *Erinnerung*. This kind of *Erinnerung* is a process both of damnation and of salvation. It is only out of the Understanding that Reason can be born.

The descent into Hell is not really separable from the Resurrection. Abstraction can happen without being accompanied by any concrete enjoyment. In fact, it does and must happen independently because of all the economic aspects and utilitarian functions of thought. But the spiritual resurrection of experience in thought can only occur *properly* when it goes hand in hand with the conscious awareness of increasing abstraction. Nothing could be more abstract than “absolute knowing”—and its discursive development as the “Science of Logic” only makes the abstraction explicit. Yet in and for itself the experience is, as we shall eventually see, the most concrete experience that is possible of what it means to be human.

Thus, *Erinnerung* is the name of a *continuous* process that goes from immediate sensation to pure Reason; while *Vorstellung* and *Gedanke* designate not different *parts* of the continuum, but different *aspects* of it (different methodological assumptions). It is idle to try to draw lines between *Vorstellung* and *Gedanke*—to freeze them for purposes of Understanding. They are themselves abstract *Begriffe*, or instruments of comprehension. Locke’s programme was to comprehend

thought as *Vorstellung*; and the programme of Leibniz was to comprehend sense-experience as *Gedanke*. It is these two philosophical programmes that Hegel's terms properly designate.

The *Vorstellungen* that we retain in the ordinary mode of memory are not vivid images with their own living force, but abstract forms that are familiar. "What is spared to the individual in this movement [of turning the in-itself around into the form of being-for-itself]," wrote Hegel in 1807, "is the sublation of its *Dasein*; but what is still left over is the representation (*Vorstellung*) and familiar acquaintance (*Bekanntheit*) with the forms." In 1831, he added "and is in need of higher *Umbildung* [development]" after "is still left over."¹³⁰ The negative (or reflective) inwardizing of experience into what I have called the "Hell" of abstraction generally happens without any positive aspect of resurrection into a higher life, because the reduction to representative forms has been done for us already. Our minds are furnished with abstractions that have been made by others, abstractions that are already part of the communal stock of memories in our cultural world.

The more a *Vorstellung* is employed, thought with, and thought about, the more it becomes familiar (*bekannt*). In this process, it *loses* vitality all the time; it has less and less of the power of an image, something that can strike us, hold our attention, cause us to linger over it. It becomes an ordinary "idea," a "form" that we are used to and can readily—indeed automatically—use. In order to turn it from *ein gedachtes* (in this sense) into *eine Gedanke* we have to bring it to life again, to think it through for its own sake, instead of just using it to think *with*.¹³¹

This enlivening is an *Erinnerung* that is quite different from the ever-increasing familiarity that constitutes the sense in which it is *erinnert* already. Reduction to an "idea," a thought-form that is "abbreviated" and handy for the saving of time and effort, is only the "first negation" of concrete historical existence. The "substance" as an outward reality has withdrawn into the darkness of memory. But it is still there as thought, the eternal substance of truth, "in the element of the self." We can recall what was there in the outer world and is there no longer—and we recall it *as a world of what is there forever*. From being what we perceive it has passed over into what we can portray to ourselves. This is how every *particular* spirit, every distinct period in the evolution of the universal *Weltgeist*, remembers its past.¹³² As an educated person, I know what my particular world knows about the past. But in order for the universal spirit to comprehend *itself*, this process of mediation between the present and the past, which must exist if there is a present world of consciousness at all, must become self-conscious.

This is not possible until there is a past that is sufficiently different from the present to make the mediation problematic. Philosophical knowing is directed *against* what is familiar, what is traditional, because there cannot be a *universal* self until there are two particular selves (the one that portrays its own past, being recognizable to itself as different from the past self that is portrayed). Until then, in fact, there is not properly a social self at all.¹³³ The "element of the self" (that is to say, social consciousness, a shared way of life) exists, but it is filled only by the "transposed substance" of cultural tradition.

31. The familiar is not “cognized.” Familiarity deceives us here. We accept fixed data as our starting point for all cognitive operations. The best test of “truth” then is whether we all agree in our views.

Hegel’s description of the world of tradition is easy to follow, being couched in the familiar terms that the traditional world uses. This is the world of what were called, in Hegel’s time, the “popular philosophers.” It is also the world of “educated common sense” (which they addressed). All of the standards and values of this world (including its religious guarantees and sanctions) have been established by a long-standing communal agreement. Everyone does have her own impressions, ideas, and opinions, but if doubt or disagreement arises it is soon settled by discovering what the prevailing consensus of opinion is.

The “popular philosophers” did seek to establish what is *true*; but they did it by asking their readers to see whether, after careful self-examination, they agreed with these findings, and so on. In the course of the next few paragraphs, Hegel’s argument proceeds backwards from the latest epigones of Locke’s “way of ideas,” through Kant and the *Nouveaux Essais* of Leibniz, to the Greeks. But in a properly thoughtful reconstruction of what he says, we ought (I think) to go the other way—that is to say, we ought to reflect on the evolution of “natural” consciousness from the traditional wisdom of the poets into conceptual self-consciousness (in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle). This will help us to understand the main text of the book; for if we read paragraph 31 in the light of paragraph 33 (which we know is coming), we can begin to grasp *one* reason why the “true spirit” of the Greeks—the “natural” *identity* of substance and subject—will be “recollected” for us by Hegel through the work of the dramatist Sophocles (not in Plato and Aristotle). The Sophists (whose influence is evident already in Euripides) broke the consensual mold of Greek social life.

Before we attack this task, however, we should reflect a little on the difference between ordinary consciousness and philosophical understanding. “What is familiar [*Bekannte*] is not cognized [*erkannt*] because it is *bekannt*,” says Hegel (and the emphasis here is his). Thus, there are two kinds of understanding. Hegel uses only the verb *erkennen* in this paragraph, but the “mighty power” of *Verstand* appears as the first stage of *erkennen* in the very next one. There is an understanding of the world that rests on *familiarity*, a practical understanding that serves us very well for organizing our lives. This remains superficial because it reflects externally upon the stock of remembered experience interpreted in a Lockean way. But there is also an understanding that is the ground (or foundation) of scientific cognition (*erkennen*). It is a very serious mistake in the interpretation of Hegel not to notice this great contrast between what we may, for convenience, call *vulgar* and *scientific* understanding.

32. Analysis was the old technique for overcoming this familiarity. This gets down to elements that are still fixed *thoughts*, but the ability of Understanding to make dead bones move is the absolute power of thought, or of the pure Ego. Aesthetic sense shrinks from this death, but the spirit does not shrink from intellectual dismember-

ment. It lives by maintaining itself in death. So it is the Subject which, by lingering with the negative, converts it into the being of truth.

It is paragraph 32 that validates my comprehensive interpretation of *Erinnerung* as a death and resurrection of experience in memory. "Analysis" is the method of the scientific understanding.¹³⁴ The Understanding produces "distinct ideas"—complexes of thought in which every element is either intuitively clear or, better still, *defined*. A *defined* term is fixed forever in thought. Hegel calls the Understanding (as the power that can fix a thought in this way) the *absolute Macht*. The Greek world of "True Spirit" was a closed and resting circle of "ethical life" which this power had not yet broken into. Its "universals" were the immortal living Gods. It was a world of beauty, and the intellectual wonder of the pre-Socratic philosophers does not, initially, rupture it. In the age of the Sophists, however, Aristophanes finds them guilty of putting the Whirlwind in the place of Zeus. "Powerless beauty hates the Understanding" because it wants to hold onto an ethical life that has vanished from the visible world of poetry into the definition-seeking of Socrates. The Spirit, incarnated thus in the thinking subject, goes fearlessly into the Hell of the Understanding. It goes there not with hatred, but *with understanding*. For the same Mephistophelian power that condemns all life to death simply, and subjects living experience to the death of thought, can raise experience to life again by lingering with it. The *absolute* power of the scientific Understanding is identical with the *magic* power of the transcendental imagination. The vulgar Understanding concentrates on the positive content of its fixed thought-atoms; hence, it sees only "the false" in negation—or "nothing real." Socrates is the figure of the scientific understanding, because he recognizes the immortal life of thought in the dialectic of philosophical argument.¹³⁵

To complete our reading of the paragraph in terms of the evolution of Greek culture, we can identify the Sophists as the "analysts" of Greek "beauty." With their basic dichotomy of *physis* and *nomos*, nature and convention, they drove a wedge between the given nature of life and the second, or *made*, nature of society. (We should note that this is the same antithesis that Antigone sets up in her protest against Creon's edict.) The Sophists began the application of the Understanding to life; and the condemnation of Socrates symbolizes the "hatred of Beauty for the Understanding," because the definitions that Socrates sought¹³⁶ are the "thoughts" produced by that mightiest of all negative powers. In Socrates and the Sophists, the first negation (which has already happened implicitly in the transposition of substance into remembered tradition) becomes *explicit*, and the Subject arises consciously to take possession of its own "element." This Understanding is not the enemy of speculative recovery, but the gateway for it.¹³⁷ What Plato and Aristotle achieved rested on the Socratic (and Sophistic) technique for the definition and manipulation of the familiar, fixed "determinations" which through its agency have advanced from the status of *Vorstellungen* to that of *Gedanken* proper.

To gloss the argument with this application to the "natural consciousness" will not quite suffice here, however, because Hegel's own text is more puzzling in this

paragraph, and some direct commentary is needed. For instance, it is not certain who the modern thinkers are who “used to pursue” the logical *analysis of representations*. Looking for the two words (*Analysis* and *Vorstellung*) together, the critical editors direct us to Tetens and Platner (and, of course, to Reinhold). But to my mind, even Tetens (*Philosophische Versuche*, 1777) is hardly far enough back to qualify for “wie est *sonst* getrieben worden.” The *sonst* tells us to look to the philosophical world before Kant. *Analysis* is the key word in the method of Descartes, and it is almost equally explicit in Locke’s “way of ideas” (promulgated in an essay on the *Understanding*). I think that Hegel means to refer us to the divided tradition that stems from these two and comes to its unification in Kant. The historical accident that deferred the publication of the *Nouveaux Essais* till 1765 brings the whole controversy into Kant’s generation.¹³⁸

We shall meet the “Beauty” that hates the Understanding (and no longer has the “marvellous strength” of Plato’s *polis*, which even then was not the “greatest,” after all) as the Beautiful Soul (pars. 655–659). She has Jacobi and Novalis as her spokesmen, but her most important shape is in the *Hyperion* of Hölderlin. Then, finally, the *Zerissenheit* of “absolute culture”—the shattering of enlightened thought into fragments in which the patiently lingering and enduring Spirit begins, at last, to find its “Truth” again—will be portrayed by *Rameau’s Nephew* (pars. 520–526). The French Enlightenment is the self-movement of the nonactual world into which the concrete “Substance” has made itself by virtue of its *Scheidung* into “cultural actuality” and “thought.”

Hegel’s reference to the protest of a Beauty that is *powerless*, however, points to an interpretation that overarches my first “natural” reading of the text and connects it with the modern cultural (or direct) reading. For although the “beautiful soul” is a contemporary *Gestalt* (whose hatred of the Understanding was very gently portrayed by Goethe), still the Beautiful Soul that set itself against the disruption of life by Understanding, and did not shrink from death in its powerlessness but endured and maintained itself through *Vermutung* and *Zerrissenheit*, was that of Jesus. *Zerrissenheit* Hegel finds in the Enlightenment, but *Vermutung*—which certainly characterizes the Terror—he associates first with the Roman legions. The main theme of his epic about how the *Weltgeist* has become visible to us as *Geist* is the story of how the intuition of universal brotherhood that went to its death on Calvary has “tarried” invisibly in the realm of thought until now.¹³⁹ Only now has the negative element of thought (the *other* world) been transformed at last into the (logical) *being* of *Wissenschaft*.

(i) *The “Science of Experience”*

33. *And of thought into Begriff*: The production of thoughts by analysis is only *one* side of *Bildung*. Natural *Bildung* is exemplified in ancient education. It formed the *natural* consciousness into a fully concrete universal. The modern individual is fed a mass of ready made abstractions. So the task of grasping the real world as one’s own is now seen as an effort to impose an abstract order, and to generate the Kingdom of Ends

from a cut off position. The ancient problem was to make the mind think, to make it conscious of the non-sensible aspect of the whole. Our philosophical problem, in this cut-off situation, is rather to make thinking come to life. This involves overcoming the very power of the intellect itself. Fixed essences have to be made into self-moving *concepts*.

Now Hegel comes to the *second* negation and the birth of the concept proper. What has been analysed out of *Vorstellung* and frozen into a definition by the Understanding must be restored to life again, but restored to life at the higher level of (spiritual) thought, the element of subjectivity to which it was transferred even before the first negation was made explicit (and where it already enjoyed, implicitly, the new life into which it will now be raised explicitly).

In the *natural* consciousness, where substantial tradition and rational individuality remain in a harmonious continuum (called “true spirit” in the body of the book), the whole process of explicitation takes place painlessly, without a sense of opposition and alienation. As Hegel said earlier (par. 30), *das Wissen* is directed *against* the representation that comes into being through the interpretive process that exists naturally. It is hostile or negative towards tradition, the familiar ideas that everyone accepts. Even within the natural consciousness of True Spirit we can see this. Philosophy is critical of the naturally self-creative Spirit, but this “warfare of philosophy and poetry” of which Plato speaks—and which we can in some measure document from our surviving sources—belongs to the natural perfection of the Concept *as such*. It is quite different from the alienation between this world and the supersensible religious realm, the situation that prevails in the post-classical era, where the life of this world exists always “under judgment.” Since 1789, the judgment of enlightened human Reason has come forward self-consciously to assume the throne of God. But its standards are just as fixed, just as clear and rigorous, as ever God’s were. Now, therefore, the world is at a crisis point. The war between Ought and Is must be mediated and brought to an end.

This is the background that we need, and which the book itself supplies, for the proper appreciation of Hegel’s contrast between the ancient and the modern “mode of study.” Ancient philosophy grappled directly with experience (with *Dasein* both actual and represented in memory). Socrates philosophized about *alles vorkommende*—“everything that came in his way”—and the quest for definitions was part of the quest for self-knowledge. In his mission, there was no radical alienation between citizenship and salvation. He philosophized *for* the world in which he lived, and taught no doctrine of salvation in another one. He was the gadfly of the City, the conscience of the *Polis* (or of “the universality active through and through”).

In contrast, the modern philosophical consciousness is a “cut off (*abgeschnittne*) generation of the universal.” Young men (and the cultivated women who read the magazines and books of the “popular philosophers”)¹⁴⁰ are taught the “abstract form” of rationality. Their education imposes upon them a duty higher than that which the uneducated, or basically educated, can recognize. They must

make the world what it *ought* to be. It is not good enough the way it is—not in the sense that it does not live up to its own best standards, for that is the Socratic driving consciousness of the “Universal active through and through,” but because it does not correspond with the *absolute* rational standards of the other world of “pure Reason.”

This philosophical situation has existed ever since Descartes taught us to understand ourselves as thinking substances created by God.¹⁴¹ Even in the intuitive consciousness of the uneducated there is already this same division. Instead of hearing poems and stories (and watching dramas) about how the Gods move among us, everyone goes to Church to be told that this life is only the testing ground for another one. The task of the educated class in society is to integrate their rational insight into the otherworldly consciousness of faith—the “cut off Universal” in its objective aspect. All of us must “drive forth what is within.” But it is taken for granted that the universality of Reason can never be more than partially generated in this world.

Now that the universal proces of *Bildung* has passed through both of these phases, the task that faces speculative Reason is to overcome the division between “this world” and the “other one,” and to restore the situation of ancient culture in the deeper *spiritual* perspective that has replaced the “natural” one. Philosophical consciousness has already raised the other world from a poetic *Vorstellung* to a “pure thought”: Dante’s Rose has given place to the postulate of immortal activity in the Kingdom of Ends. But the persistent “curtain” between this world and the “beyond” is generated by the fact that so far Reason has only pursued its own development to the point of its thoughtful completion as Understanding. Resurrection from this eternal death is what is now crucially necessary. The eternal world of thought must be brought to life; and for this the essential step is a new insight into the relation between thought (the eternal) and life (the temporal). In order for Reason to exist as Reason, *the Understanding must understand itself*.

To bring life and fluidity back into the eternal fixity of the realm of the Ego as the moral Understanding (the intelligible or supersensible world of speculation from Descartes to Fichte) is the function of Hegel’s *dialectic*. Thus, the description of “how thoughts become fluid” here is Hegel’s first logical definition of the dialectic in the *Phenomenology*. He presents it here (as later in the logical introduction for the *Encyclopedia* of 1827) as the need to abandon the claim that the thinking self is a separate substance. The self must lose its status as a fixed point and recognize itself as a *moment*. Fichte changed the almighty “fulguration” of the Leibnizian God into the free self’s philosophically conscious awareness of being a self-fixing point;¹⁴² but now the thinking self must recognize itself as the motion of the world as “Spirit”—the total motion within which both the world (as Nature) and the self (as self-conscious thinking) are defined. When our “thoughts” become circular (or self-defining) motions of this kind, they are, at last, true “concepts.” Conceptual knowing is a *circle* which goes round from the perception of the world as actual nature to the self-comprehension that knows its world as “Spirit.” Concepts are not instruments in the process wherein the self knows the world. Instead, this

whole instrumental conception of thinking is the middle term (or instrumental stage) through which we can finally grasp what knowledge is (i.e., rational comprehension of “self” and “world” as moments of Spirit).

The reader should take note that I have followed Hegel's example and have avoided the word “subject” in the explication of paragraph 33. I think that Hegel's meaning is clearer if the word “self” is used to designate the subjective *moment* in the total process of the “subject” which recognizes the world as its “substance”). “God” is the “Substance” that becomes “Subject” as a *substantial community* of “selves.” Hegel's philosophy needs the divine Substance of the “law of nature,” but it does not need any divine Subject except the “Invisible Church” to which every rationally *human* self must (by definition) know that she belongs.¹⁴³

34. This development of thought-essences is philosophical method. It leads us to the concept of knowing as an organic whole; and the path ceases to be a casual, one-sided, philosophical argument; it grasps the whole “worldliness” of consciousness in its *necessary* aspect.

Gedanken become *Begriffe* by being recognized as forms of the movement of the divine Subject which defines the self and its world at the same time. “Self” and “world” are the moments of this movement. That is why we can say that *substance* has become *subject*. But we should always remember that substance becomes subject in order to generate spiritual substance (philosophical science).¹⁴⁴ Hegel's peculiar terminology of “essentialities” (*Wesenheiten*) is intended to preserve the necessary neutrality about substance (what is) and subject (what knows). Spirit is what is because it knows itself to be so. Thus, logic is conceived by Hegel as the self-motion of the truth-defining structure that establishes the self in its world. No proper logical concept refers either to subjective activity or to an object simply; and every properly logical concept refers implicitly to the concept of scientific knowledge in its self-comprehensive or perfectly adequate mode.

If we are to set forth “the experience of consciousness” as a *science*, therefore, we must be in possession of two crucial pieces of logical knowledge. We must know, first, what the simplest proper concept of consciousness is, and second, what the advance to more complex concepts is like. If we know these two things, then our path to the discovery of what logical science is can and will become a logical science on its own account. We shall be able to begin at the necessary beginning and advance until we reach the self-concept that embraces “the complete worldliness of consciousness in its necessity.”

A synonym for this “complete worldliness” would be “the self-concept of human experience as a single universe of discourse”; but Hegel's phrase “in its necessity” is ambiguous. The logical articulation of this concept as we reach it in the *Phenomenology* exhibits its necessary structure with respect to time (for it becomes finally comprehensive of its own evolution in time). This is not the same sort of developmental articulation that it receives in the *Science of Logic*, where the “pure essentialities” are generated from the simplest in a chain that is extratempo-

ral. That logical chain exhibits the structure of the human world of discourse at any and all times equally.

But there is, nevertheless, something absolutely ultimate about the “necessity” of the phenomenological structure. For Hegel’s theory of Absolute Spirit (the climax of the “real philosophy” for which the *Science of Logic* provides the “forms”) ends with the same outpouring of the “chalice of spirits” that we encounter in the *Phenomenology*.¹⁴⁵ This essential temporality is what gives the *Phenomenology* its real-philosophical (as distinct from its logical) aspect. That is what Hegel means by “complete worldliness.”

This is where Hegel makes his first reference to the transformation of the character of philosophical discussion produced by the speculative problem of overcoming the “modern method of study.” Socrates came to his death because the circle between his world-consciousness and his self-consciousness (the “care of the soul”) was not understood. Even in the world of natural consciousness, philosophy had its *critical* aspect. The Socratic dialectic did not explicitly go in circles, returning always to the problem that it started with. But it was always clear that there were two sides to any question.

A *Begriff* is a circle. It comprehends its own opposite. Hence there is no more need for *sides*. We do not do speculative philosophy by opposing what ought to be thought to what is thought (or to the absence of thought). We let what *is* thought develop itself. What is thought usually has two sides to it; and since we are not (like Socrates) thinking against it, we must be sure that both sides receive a hearing. As we shall see in due course, the Aristotelian method of dialectic (in which the received views of the “many” and the “wise” are compared) plays an essential role in Hegel’s “beginning.” But once the rolling movement of the “Science of experience” has begun, there will be no need to consider *all* views. The ones that we need in order to reach our goal will generate themselves; and by making a circle at every stage we shall be showing why an endless generation of variant views is possible. That is all that a “science of experience” requires. If more were (or could logically be) required, then the science would be impossible.

Apart from closing every “experience” into a proper concept, our science must close itself into a complete circle of these conceptualized experiences. How it does this we must for the present wait to see. That any valid whole of this kind must be an “organic whole” is a tautology with respect to Hegel’s philosophical use of the word “organic.” But that the “circle” is bound to contain “the complete worldliness of consciousness” is not equally obvious. As we shall see, the justification of this claim is provided by our eventual arrival at the level of *religious* experience. We shall have to see in what sense the “biography of God” is “complete” at the point where we pass to “Absolute Knowing.” “Religious experience” is the “organism” that reaches its “wholeness” in our “Science”; and what marks the closure of an organic circle is “death.”¹⁴⁶

35. This exposition is the first part of science because the *Dasein* of spirit, as principle or origin, is immediate. *Dasein* is what distinguishes this Science.

As compared with the philosophy of spirit, this “science of experience” is different because it accepts the “standpoint of consciousness.” We shall study the development of finite spirit through a Hegelianized version of what Locke called “a historical plain method.” Our working concepts will not be like Locke’s representative *Gedanken*, but we shall let our object *be* in the way that it defines itself; and we shall let it tell us how its world is. This procedure is in sharp contrast with that of the lectures on the philosophy of world-history, which cover much of the same territory in systematic terms. In his “world-history” lectures Hegel was addressing a general audience that had not had an appropriate introduction to philosophy. Hence he spoke in terms of their religious beliefs and offered religious translations for his “pure essentialities.” This partial acceptance of the standpoint of consciousness—specifically, of the *religious* consciousness of his audience—produced complete confusion about what he meant at the conceptual level. In the *Phenomenology* the “standpoint of consciousness” and that of the philosopher are both present, but they are carefully distinguished. Thus, among other things, the *Phenomenology* will teach us how to interpret the lectures on world-history properly.¹⁴⁷

As what is “first,” Spirit exists in the “immediate *Dasein*” of time. “Time” is the *Dasein* of the Concept (par. 80). In conformity with this doctrine Hegel will approach Sense-Certainty from the side of temporal succession rather than that of spatial extension; and when we reach the Self-Consciousness for which the spatial world of the Understanding has no essential being of its own, he will tell us that now we are entering the “homeland of truth” (par. 167). The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the “first part of Science” because the “comprehension of time” is the necessary preliminary for the “Science of logic” (which is the formal theory of the Concept as “eternal thinking”). In the systematic perspective, it is Logic that is first (and Spirit is last). But the logic that is the “thought of God before Creation” does not deal with the thinking of a God who is *outside* time; it lays out the thought-structure of the incarnate spirit that is in time. Before we can do logic properly, the incarnate spirit must become “divine” by “comprehending time.” That comprehension establishes the eternal standpoint of logical thought within time. Hence, in the order of real appearance, it is neither logic nor absolute Spirit that is “first.” What is first is the Spirit whose *destiny* is to become absolute, the Spirit that makes its appearance as a finite sensory consciousness. In the eternal order, Logic (the Concept) is first and Spirit (the Idea) is last. But in the real order, finite spirit is first and absolute spirit is last. Because of the identity of these two terms as Spirit, the finite consciousness is “in itself” the Concept (of Truth). What appears as “Sense-Certainty”—which in *absolute* terms is radical “uncertainty”—is already implicitly the Absolute Spirit. But our awareness of that is in a nonphilosophical mode. Every human being that comes into the world is “lighted by the true light.” But to say that this is “God’s light” is only to say that it is the *identical* light that makes all of us human, and makes all of our experience *human* experience—that is, potentially rational experience, the experience that can express itself in human words.

For the world that Hegel was addressing, this translation from the metaphor of revelation to the language of universal secular Enlightenment would have been

enough. For us, who no longer have the “certainty” of a universal human community, because we have learned by experience that we cannot take it for granted that humanity is naturally “good,” it is important that the path of development from sense-certainty (or uncertainty) takes us from absolutely selfish imperialism through modes of consciousness in which other human tribes are regarded as a different kind of “animal.” *Hegel* takes nothing for granted. The religious assumption of “Original Sin” is his methodological safeguard against that. But he writes for a community that has put “faith in Reason” in the place of “faith in God.” There is radical disagreement about whether the commitment to Reason entails theism, atheism, or agnosticism. “God” is simply the most important of the “fixed thoughts” that must be set in motion to turn it into a true “concept.” It is the measure of Hegel’s critical insight that he understood that the “light of Reason” must somehow *validate itself*. It cannot simply be accepted as an apodeictic practical certainty. (The concluding Preface returns here to the argument of the opening Introduction.)

36. It is the science of the experience of *consciousness*—i.e. of the shapes of consciousness that are moments of Spirit’s development. Spirit is the *movement* of the cognitive substance that takes itself as object in order to recognize itself in this otherness. “Experience” is the process in which immediate being (whether sensible or intellectual) is estranged from itself and returns to display itself as it truly is.

Before he can begin his discussion of the “fixed ideas,” Hegel must complete his statement of how the “first part of science” differs from the Sciences of Logic and of Reality. All of them have the character of Science (*Wissenschaftlichkeit*). They are all “organic wholes” which grow necessarily from their proper beginning. But the science of appearance grows in the “element of immediate *Dasein*,” whereas the systematic sciences grow in the “element of absolute knowing” to which the science of appearance will lead us.

The “element of immediate *Dasein*” is precisely “consciousness.” Our science is born in the world of the universally enlightened secular consciousness, and we “know” (that is to say, we have the immediate certainty of) what that enlightened awareness knows about itself. “Consciousness” is a logical structure with two sides—the knowing awareness and the thing known. This structure strictly entails that the “object” is something before it is known, and independently of its being known.

For this reason, the absolute Spirit must appear in consciousness as a “substance.” It is, by definition, what is absolutely real and true, and it is the “object” of our philosophical awareness. But this substance can only be *absolute* (i.e., nonrelative) because it is implicitly its *own* object. It is implicitly the conscious subject, and its absolute being has to be identified as the total process of its development in consciousness. But until the process comprehends itself as a whole, every movement of its “appearing” is bound to involve conscious opposition between the awareness and its object. It has to be a “shape” (*Gestalt*) of consciousness. Consciousness does not (immediately) have an *absolute* shape. The abstract *structure*, which remains constant

at least until the dialectical mistake involved in the basic assumption that the object is prior to and independent of the subject is comprehended, is not a stable "shape" at all; it is only the "antithesis" that comes up again and again in many "shapes."

What distinguishes the different concrete shapes is the changing interpretation that the finite awareness makes of its relation to its absolute object. *Many* interpretations of this relation are possible, but not an indefinitely large number. Formally speaking, we are already at the terminus of the "process" of consciousness ourselves, because we already know that it is a spiritual process that takes many "shapes." "Consciousness" *as a process* is already our "object." We know that in order for the Absolute to be absolute as a *substance*, it must logically be the true *subject* of its own experience. Otherwise, the conscious subject would be something external to it, and however transient and superfluous we may take that external "awareness" to be, the supposed absolute object would not be truly absolute. Hence, we know (logically) that the process of finite consciousness *must* terminate here, in the recognition that "the Absolute is Spirit."¹⁴⁸

Indeed, we already know that it *has* terminated here, since the "consciousness" that is *our* object, the only consciousness that we can observe, is our own. We do not observe the development of consciousness as it is actually happening; we cannot do that. We observe only our own recollection of what *has* happened. Thus, our object both is and is not "ourselves." Herein lies the answer to the question whether the final (self-comprehensive) position of consciousness is itself a "shape of consciousness." The answer is "Yes, but since it is the shape of self-conscious absolute Spirit, a shape of consciousness is not *all* that it is." We cannot deny that our own position is a "shape of consciousness"; specifically, it is a shape of Rational Observation. But the structure of our "shape" is more complex than that of the simple *Gegensatz*, because we are observing the evolution of the simple *Gegensatz*, and we know that we are observing ourselves. When the object of our observation finally comes to have the same self-conscious awareness of itself that we have, we shall have two selves that are equal but complementary. We shall be observing an "object" that is observing itself in its object in exactly the same way as we are.¹⁴⁹

What the "complementarity" (the opposition, or difference of the selves) is like in this relation we shall have to wait to see when the concrete object of the observation is before us. But when the unequal relation of the self observing a self that takes its object to be an independent other turns into the equal relation of two selves, each of which is *its own other*, because they both know that selfhood is self-othering, the objectivity of the "object" is transformed. We are not then obliged to let go of the difference, the otherness of the object, but we *can* do so. To hold on to the difference is to *enjoy* our experience, to appreciate all of the other selves that we are because we *have been* them (and we still are them, because we know that to be them is *essential*). But we can turn away and hold on to the identity instead; and when we do that, the "objectivity" of all of those "others" becomes the pure objectivity of thought. What we think now is what is objectively necessary for the whole world of the self and others in their "experience."

We can still say that this new position, the standpoint of the philosophical logician, is itself a “shape of consciousness.” Certainly it is a new kind of philosophizing, and the logician must be “conscious,” like everyone else. But to concentrate attention on this fact is to lose sight of precisely what is distinctive in the new position. One cannot think “objectively” in this new sense unless and until finite consciousness, with all of its positions, is behind one. To do logic is to have a “shape of consciousness” that is *irrelevant* to itself. What matters now is the conceptual necessity of the thinking, the “objectivity” of the process, and the validity of the results.

The conceptual necessity, the objectivity, and the validity of our observation already matters to us, of course, as scientific observers of experience, but they are not *all* that matters. On the contrary, they matter because the content matters, and the content is the content of our life-experience. It is not directly and simply identical with the logical form of our thinking, and our “consciousness” is not reduced to that. We are logicians already, but that is not all that we are. The “shape” of our recollected experience is just as essential as the moving process in which it is caught up. That is *still* true, even when it becomes the self-transparent shape of experience as a self-standing and self-justifying whole. To turn our back upon it, to let it go in the attempt to do “pure logic,” is a new resolution and a free decision. The fact that Hegel himself has already made that resolve ought not to blind us to this. Perhaps the logical comprehension of experience is possible and that of pure thinking is not—or perhaps the reverse is the case. Nothing is obvious here (and Hegel himself certainly changed his mind about the kind of connection that exists).¹⁵⁰

I have explained briefly why the Absolute must be “Spirit” (a communicative interaction of selves) in order to be a “substance” at all. Hegel only refers us to the religious tradition in which we know what the “absolute Spirit” is by faith. But he had completed the book before he wrote the Preface; and I am only taking advantage of having read the book right through in order to explicate his philosophical claim that “Spirit becomes object because it is this movement of becoming an *other to itself*, i.e., *object of itself*, and of subsuming this otherness.” Let us return now, as Hegel does, to the elementary *antithesis* present in all the “shapes of consciousness.”

In the movement of experience, what is *immediate* is a finite “experiencing” self facing an object that *transcends* its experience. Long before there is a philosopher (Socrates) with a mission that causes him to turn his back on nature in order to investigate himself, there is a problem about the “beyond” of experience. Philosophy begins when the objective world ceases to be “home” and becomes strange and alien. But Hegel speaks only of the climax of the process of alienation that precedes the recognition that experience is the “phenomenology of spirit.” The shape of that climax is that in the realm of pure *Gedanke*, enlightened Reason divides and reaches the twin termini of atheistic materialism and Deism. On the one hand, the investigation of nature as an alien mechanism leads to the postulate of a “matter” which is “the abstract [i.e., the thought-essence] of sensible being”; on the other hand, the divine authority is refined into the “simple that is only thought of”—

that is to say, the natural law which remains when Newton's clockmaker can finally be dispensed with.¹⁵¹

37. The inequality between self and world can be seen from both sides as a *lack*—but it is a tension that moves them. [The Epicureans] rightly identified the negative as a moving principle, but it is not an external void. The movement of consciousness is really that of the Substance becoming Subject. When the inequality is abolished we have reached the *element* of scientific knowing; and this completes the first part of science. Recognizing the simple identity of world and self establishes the *form* of all truth, the *element* of genuine logic.

In large part, the explanation of this paragraph has been given already. But apart from describing the climax of his own “objective” idealism, Hegel wants to show how the spiritual assumption is present in the “opposite” extreme of sense-oriented materialism. In naïve consciousness as a *theoretical* standpoint, the world is everything and the self is nothing. But naïve consciousness does not often adopt a purely theoretical (i.e., philosophical) stance. It is more usual to find naïve *self*-consciousness following its own passions and developing its capacities, knowing full well that the world is simply an “impression-maker” that has to be organized in accord with its own “ideas.” But in the scientific common sense of the Enlightenment, philosophy as a *thinking* activity has come full circle. The *inequality* of subject and object, the *distinction* between them, is seen from both sides as an absolute negation. If we set Kant beside d’Holbach and LaMettrie, or Fichte beside Jacobi’s interpretation of Spinoza (which Fichte accepted), then we seem to be faced with the stark choice between a substance that annihilates the freedom of the subject and a subject that annihilates the standing of the substance.

Hegel says that this radical inequality between the self and the substance is precisely their “soul” (in the Greek sense of “moving principle”). Beginning at the materialist extreme, he points out that for the Epicureans the Nothing (empty space) is the moving principle.¹⁵² But this is not the Nothing of a self (which we can recognize in Newton’s Clockmaker or the God of the Deists).

Even with mechanical motion, we ought not to see it as accruing to the object from outside. The absolute “downwards” of the Epicurean void was an error. Substance is *self-moving* (like the atoms of Democritus or the atoms and void together in Epicurus). Hegel begins from the materialist extreme here, because materialists must necessarily posit a *self-moving* substance; they are already on the road to the recognition of substance as subject. The dualistic hypothesis that material substance is inert and that all motion comes from some supersensible rational agency is a falsification of the dynamic character of substance as it presents itself to naïve consciousness even at the most primitive level. The phenomenology of Spirit goes from the observably dynamic character of physical matter to the comprehension of the whole historic community of humanity as the substance that is subject. Then it is complete.

When substance and subject have been equalized in this way, the *element* of proper logical comprehension has been prepared. The self that has recognized

itself in *all* the otherness of experience is the one that can do pure Logic. Its “objectivity” is that of the rational community. Science is the human community organizing its own experience as a single rational continuum (without the admixture of any “consciousness” other than its own). The moments of the scientific continuum are the categories of logic, “the *form of simplicity* that knows its object as its own self.” The God of Moses, or of Newton, in contrast, is *the simple* that knows its object as a pure other. Whether pure logic is possible—whether the continuum *can* be unfolded into moments as a *pure form*, and in what sense its moments can be *necessary* and eternally stable—is the most difficult (and most ultimate) question about the whole Hegelian project. But we need not be concerned here with the problem of how the “pure form” is to be unfolded. If we can succeed in unfolding the journey to that “pure form” as a logical sequence present in the empirical continuity of our own cultural evolution, then we shall certainly be in a better position to discuss that problem than we are at present.¹⁵³

Notes

1. The announcement is printed in *G.W. IX*, 446–447 and translated in Kaufmann (1966, II, 4–5).

2. I consider that H. H. Ottman (1973, 37–38) is plainly mistaken when he says that in writing the *Phenomenology* Hegel had a two-part system consisting of Phenomenology and Logic in mind. But he is only repeating an assumption that Fulda (1965) made in his inferences about the structure of Hegel’s Logic in 1806. Fulda’s interpretation of Hegel’s view of the relation between the *Phenomenology* and the system after 1817 remains valid even without this assumption.

3. Ever since the first reviews, the Preface has received more notice than any other part of the book—except perhaps “Lordship and Bondage.” There is a useful commentary by R. Schacht (1972), and one in Italian that is not very useful by G. Trogu (1973). W. Marx (1975) has written a valuable study of the Preface and Introduction together (but see note 14). The Preface is also discussed at length by J. H. Smith (1988). There is a breezy article by R. C. Solomon (1969) and one by H. Adelman (1984). The best English translation is that of W. A. Kaufmann (1965, chap. VIII or 1966, II).

4. Even when we reach this beginning, it has *two* sides: that of natural certainty and that of the reflective interest that we bring to birth. Compare the discussions by J. C. Flay (1970b and 1984, 15–17) and J. Sallis (1977). A good discussion of the problem of beginning a “science” from somewhere in “consciousness” will be found in H. F. Fulda (1965, chap. 1). See also the valuable articles of J. C. Flay (1974 and 1994).

5. R. C. Solomon (1983, 238) says: “The Preface was written in even greater haste than the rest of the book, when the author was already removed from his text, tired of it, glib about it, and in a hurry to see it in print.” In this summary, only the pressure of the publishing deadline can be accepted as valid. Hegel was never “in a hurry” to see any work of his in print; and there is no evidence that he was “tired” of this book. (How *could* he be, when he had to finish it in a rush, and would clearly have liked to take the time to rewrite at least parts of it?) Certainly, he was not “removed” from it either (on the contrary, he tried for several years to adapt his “consciousness-theory” to the intelligence and limited experience of his *Gymnasium* students). As for “glibness,” that is a subjective matter which the reader must be

left to decide personally. In my opinion, however, Hegel was hardly ever “glib” about his own work—it is only with respect to the views of others that he sometimes deserves that adjective. Even in the matter of “haste,” the Preface—though written quickly—had been long meditated (as the *Wastebook* shows); and its composition was delayed as long as possible while Hegel thought about what he had done. It is chapter VIII that was certainly written “in a hurry.” (The comments of Kaufmann and Solomon probably reflect their own “experience” of writing and publication. This note certainly reflects mine. I am well acquainted with “tiredness,” but as the reader can see, the resulting impatience is not directed at my *own* book. The reader must decide whose “experience” is closer to that of Hegel.)

6. R. K. Maurer (1965, 161) opines that “from a historical point of view the *Phenomenology* is more encyclopedic and systematic than the *Encyclopedia*.” This obscures the *complementary* relation that exists between the two “parts” of Hegel’s *one* system; P.-J. Labarrière (1974, in 1986, 123–148) is more balanced.

7. The significance of this moment in Hegel’s development was very ably expressed by H. Glockner (1929, II, 419)—the passage is translated by Lauer (1976b, 270, n. 3).

8. Loewenberg’s intelligent layman (Hardith) accuses Hegel of “throwing consistency to the winds” (1965, 2); but the Hegel student Meredy makes an intelligent response, and Hardith’s subsequent criticisms are much sounder.

9. This is the reading offered by R. Norman, who says categorically that “Hegel tries to do what he himself declares to be impossible” (1976, 9).

10. Hegel knows what he is talking about, for all through his life he read authors’ prefaces, and the similar reviews of critical third parties, assiduously, and we can sometimes show that these constitute his only knowledge of a work.

11. Here I am agreeing with H. Adelman’s hypothesis that the *Vorrede* is “philosophical but unsystematic” (1984, 164). But I do not find this claim in Lauer, to whom Adelman seems to ascribe it. The interpretation that Kainz gives of the identity of “external” and “inner” necessity in Hegel’s paragraph 5 (1976, 134, n. 2) could be paraphrased in this way, and I think that (although Kainz’ argument is unsound) his view of the Preface as an “external” demonstration that the “time is ripe” is correct. (Kainz is certainly not “blind to the apparent contradiction” of the *Vorrede*, as Adelman says [1974, 162].) If one does not like to admit “unsystematic philosophy,” one can call the *Vorrede* “propaedeutic” (Navickas, 1976, 14). But it is wrong to call it “hors d’oeuvre,” as Hyppolite did (1946, 10; 1974, 4).

12. That the Absolute must be present at the start as a conscious *problem* is the interpretation of the puzzling remark in the Introduction proposed by J. C. Flay (1984, 10–12). As we shall see in due course, this is only one of the ways in which “the Absolute is present”; and since the *problematic* presence of “absolute knowledge” for the critical philosopher is as much negative as positive, it provides only an ironic interpretation for a comment of Hegel’s that appears to be sincere.

The philosophical “problem” of the Absolute is not all that ordinary consciousness has “at the start.” One thing that the Preface makes clear is that the “common sense” which needs, and can rightfully demand, a “ladder to absolute knowing” is a sincerely *religious* consciousness. It “desires to know”—specifically, to know God. But this sincere consciousness need not have any “certainty” that God is there to be known. Hence, the Absolute sinks into a “problem” in this religious aspect too. The time would not be “ripe” for the “Science of experience” if this had not happened. Thus, Flay is right in thinking that we can only recognize how the Absolute was always present “in itself” when we have succeeded in becoming its consciousness “for itself.” (But this is still not the whole story of what Hegel means.)

13. Mueller (1968, 219–242) is a good example. Haym was perhaps the first to treat the Preface in this way (1857, 215–228). Kaufmann (1966, II, 1), followed by Schacht (1975, 43), cites a number of hyper-enthusiastic reactions. (Kaufmann's own similar verdict can be found in 1966, I, 136.) Solomon (1969) makes fun of all such overreactions, and says almost everything that can be said against approaching Hegel through this famous Preface (compare Solomon, 1983, 237–243).

14. It is not right to regard the *Vorrede* as a supplement to the *Einleitung* (as W. Marx does [1975, xii]). What needed supplementary discussion was chapter VIII, as Marx rightly points out later (1975, 53). But quite apart from that contingent need, the *circle* of the “science” of experience needed to be completed and the reason for it had to be explained. Loewenberg's claim (1965, 2)—supported by Lauer (1976, 270) and others—that the Preface is “the kind of pronouncement required to be read as an epilogue instead of as a prologue” is not really correct. The *Vorrede* is useful in both ways, but it was *logically* necessary as a prologue, and only accidentally necessary as an epilogue.

15. J. C. Flay (1984) understands that all three “beginnings” are needed in order to “situate us in the problem.” But his view that there is a “vicious circle” to be overcome in the Preface is peculiar (1984, 4–5). One does not “beg any question” by beginning philosophy with the problem posed by one's own time, as Hegel does in the Introduction. Hegel does want to show us what his “place in the tradition” is, but he is not continuing any “quest for certainty.” “Certainty” we already have—as soon as we put artificial doubts aside. What we are in search of is a “truth” that reconciles all of our “certainties.” (Flay's title was clearly determined by what Hegel says about the *Phenomenology* in the *Science of Logic* [Miller, 49]. Cf. J. C. Flay, 1974, 48–49. For a summary account of his approach, see Flay, 1982; for a critique—among many—see J. P. Kow, 1993.)

16. Norman (1976, 9) first offers the verdict quoted in note 9. But then he adds, more sensibly, “I do not think one can properly understand it [the Preface] until one has already read a good deal of the *Phenomenology*.”

17. We shall follow this procedure systematically throughout, although it may occasionally be appropriate and convenient to take two paragraphs together. (For the method of referring to Hegel's text by paragraph number, see the note on Conventions and Abbreviations, p. ##.)

18. This point is made first in the *Wastebook*. See aphorisms 42 and 45 (Rosenkranz, 545–546; *J.J.P.* III, 1979, 3, nos. 1 and 4).

19. G. Nicolin, report 12 (Christiane Hegel); Rosenkranz, 25. Hegel used what he learned in the construction of his own general theory of the living organism—and this is, of course, the climax of his philosophy of nature.

20. The loose heaping together of information goes with the *conversational* method of discussing it. Hegel calls this *historisch und begrifflos*. “Science” is characterized by its logical structure and its “conceptual” method of development. (I agree with Kaufmann [1966, II, 7 n. 3] that *Begriff* should be translated as “concept,” but his strictures against the translators who used “Notion” are unjust. They were *not* making an incomprehensible choice from their “ordinary” vocabulary; they were following the native *philosophical* tradition of Cambridge Platonism. “The Notion”—with its Platonic capital which Kaufmann disdains to notice—has none of the “vague and capricious” associations of ordinary usage.)

21. Throughout this commentary I shall render *die Sache* as “the Thing” and *die Sache selbst* as “the Thing itself.” I am convinced that all of the earlier translators and commentators who vary their rendering according to context and offer periphrases are making a bad

mistake by obscuring both the Platonic echo and the implicit reference to the “public Thing”—the *res publica*. It is not possible to make this last reference explicit, but the echo of Plato’s “the Good itself,” “the Triangle itself,” comes out even more clearly in English than in German because “thing itself” (even without the capital) has a narrower range of colloquial use. The capital letter is necessary in order to distinguish *Sache* from *Ding*, and the reader should note, particularly, that my usage diverges from that of Miller, who uses “Thing” precisely for *Ding*. (Admittedly, *das Ding* is a technical category, but this was a disastrous decision on Miller’s part, because it is the *Sache* that is more apt to be confused with the common abstract use of “thing” in English. For a discussion of some of the errors in both the Miller and the Baillie translations—but especially the former—see H. P. Kainz, 1986.)

22. For a discussion of the rendering of *Dasein* (and of a number of other terms in Hegel), see H. S. Harris and T. F. Geraets (1991).

23. Kaufmann (1966, II, 9, n. 6) objects to Hegel’s use of “necessity” and “necessary” here. He says, “Hegel often uses ‘necessary’ quite illicitly as the negation of ‘utterly arbitrary.’” But it is the objection that is “illicit” and “utterly arbitrary.” Hegel’s use is quite normal here, and its normalcy is very illuminating. All of the stages of growth—bud, blossom, fruit—are “necessary” to the life of the plant, but the plant grows at its own pace, and with much accidental variation. Similarly, all of the “stages” are necessary in the evolution of a philosophical concept, and we must learn to recognize what is only accidental in its historical growth. The “necessity” of the “phenomenology of Spirit” is the necessity created by the evolution of “truth.” It is the “love of truth” that impels consciousness to move on to the next stage. Someone who *sees* that a certain concept has broken down is impelled to look for a new one. What she finds, if she is an intelligent and dedicated seeker, is the “truth” that is implicit in the shape of the breakdown. Otherwise, what she produces will soon be forgotten. (R. C. Solomon [1993, 190] says this passage is “only somewhat tongue in cheek.” But Goethe, who was offended by it, knew that it was wholly serious.)

24. Reinhold is criticised for this error in the *Difference* essay—see Harris and Cerf, 86–89. Fichte’s comment “The kind of philosophy someone chooses depends on the kind of man he is” (*Werke* I, 434; Heath-Lachs, 16) became a byword. What he meant is beautifully illustrated in *The Vocation of Man*.

25. See the opening pages of the *Difference* essay for Hegel’s own use of these metaphors. That passage (*G.W.* IV, 9–10; Harris and Cerf, 85–86) should be compared with this third paragraph.

26. See *Faust* I, 1699–1702. But, alas, these lines were not published until the next year (1808); the scene was written already when Hegel came to Jena, but we have no evidence that he knew of it.

27. For discussion of Hegel’s concept of *Bildung* see note 118, and the notes in *Odyssey*, chapter 5. (There is another echo of Goethe’s unpublished text here. Kaufmann has made us all mindful of the soliloquy in which Faust adjures himself:

Was du ererbst von deinen Vätern hast
Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen
 (lines 682–683).

Hegel says that the beginning of *Bildung* is “Kenntnisse allgemeiner Grundsätze und Gesichtspunkte zu *erwerben*.” Did Goethe begin the process of making his memorable lines proverbial even before they were given to the public in print?)

28. Hegel provides the reader with a careful analysis of the *Vorrede*. His first heading is “The element of the true is the concept, and its true shape the philosophical system p. VII.” paragraph 5 begins on p. VI, so Hegel regards it as part of the preamble. This is justified by the personal tone here. The author tells us what *he* hopes to achieve, but the paragraph also announces the first theme. Hegel’s first three headings all state themes which are announced one paragraph earlier than he formally locates them. The return of the personal note at the end of the Preface (par. 71) marks paragraph 5 as its true beginning.

29. These tags come from Hegel’s Jena lectures, fragments of which will appear in *G.W.V.* The first was quoted by Rosenkranz (182; Harris and Knox, 256–257); for the second, see, for the moment, Baum and Meist (1977, 45–46). For the context, see *Night Thoughts*, chapters V and IX—especially 192 and 398.

One early reviewer (probably Friedrich Köppen) objected (with formal correctness) that we cannot “come closer” to Science. Either we have it or we do not—see W. Bonsiepen (1979, 23). An analogous attitude is evident in many modern critics who think that the *Phenomenology* cannot contain a “Science,” because they accept it as the “way to science.” (The book actually aims to fulfill several functions simultaneously. M. N. Forster [forthcoming, parts 1 and 2] has produced an insightful account of the “tasks” that Hegel sets himself, all of which are set forth in the Preface.)

30. I shall argue later that Sense-Certainty is properly the *pre*-philosophical position of consciousness; but it is *also* a philosophical position, and it needed to be formulated philosophically (in the Enlightenment) in order for Hegel’s “science” to be written. It is this *double* aspect of Sense-Certainty—as pre-philosophically necessary (permanent) and philosophically contingent (but presently maintained) that gives it the status of the proper beginning of the “science of experience.” The positions of consciousness are all “necessary” to philosophy; but they are not pre-philosophically *universal* in the way that Sense-Certainty is.

31. *How* it does this must be left aside for the moment, since the answer is in no way implicit in paragraph 5. But the “phenomenology” that will reappear in that systematic comprehension of “reality” as the essential moment of individual *Bildung* is not the same as the “science of experience,” which deals with the *Bildung of the absolute spirit* for its conscious existence.

32. The “correspondence” in *content* of the “science of appearance” with the “science of reality” remains, even when identity of *form* is not claimed. Hegel asserts their equality of comprehensive range in paragraph 805. (See further the commentary on par. 805 in *The Odyssey of Spirit*.)

33. Since it is the task of the whole book to demonstrate that the “external necessity” of the time is really an internal logical need for experience to be comprehended logically, the view of H. P. Kainz (1976, 134, n. 2) that the Preface demonstrates “externally” the necessity that is demonstrated “internally” in the book is not quite correct. What he calls alternative (a) is the right one, but it does not make the writing of a general “Preface for the System” inconsistent. The announcement tells us that the Preface is about what philosophy “seems” to need at present (and about what must be dispensed with in its present situation).

34. See especially Cerf and Harris (55–66 and 147–152). Both Schleiermacher’s *Addresses* and Jacobi’s *David Hume on Faith* have been translated; see Crouter (1988) and Di Giovanni (1994). As we shall soon see, what troubles Hegel most is the *rebirth* of religious intuitionism within the new speculative philosophy that Schelling began. Eschenmayer was certainly involved in that process.

35. See especially Knox and Acton, 133 (*G.W.* IV, 484, line 34): “the absolute Idea is in itself absolute intuition,” and 111–112 (*G.W.* IV, 464, lines 21–31): “The Absolute is that which intuits itself as itself, and that absolute intuition and this self-knowing, that infinite expansion and this infinite recovery into itself, are simply one . . . Spirit, which is absolute intuition of itself as itself (or absolute knowing) is, in the recovery of the Universe into itself . . . the absolute ideality thereof in which it annihilates . . . separateness, and reflects it into itself as the unmediated point of unity of the infinite Concept.” The doctrine and language of both passages (which are perorations) are strikingly close to the Schleiermacher dictum that Bonsiepen and Heede aptly quote as a likely target of this paragraph: “to have religion means to intuit the Universe” (*Reden* 1799, 2, 126). Compare Cerf and Harris, 182 (*G.W.* IV, 408, lines 20–22).

Behind all the explicit criticism of his published contemporaries, however, there lies a reflective criticism of the ideal of “love” which Hegel espoused and developed in his Frankfurt years. In its origin, this ideal was Hölderlin’s rather than his. That is why the doctrine of “absolute intuition” in Hegel’s own version of the Identity philosophy (which comes to its climax in the *Natural Law* essay) is *aesthetic* rather than *intellectual*. It is Hölderlin, more than any other living contemporary, with whom the *Phenomenology* is a final casting of accounts.

36. Letter 107, 2 Nov. 1807 (*Briefe* I, 194; Butler and Seiler, 80). Schelling confesses that, after nearly six months, he has found time to read only the Preface.

37. Cerf and Harris, 55–56 (*G.W.* IV, 315, line 5–316, line 2).

38. For the summary of the “Natural Law” lectures see Rosenkranz, 136–141 (Harris and Knox, 181–186).

39. The ideal of Frankfurt was a Christianity in which Catholicism and Protestantism were reconciled, and the “Mother of God” was certainly an important symbol for Schelling and Hegel in the Jena years (see *ist nur die Form*, *G.W.* VI, 330—Harris and Knox, 250–251; and especially J. D’Hondt, 1980, 49–52). This symbolism is still present (as we shall see) in chapter VII of the *Phenomenology*, but it is used with a *heretical* intent; and the Catholic conversion of F. Schlegel was always a matter of ironic amusement for Hegel.

40. Rosenkranz, 182 (Harris and Knox, 256–257).

41. See *Encyclopedia Logic*, section 76; and T. Rockmore (1986).

42. In later notes, they give enough samples from the minor authors to convince me (at least) that they are right, but the catchword “beautiful” and the contrast of “ecstasy” with “cold necessity” suggests that Novalis may also be in Hegel’s sights. The *Wastebook* condemns this demand for philosophical “edification” too; but it gives a positive evaluation of its present function—see aphorisms 38, 47, 60, 66 (Rosenkranz, 544, 546–547, 551, 552; *I.Ź.P.* III, 1979, 2, no. 10; 3, no. 6; 4, nos. 6 and 9).

43. Jacobi regarded the collocation simply as a new method of abusing him (see G. Nicolin, report 65); Herder, who died in 1803, quite probably never saw the essay. (See Cerf and Harris, 118–119.) For a plausible explanation of why Hegel put them together see Di Giovanni’s introduction to Jacobi (1994).

44. He certainly intends to criticize Schiller and Hölderlin, for example, for not seeing that the contribution of philosophical insight was more than “preliminary.”

45. This is a slight overstatement, because Bonsiepen and Heede are almost certainly right in holding that “the present as such, which was called ‘experience,’” points to Francis Bacon. They appeal to the *History of Philosophy* lectures. See *T.W.-A.* XX, 74 (Haldane and Simson, III, 170–171) and *Vorlesungen* 9, 75–78 (Brown and Stewart, III, 111–117); see also

the Introduction to P. A. Simpson (forthcoming). *Faith and Knowledge* does not look further back than Locke. If the forceful redirection of attention was indeed the religious wars, then Bacon *is* probably meant. (Jacob's Ladder as a "thread of light" is in *Paradise*, Canto XXI, but the "thread" metaphor is not Dante's.)

46. In this important respect I agree with Kojève (1947), although the self-consciousness of the new philosophical age belongs not to a singular "Sage," but to the whole (literate) community. The singular philosophical consciousness is important in the new age because only a highly trained specialist can develop "absolute knowing" into the discursive form of the "science of logic"; but as soon as Hegel had worked *that* out to his satisfaction, he began labouring to turn it into a manual that could be absorbed by every educated consciousness.

47. The clause "wer seine irdische Mannichfaltigkeit des Daseins und des Gedankens in Nebel einhüllen" plays sarcastically upon "wie Jacobi sagt, das grösste Verdienst des Forschers erwerben, *Dasein* enthüllen und offenbaren" in *Faith and Knowledge*. According to Hegel, Herder deserves to be counted in Jacobi's camp because he does this (*G.W.* IV, 363, lines 7–8; Cerf and Harris, 119).

48. See "Dreams of a Spirit-seer" in *Akad.* II, 315–384. (It is only "sleep," not "wisdom in sleep," that God gives to his "beloved" in Psalm 127:2, but perhaps Kaufmann is right in seeing a reference here [1966, II, 19, n. 15]).

49. For Hegel's earlier critique of Boehme, see Harris and Knox, 257 (Rosenkranz, 182–183). Compare also *Wastebook*, aphorisms 48 (Rosenkranz, 547–548; M. H. Hoffheimer, 1983) and 45 (Rosenkranz, 545–546; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 3). It was Ludwig Tieck who introduced the romantics and speculative idealists to the study of Boehme around 1799, but it is only in 1804 that Hegel appears to have become interested; and that is the year in which Schelling's interest—which was lifelong—clearly declared itself. See D. Walsh (1984); R. Brown (1977, 114–119); and J. Guttman (1936, XLIV–XLVIII).

50. Letter 74 (to Niethammer, 13 Oct. 1806), *Briefe* I, 120.

51. All of these are accused by Hegel of holding an elitist doctrine of the privilege of genius or of trusting in oracular or prophetic "intimations" (*Ahnungen*). For Görres and Wagner see the *Wastebook*, aphorism 9 (Rosenkranz, 539) and the *History of Philosophy*, *T.W.-A.*, xx, 417 (Haldane and Simson, III, 509).

52. The reference to "boredom" further confirms the intentional parallel with the time of the birth of Christianity. *Leichtsinn* ("frivolity"), however, points forward to the final dissolution of the values of Christian culture in *Rameau's Nephew*.

53. The image of the "newborn child" can be found in the *Christianity or Europe* of Novalis, but Hölderlin's ideal of "Nature" as realized by the Greeks was more important to Hegel; and we should not forget the idea of an original revelation in Schelling's *University Studies*. (For other Romantic expressions of the aesthetic dream of a "rebirth," see E. Behler, 1972, 198–216.) Hegel rejects this aesthetic approach, but, having shared it, he wants to do justice to it in his reconciliatory theory of the historical development of conceptual rationality.

54. This is not explicitly said here, but the emphasis on the community between science and the common understanding is the obvious ground of the requirement that the *Volk* must possess philosophy in its own tongue. See Harris and Knox, 257–259 (Rosenkranz, 183–185); see also *Wastebook*, aphorism 67 (Rosenkranz, 552; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 4, no. 10).

55. The *Wastebook* speaks of Fichte's position in philosophy as settled, but then says, more ambiguously, "What Schelling's philosophy is in its essence will shortly be revealed" (aphorism 40, Rosenkranz, 544; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 2, no. 11).

56. In the *Wastebook* he wrote, "Reason without understanding is nothing, while understanding is still something even without Reason. One cannot make a gift of it" (aphorism 46, Rosenkranz, 546; *J.P.* III, 1979, 3, no. 5).

57. Harris and Cerf, 192–195 (*G.W.* IV, 91, line 28–92, line 36).

58. See Schelling's acknowledgment in the *Critical Journal of Philosophy* (*G.W.* IV, 161, lines 30–37); and in the *Darstellung* of 1801 (Schelling, *Werke* IV, 113). Hegel regarded Schelling's debt to Eschenmayer as an aspect of his worst mistake (the *mathematical*, and hence *quantitative*, concept of the *Potenzen* of Nature).

59. *Der Eremit und der Fremdling. Gespräche über das Heilige und die Geschichte* (Erlangen, 1803). Compare also *Die Philosophie in ihrem Uebergang zur Nichtphilosophie* (Erlangen, 1803).

60. Harris and Knox, 259 (Rosenkranz, 184–185). But in his "Guidelines for the Journal of German Literature" (*G.W.* IV, 509–514; *Clio* 13, 1984, 407–414), he does say that Schelling had adopted the posture and principles of the formalists himself for a time and was only now (1807) "beginning to renounce them." (The exemplars he cites there are K.J.H. Windischmann, J. Görres, and H. Steffens "for the most part." See section i, *G.W.* IV, 511, line 28–512, line 19; *Clio* 13, 1984, 411–412.)

61. Letters 95 (May 1807) and 107 (November 1807)—*Briefe* I, 162, 194 (Butler and Seiler, 80). The earliest reviewers took note of Hegel's polemic against "formalism." It is not surprising, therefore, that a breach between Schelling and Hegel followed. (I have ventilated the whole problem of Hegel's critique of "Schelling and his school" as well as I can in H. S. Harris, 1988 and 1990. Wherever differences of interpretation can be detected, the latter article should be preferred to the former. The discussion in this volume should take precedence over both, but I believe that there are no material disagreements between the article in the *Hegel-Jahrbuch* and what is said here.)

62. Compare Rosenkranz, 184–185 (Harris and Knox, 259) with letter 95 (1 May 1807, *Briefe* I, 162; Butler and Seiler, 80).

63. *Wastebook*, aphorism 9 (Rosenkranz, 539).

64. For the Identity-formula, see *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 87, lines 8–10; Harris and Cerf, 186). Hegel's critique of the "reduction programme" extends from *G.W.* IV, 84, line 31–91, line 27 (Harris and Cerf, 183–192).

65. See, for instance, *Faith and Knowledge* (Cerf and Harris, 70–82; *G.W.* IV, 327, line 17–336, line 31). (In Hegel's discussion, the doctrine is stated and its degeneration into a formal philosophy is analysed. *Formalism* is a further degeneration; Kant's philosophy is *formal*, but it is not *formalism*.)

66. See Cerf and Harris, 154–169 (*G.W.* IV, 387, line 31–399, line 1).

67. For the *joint* denunciation of Reinhold and Bardili, see Schelling's "On the Absolute Identity-System" (*G.W.* IV, 129–173). This is a "conversation between the author and his friend" (i.e., Hegel).

68. See the *Ideen* (2nd ed., 1803): *Werke* II, 198, 208–211; E. Harris and P. Heath, 158, 167–169.

69. Steffens recorded that Schlegel often spoke of Schelling's Absolute as the "night in which all cats are grey" (see Bonsiepen's note, *G.W.* IV, 485–486. The source is *Was ich erlebte*, IV, 312, Breslau, 1841).

70. Jean Paul, *The Horn of Oberon* (trans. Hale, 287 n.).

71. *Bruno*, *Werke* IV, 258 (Vater, 158–159).

72. But it may have been active earlier, because the metaphor of Night for the Absolute Identity in Nature is already present in the very first statements of the Identity Theory. We find it, for example, in Hegel's *Difference* essay. (*G.W.* IV, 16, lines 1–7; 23, lines 13–17; Harris and Cerf, 93–94, 103.)

73. *Fernere Darstellungen*, *Werke* IV, 405 (see also 403). M. Frank (1975, 68–72) has argued that the origin of the “dark night” metaphor is here. (W. Marx [1984, 38] thinks that Hegel's target must be Schelling, but thinks that the criticism is unjust. But if Hegel is criticizing Schelling, he is recanting a heresy of his own as well—see note 74.)

74. *Bruno* (see note 71). Both Schelling and Hegel had used the word *Abgrund* in expounding the “indifference” of the “Absolute Identity.” They probably took it from Kant (not Boehme, as claimed in *Night Thoughts*, 165). See, for instance, Schelling's *Ideen* (1797) and Hegel's *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 23, lines 13–17; 80, lines 28–30; Harris and Cerf, 103, 178). See also *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 413, lines 34–35; Cerf and Harris, 190). These cases are interesting, because the first and last are the “speculative abyss” and the middle one is the formal “abyss of Understanding” referred to in the present paragraph. This shows that Hegel had already appreciated and made use of the ambiguity that he plays upon here.

75. W. A. Kaufmann (1966, II, 28) gets this right; and R. Schacht (1975, 45) follows him. But neither of them comments on it, and they appear to regard it as insignificant. J. N. Findlay (1979, 13) says that Hegel's “Subject” is “a purely logical conception, definable in terms of the connected moments of the Universal, the Species and the Instance.” Neither the absolute nor the finite subject is a purely logical conception in the *Phenomenology*, but it is wise to regard subjectivity as a logical process. Compare further D. Henrich (1971, 95ff.), and for a “nonmetaphysical” interpretation of this dictum see T. Pinkard (1991). But Pinkard is concerned there with the *Logic* rather than the *Phenomenology*.

76. The quoted phrases come from paragraphs 748–749, where we shall return to “the first Substantiality” and the equalizing of the two *subsequent* “propositions of Subjectivity.” There is no “sure misunderstanding” of Spinoza here, as Solomon (1983, 256) asserts. Hegel knows that Spinoza—like Zarathustra—regards God as a “subject,” and, of course, as the absolute subject. He simply disagrees with Spinoza about what is logically necessary before anyone (even the absolute subject) can exist *as* a subject “for itself.” He may not be right (though I fancy that only Spinoza's God will ever *know* that), but he has not misunderstood Spinoza's theory. Indeed his own conception of “the first Substantiality” (in pars. 748–749, 755) depends upon his own full appreciation of Spinoza.

77. See Bonsiepen's note (*G.W.* IX, 486–487); and compare *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 87, line 1–88, line 19; Harris and Cerf, 186–188). Hegel does *not* cite this exact expression from either source.

78. This second moment of the triad in paragraph 17 has been variously identified. Most interpreters have seen a reference here to post-Kantian views. Fichte is an attractive candidate because he set up an explicit opposition of his own position (idealism) and that of Spinoza (dogmatism). But the claim that his Ego is “the very same simplicity, or undifferentiated, unmoved Substantiality” is not plausible because of his insistence that the Ego is a *Tathandlung*. On the contrary, it is *Fichtes Verdienst*, in Hegel's opinion, to have shown how radical the *negation* of substance has to be (see Introduction, pp. ##). For a summary of earlier views and an interesting but unconvincing view of his own, see Robert Solomon (1975).

79. For this initial characterization, see especially *Ethics* (II, prop. 40, schol. 2). *God* was first systematically defined in this way by Aristotle. But in Aristotle, “God” remains an

object of *imitation*. In Spinoza, the *scientia intuitiva* of God himself becomes the goal of human intellectual striving. One can, of course, go back beyond Aristotle to Parmenides and Heraclitus—and perhaps even to Pythagoras and Anaximander.

(Eric Voegelin [1968, 43] cites this passage in the context of a discussion in which “comprehension” is identified with practical control. This is the fundamental error in his interpretation of Hegel. He writes as if Hegel already wanted—like Marx and Engels—to make philosophy an instrument of change. Since Hegel was a conceptual idealist this makes him—as he would himself agree—a “sorcerer.” But just how far his “comprehension” was from any magical *domination* of the world can be seen by examining the placement and analysis of “magic” in his philosophy of religion.)

80. The *Phenomenology* (like Hegel's other “sciences”) is a “circle of circles,” since, as we shall see, every “*Gestalt* of consciousness” is a self-closing fortress that can defend itself against all comers. R. C. Solomon (1983, 258) says, “it [the circle] is a terrible metaphor; circles don't have ends and beginnings, and it is clear that what one has at the end of the . . . dialectic is *not* what one had at the beginning, except in the vague sense that they both refer to self.” But first, all circles constructed as plane figures *do* have “beginnings” in experience to which the compass marker must return at the “end” if the circle is to be complete; and secondly, in a “circle of circles,” the one that has to be drawn first is a *necessary* beginning, since it will keep the status of logical origin no matter how the whole system may be rotated or moved about afterwards. Admittedly, the speculative overlapping involves a greater “difference” than the empirically necessary overrun of a compass pencil, but the identity of *placement* holds. The “absolute knower” is a “sense-certain” consciousness who logically appreciates the “necessity” of her sense-certainty—instead of having the sceptical self-certainty of Descartes, who falsely believes that he can surrender the whole realm of sense-experience. (Of course, D. J. Schmidt [1988, 116] is right when he says that this consciousness “conceives of the beginning as a circle that is already underway.” Thus, “Now is Night”—but also “Midday,” etc.)

81. In fact, they make their first appearance at no great interval from one another (see pars. 177 and 210). But the explicit development of the theological doctrine has to wait until the phenomenology of the human community as such has reached completion (compare par. 671 with pars. 769–72). Only through the following out of the method stated in the Introduction can we resolve the paradox created by the necessity that what truly is must be substantial yet must with equal necessity be the self-knowledge of a subject. The resolution is well put by U. Claesges (1981, 110–111). “What truly is” logically has to be a conceptually self-communicating process.

82. See especially *Ethics* V, prop. 42 (the last proposition). The discussion of *amor Dei intellectualis* begins at V, prop. 15, but it is not called *intellectual* until V, prop. 33.

83. *Ueber Anmut und Wurde*, National Edition, XX, 303; some of the context is given by Bonsiepen and Heede (*G.W.* IX, 487). For a (bad) translation see Schiller (1875, 218). I cannot get rid of an uneasy feeling that the actual expression “Spielen der Liebe mit sich selbst” will eventually be found either in one of the Romantics or in one of their favorite authors (e.g. Hemsterhuis).

84. *Ethics* V, prop. 17. Anyone who begins at prop. 15 will understand why Hegel insists that we cannot be satisfied to intuit the *Wesen* without the *Form*. Spinoza certainly does not “lack the seriousness, suffering, patience and labor of the negative (i.e. of thought).” But Hegel implies that he—and Schelling after him—believed this pure intuition of the *Wesen* to be the ultimate goal.

85. Bonsiepen and Heede refer to the following passages: Fichte, *Science of Knowledge* (*Werke* I, 91; see Heath and Lachs, 93); *Sunclear Report* (*Werke* II, 375); Schelling, *Fernere Darstellungen* (*Werke* IV, 367–368, 376; the first of these Schelling passages is echoed in this present paragraph).

86. *Mysterium Magnum* 6, 1–3. My own understanding of the “seven qualities” depends entirely on the summary account in Brown (1977, 59–62). Brown provides a fuller list of references.

87. *G.S.A.* III, 73; Trask (Signet), 85. The influence of Schiller is very plain here, so this echo helps to confirm his focal importance at this point. (My comment that *Hyperion* lacks the *patience* of the negative is based on the conviction that Hölderlin’s hero is the *Gestalt* of the “Hard Heart” [pars. 663–668].)

88. The astonishing fact that it is not in any English-language dictionary of quotations testifies to the philosophical illiteracy of Anglophone literary scholars. It is often cited as “The Truth is the Whole,”—which facilitates the weaving of neo-Platonic fantasies and the spinning of “absolute coherence” webs. It ought to be obvious from the lowly position and elementary treatment of “whole and parts” in the logic of Essence that this dictum refers to a different kind of “wholeness.” The best treatment of the highly complex sense in which Hegel’s system is a whole is that of L. B. Puntel (1973—usefully reviewed by M. Westphal, 1983). But the elementary facts are that every Concept is a “whole” that “returns to itself” out of its division into a Judgment—a unity of opposites—and that every “presentation” of the System (the *Phenomenology* itself being one of two or, more properly, three such) is a circle of these conceptual circles that closes upon itself. (For the origins of Hegel’s philosophical *concept* of the whole in the *Parmenides* of Plato see F. Chiereghin, 1984.)

89. It should be obvious that I agree with R. C. Solomon (1983, 258), who connects the dictum with the thesis that “the true shape of truth is the scientific system.” But I think that it should also be connected with the *method* of the “system,” which is to begin from an *immediate* “whole” of “truth” and advance to the “truth-wholeness,” which has demonstrated itself in experience to be absolutely comprehensive.

90. Hegel’s direct target here is the “immediate” awareness of God in “feeling” that was set up as “absolute truth” by theologians such as Jacobi, Schleiermacher, and Eschenmayer. But about “sentences” it is helpful to remember what H. Hülsmann said (1966, 79):

The sense of the sentence is contained in each of its moments. But more than that. The sentence contains in each moment both speaker and hearer and therefore social communication as its moment. It contains them in such a way that they are contained at the same time in the absolute movement of spirit as concept . . . The sentence is the model of an absolute situation. But, of course, the concept of a model is not completely adequate, for sentence and actuality belong together.

I cite this from J. C. Flay (1984, 361, n. 9).

91. Paragraph 21 makes it clear that the science of experience begins with the logical concept of Becoming. The *Gestalt* of Sense-Certainty moves from Becoming to Being There (*Dasein*). What “is there” is what can be ostensively identified by *pointing at it*. Hegel called Becoming “the first concrete thought” in his Berlin lectures (see *Encyclopedia Logic*, sec. 88, Add.). In that same context, “life” and “spirit” are offered as “deeper” or “higher” forms of Becoming. Thus, what is taking place in the present paragraph is the *abstracting* of the simplest logical form present in “experience.”

92. Hence, Hegel says in the *Encyclopedia Logic*: “the highest form of the Nothing for itself would be freedom” (sec. 87h). But in this negative shape, freedom is only a “would be.” What it *is* (positively) in the “absolute affirmation” spoken of there is the “absolute knowing” of the chalice from which Spirit foams forth.

93. In the perspective of the “science of experience,” the “Big Bang” is a theory produced by our purposive activity of *sense-making*. Insofar as it makes sense of our experience, it is the perfection of our consciousness as Understanding, and as such it is the theoretical presupposition of our purposive activity as a rationally active community. Hegel’s own presupposition is the Aristotelian concept of the order of Nature as an *eternal* image of organism (pars. 162–165). But “Science” itself requires no presupposition. (On Hegel’s concept of teleology see J. N. Findlay, 1964 and M. Greene, 1976; but they do not discuss the *Phenomenology*.)

94. In contrast, the absolute selfhood that we shall observe in the “science of experience” moves and knows itself at every stage as a being of its own making. As external reflection, we are not allowed to do anything except watch.

95. For Görres and Wagner, the interested reader must go to the Critical Edition. For Fichte the references they give are *Werke* V, 186 and 543. But see also note 96.

96. “Cowpox-voices of the time.” Hegel applies this sobriquet to the minor “enlighteners” Campe and Salzmann in the *Wastebook* (aphorism 79, Rosenkranz, 555; *I.J.P.* III, 6, last aphorism). He speaks of Görres and Wagner as typical purveyors of the “formalism” of the newer “philosophical age of genius” that ensued upon the Enlightenment (Rosenkranz, 539, aphorism 9).

Fichte’s *Way to the Blessed Life* is actually a more likely source of the title “das Ewige,” because he associates it with “das Unveränderliche.” Quite probably, therefore, all of these terms come from Fichte, and Hegel relies on the unmistakable “moral world-order” to direct the reader towards him—see, especially, *Werke* V, 401–407. (C. O’Regan [1994, 124–125] agrees that Hegel has Fichte’s *Anweisung* in mind.)

Hegel’s notes in the *Wastebook* about *aeternitas*, *aivniow* and *aivn* should be remembered. He says that, apart from its employment by the Ptolemies and the Roman emperors, “This *aivn* seems otherwise to be peculiar to the New Testament” (aphorism 18, Rosenkranz, 541). There is a *locus classicus* that he ought to have remembered—*Timaeus*, 37d: “a moving image of eternity [*aivnow*].” Liddell and Scott indicate that in the New Testament, *aivn* is only used for “eternity” in plural or multiplicative modes; but for one noteworthy exception, see John 8:35. The use (both singular and plural) came to the early Christian authors from the Septuagint.

97. John 8:58 (the whole passage from 8:25 should be studied).

98. One of the merits of the article by John Sallis (1977) is that he recognized this problem. He also saw the direction in which the answer was to be sought. But because of his general conception of the Preface, he is satisfied with a looser mode of “consequence” than I believe we ought to seek (cf. 1977, 140–143). The dialectical view of “basic propositions” is one of the early signs of Hegel’s discontent with “intuitive” beginnings—cf. *Ann: Philosophie* (in *G.W.* VII) and, further, K. Westphal (1989, chap. 11).

99. This is often disguised or concealed by citing Hegel’s dogmatic position simply as “The Absolute is Subject.” This is how Hegel himself put it in his Table of Contents. But the proposition in his text is “everything turns on apprehending the true not as *substance* but just as much as *subject*”; and when he comes (in par. 18) to “what this is,” he says, “The living substance is, moreover, the being that is in truth subject etc.” The *substantiality* of God (his “unchangeability”) is just as important as his justice and love.

100. If we *apply* the doctrine of paragraph 24 to the three propositions of paragraph 23 in this way, we can see why it is neither a mere *repetition* of earlier statements nor an interruption of the flow of the argument, although it may appear to be both.

101. The *Phenomenology* turns Spirit into a Concept. The importance of this as a development in Hegel's struggle with the Kantian philosophy is brought out in different ways by H. S. Harris (1989b) and by L. Lugarini (1986, 77–119). A good commentary on "God is Spirit" is provided by L. Dupré (1984; see also 1982), but he depends mainly on Hegel's Berlin lectures on the *Philosophy of Religion*.

102. Compare *Religion, eine Religion stiften* and *so wie sie mehrere Gattungen* (1797), Nohl 376–378 (*Clio* 8, 1978/1979, 258–263); with *The Spirit of Christianity* (1798–1800), Nohl 293–296 (Knox, 244–247). E. L. Jurist (1987, 7) says, "The self-knowing sense of recognition has been largely ignored." I am not sure this is really true, but there has probably been too much emphasis on "recognition as the principle of *practical* philosophy" (to quote the title of Siep's 1979 book. R. R. Williams (1992) has the balance right. Jurist correctly insists that "self-recognition" is Hegel's *epistemological* principle. Gadamer (1960) may have been the first to see this—see Gadamer (1975, 307–308). (For a good discussion of cognitive self-recognition in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, see Paul Redding, 1987.)

103. See especially *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 407; Cerf and Harris, 180–181); and *System of Ethical Life* (Lasson, 1923, 461; Harris and Knox, 143). What is called "the religious view" in the first passage is identical with "philosophy's view of the world" in the second. This may already have been true in the "Systemfragment" of 1800 (although in what we have, there is an opposition between religion and reflective philosophy, very like the opposition between religion and the "philosophy of subjectivity" in *Faith and Knowledge*—see Nohl, 347–348; Knox and Kroner, 310–313; and *Night Thoughts*, 6–14).

104. The aether was a focal topic in natural philosophy from Newton's time onwards (at the latest). Lambert and Kant both discussed it. For background, see J. Edwards (1991) and E. Förster (1991).

105. Werner Marx (1975, 34–35) characterizes the face-to-face situation of "natural consciousness" and "Science" very well. Each of them is "self-consciousness," but the "natural consciousness" of educated present-day common sense does not fully appreciate the "self" of which it is conscious. The exercise of "recollection" is necessary to bring it to see its own identity with the scientific consciousness.

106. The metaphor of "philosophy standing on its head" probably originated in Jacobi's *Spinoza Letters* (cf. D. Henrich, 1992, 44). Hegel first speaks of the philosopher's world as an inversion of the world of common sense in his Introduction to the *Critical Journal* (see *G.W.* IV, 125, lines 3–4; Di Giovanni and Harris, 283). When Karl Marx borrowed the image from Hegel, in his turn, to express what his economic science had done to German Idealism (see *Das Kapital*, 2nd ed. 1873, preface), he was correct in one way, but he went wrong in another way—or perhaps in two other ways. He was using the image correctly in that the Marxian science does reassert the primacy of the practical standpoint, and in that sense Marxism did put Hegel (or rather his inverted dialectic) back on his naturally conscious feet again. But Marx and the Marxists went wrong when they interpreted what Hegel had done in their own practical frame of reference, taking Absolute Spirit as a supposed *cause* of the human social structure and the Idea as a transcendent *controller* (just as those who thought of stoning Jesus were mistaken, since he was not claiming identity with the older divine *authority*). Also, the Marxists went wrong when they ignored the speculative character of their own double negation. Science continues to stand in an inverted relation to natural con-

sciousness even when it is *practical* science. "Let Science be in its self what it may, in its relationship to the immediate self-consciousness it presents itself as something inverted." Natural consciousness can no more easily possess itself in the "beyond" of a speculative economic theory, than it can in the heaven of a speculative logic.

The claim to speak authoritatively *for* the natural consciousness—ignoring the right of "absolute independence" which Hegel so trenchantly asserts—is undoubtedly the most fundamental error of the Marxian practical science. When T. W. Adorno (1993, 87) reverses Hegel's dictum into "The whole is the untrue" by taking the Absolute as "a positivity that can master everything that opposes it," he is treating it as if it were the triumph of the proletariat. But the "necessity" of the progression to Absolute Knowing exists only for those who desire that goal; and when one desires it, one discovers that philosophical knowledge has nothing to do with power.

107. When we return to this point in paragraph 62, this will be seen to be an important clarification of what is meant by the proposition "God is being"; and—in spite of the evident absurdities that it generates, both logical and ethical—we shall see how absolute the right of self-certainty is when we come to Hegel's discussion of "Conscience" (especially pars. 639–655).

108. The natural consciousness has the right to ask for a ladder, but it is not obliged to use it. Only for those of us who want to know *absolutely* what human knowing *is*, is the ladder *necessary*. Thus, the answer to E. Fackenheim's question (1967, 70) why the moral or the religious consciousness should be so *presumptuous* as to grasp the ladder is: "If the drive is felt strongly enough, the boundary will be crossed. Otherwise the higher rungs of the ladder will appear to be only a game (idle or perilous, according to the temperament of the supposed observer)."

If it is legitimate to identify the desire for philosophical comprehension with "the spirit of the philosopher," then we can almost agree with S. Rosen (1974, 129): "The ladder to the Absolute is not historical necessity, or even the negation of the negation, but the spirit of the philosopher." (But he is offering us a false option, because the philosopher recognizes teleological "necessity" in the experiential process of double inversion.)

From the point of view of the logic of reality itself (which is "pure thinking" in its abstraction), the "ladder" can be cast away once it has been climbed—like the ladder of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* (cf. P. Miklowitz, 1983, 71). That is why Hegel could dispense with it and supply a much simpler "introduction to Logic" for the *Encyclopedia*. But from the point of view of the System as a whole, the concretely universal Concept (of experience) that recollects itself as the ladder remains crucially essential. It shows us how *all of us* (not merely the speculative philosophers) belong to the "procession of the Spirit" (which is what we arrive at again in the Philosophy of Spirit); and how "life" comprehends the Idea reciprocally.

109. *Encyclopedia*, section 25, Anm. A long line of interpreters have held that "the *Phenomenology* is *either* an introduction, *or* it is a part of the System" (Haering, 1934, 133). One would have thought that *either* Hegel's lifelong concern about the problem of "beginning" *or* the curiously ambivalent and dialectical character of this Preface in 1807 (or both!) would make everyone cautious about their logical intuitions in this matter (see further, William Rowe, 1986). But H. H. Ottman thinks that the exclusive alternative is valid (while holding that the book is a failure in both ways—1973, 192–197; cf. 145); while K. Dove (1970), W. Maker (1981, 1990) and R. D. Winfield (1984a, 1984b, 1989) seem to think that Hegel came to his senses after 1817, when he abandoned the claim that the *Phenomenology* is a "part" of

the System. A bird's-eye view of how the *Phenomenology* can be both the "introduction" and the "first part" is given in my "Comment" on K. Dove (1982); how far it is successful (in either role) this commentary aims to show.

H. F. Fulda (1965) gives by far the best treatment of the whole problem. He rightly says (1966, 29, 52ff.) that the philosophical-historical introduction of the *Encyclopedia* does not imply that Hegel regarded the *Phenomenology* as superannuated. The view that the incorporation of a phase called Phenomenology in the Philosophy of Spirit indicates this—a view argued at length by M. J. Petry in Hegel, *Berlin Phenomenology* (1981, xiii–xciv), and often reiterated—is completely mistaken.

Hegel himself taught "consciousness-theory" at Nuremberg as an introduction to the System. I agree with W. A. de Vries (1988, 87–89) that we need critical texts of Hegel's Nuremberg lectures; but I do not think that they will make any difference to the pseudo-problem of two "phenomenologies." Anyone who studies the Jena systematic texts (for which we have good editions) can see that the "phenomenology" of the finite consciousness was already in its *systematic* place when Hegel wrote the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. This last deals with the "appearing" of the self-consciously philosophical World-Spirit—which is quite a different topic in spite of some overlapping in the early stages. (Cf. the discussion by R. G. McRae [1985, 6–8]. McRae uses the "second Phenomenology" to illuminate the "first," and he draws attention to the necessity of completing "first" before the incorporation of the second within the System could be attempted.)

On the abbreviation of the *Phenomenology* for pedagogical purposes at Nuremberg, see W. Bonsiepen (1977, 72–74); see further, G. Baptist (1989, 278–283) and K. Kozu (1986).

110. Whatever we think about the status of the *Phenomenology* as a "philosophic science" in the context of the Berlin *Encyclopedia*, the deletion of the clause "as the first part of the system of science" is one correction of Hegel's that no modern editor (or translator) ought to accept silently (as Miller, for example, has accepted it). Baillie followed a more proper course by recording it in a footnote. It happens that Miller's silent acceptance of the revision does no harm, because Hegel repeats the assertion a little further on (par. 35)—and his revision never reached that point. But without that accident, the reader would have been deprived of one valuable clue for the interpretation of this extremely difficult and complicated book. It is far better to be told twice that this is the first part of Hegel's "System of Science."

111. Heidegger himself suggested this analogy, but his view that the Absolute is *present* throughout the *Phenomenology* obliges him to maintain that the *Phenomenology* is not an "introduction" to philosophy (1980, 41–42; 1988, 29–30). Hegel clearly holds that it *is* that. But in Hegel's view both "common sense" and "Science" are present together at the start. Everything depends, therefore, on what counts as an "introduction to philosophy."

Hegel did regard "Science" as a proper object for devotional feelings. Compare, for instance, Gabler's report of his spontaneous response when the students held a festival in his honor in February 1806, and his inscriptions for the albums of van Ghert (Sept. 1806) and Held (30 Sept. 1809). See G. Nicolin, report 92, 69–70; and *Briefe* IV (i), 167–168.

112. See *Difference* (G.W. IV, 81, line 28–83, line 8; 91, lines 19–27; 92, lines 18–36; Harris and Cerf, 179–181, 192, 195).

113. *Werke* II, 168 (Chisholm, 3).

114. *Werke* II, 328.

115. Fackenheim, 1967, 32. But G. di Giovanni (in M. Baur and J. Russon, eds., forthcoming) has now put forward a good case for reference to J. F. Fries. Perhaps the most plausible hypothesis is that Hegel means to condemn a wide range of religious and romantic intu-

itionists, and not someone specific—cf. the use of the pistol metaphor in the *Science of Logic* (G.W. XXI, 53, 20–25; Miller, *Logic*, 67). But that is many years later (1831).

116. See *Night Thoughts*, chapter 1, and my introduction to the *Jena Logic and Metaphysics* (ed. Burbidge and Di Giovanni).

117. Translated in Di Giovanni and Harris (1985). W. Hartkopf (1976) argues for the influence of Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism*.

118. This paragraph shows that the supposed *problem* of “two phenomenologies” rests on a simple misunderstanding (see note 109). Hegel expounded his concept of individual *Bildung* (educative formation) for his high school juniors (14–15 years old) in 1810/1811. See George and Vincent (sec. 41–43). R. K. Maurer (1965, 45–61 and 1980) has much helpful discussion of the sense of *Bildung* in different contexts. (Cf. also F. Nicolin, 1955.)

119. In 1831, Hegel substituted “selbst bewusste Geist” for “Weltgeist.” Clearly the two are identical, but it is the philosopher who is the self-consciousness of the “universal individual,” the “self-conscious [world] spirit.” When the clue supplied by *Weltgeist* is removed, the difference between the “universal individual” and the *particular* individual” is easily misunderstood, because the temptation to read *besondere* as *einzelne* becomes very strong.

120. Miller's translation of “besondere Individuum” as “single individual” is mistaken; that would be *einzelne*. The reference is to a *particular* stage of *social* culture. (The argument of this paragraph strongly suggests that the declared *parallel* between Phenomenology and Logic in 1807 can best be understood through the later doctrine of the evolution of the logical Idea in the history of thought.)

T. I. Oisermann (1979, 112) takes this sentence in Miller's way, and uses it to show that the social *Aufhebung* of “natural bodily determinacy” is the negation of the individual's subjectivity. This is a fair specimen of “Soviet Hegel criticism.” A good idea of the condition of *Phenomenology* studies in the Soviet bloc at the time of the second Hegel Centennial can be gathered from E. Lange (1970). It is not a stimulating or inviting prospect. I have for the most part ignored it.

121. We must distinguish different forms of “veiling” here. Some “vestiges” are direct survivals of previous modes of consciousness. They may (indeed, they *will*) be transformed, but they cannot be identified with the “forgotten” substance of prior logical developments. The consciousness of those, where it is present, will be predominantly *negative*. Thus, Robespierre and Napoleon both presuppose Louis XIV, but they do not see themselves as his heirs. The situation of Catholics in a Protestant culture is rather different. (Collingwood's “law of primitive survivals” contains the same ambiguity.)

122. We should remember that before the advent of the camera, members of the cultured classes frequently made silhouettes and sent them to one another.

123. This is where W. A. Kaufmann (1966, II, 47, n. 6) is led to suggest that Hegel may have heard the still unpublished lines from Faust, Part I. Hegel uses both *erwerben* and *Besitz nehmen* in his description of individual *Bildung*; and the “inorganic nature” that we “consume” (as the food of our spiritual life) is “schon erworbenes Eigenthum des allgemeinen Geistes” (as the “substance” that offers itself to us in that “inorganic” form).

I. Soll (1972) uses paragraph 28 to argue that Hegel had an elitist conception of education. Since higher education was socially restricted in Hegel's world, this appears to me to be an unjustly anachronistic criticism. Hegel's general view of Religion and of the philosophical transformation of Religion is “Lutheran-democratic.” (A more balanced impression of Hegel's educational attitude can be gathered from L. Dickey, 1987. For a collection of the evidence see G. Thaulow, 1854; or in English, F. L. Luqueer, 1896.)

124. This is the point at which to remember what Marx said about the *Phenomenology*:

The outstanding achievement of Hegel's *Phenomenology*—the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle—is, first, that Hegel grasps the self-creation of man as a process, objectification as loss of the object, as alienation (*Entäusserung*) and sublation of this alienation; that he grasps the essence of *labor*, and conceives objective man, true because actual man, as the result of his *own labor*. (K. Marx, 1844, MEGA, I, 574; trans. by T. B. Bottomore, 1964, 202).

Hegel's procedure validates what Marx says because our *intellectual* labor completes the process of *Bildung*, which *begins* with the self-discovery of the serf in his labor and becomes voluntary self-transformation in the Unhappy Consciousness. See also W. Sünkel (1982) and, for a detailed account, S. Reuss (1982).

J. McCumber (1991, 301ff.) claims that the *telos* of the *Phenomenology* is the "consolidated self." This is true, but it is one-sided in its form of statement. Spirit is "the I that is We," and its perfect self-consciousness (which is its *telos*) is a society which (as Hegel would put it) "knows what it says." That society can exist even if many of the philosophers (and, *a fortiori*, others) among its members are not "consolidated selves" in McCumber's sense. What is essential—as McCumber says elsewhere (1994)—is a certain "company of words."

125. I agree with W. Marx (1975, 39–40, n. 3) that we do not need to worry about the different sorts of history that Hegel distinguished in his maturity, as Fulda did (1965, 217ff.). The *Phenomenology* "comprehends time" at several levels, and we must simply look for the most appropriate standpoint and data as we go along. We may well find Fulda's distinctions illuminating when we reach the end, but they will not help us much on the way. (He distinguishes history of absolute Spirit, world history, history of philosophy, and history of culture.)

126. The view that the section "Plant and animal" (pars. 689–690) is an interpretation of Hinduism is mistaken; and the reference to the caste-system (par. 700) probably refers to the report of Herodotus about Ancient Egypt.

127. Miller avoided the problem by leaving out the difficult clause, and he gives only a rather loose paraphrase of Hegel's text. Translated literally, with the cancelled version in angled brackets and the additions of 1831 in square brackets, it reads as follows: "Meanwhile, he does at the same time, have lesser efforts to make, because *in itself* this has been accomplished: the content is already actuality cancelled into possibility <and> the immediacy subdued, [and the embodied shaping is already degraded into its abbreviation, the simple determination of thought]. Already a *mental* thing (ein *Gedachtes*), <it is property of the individuality> [the content is *property* of the substance]; there is no longer the *being-there* <to turn over into *being-in-itself*, but only the *in-itself* to turn over into the form of *being-for-self*> [in the form of being-in-itself, but only what is neither still merely original, nor submerged in thereness, but rather already *recollected* in-itself to turn over into the form of *being-for-self*]."

Physically the *Dasein* has vanished. But it is *transposed* into the mode of memory (which is *substantial* because it is objectively true and logically eternal); in other words, it is now in the *element* of the self, but it is not actual self-consciousness. Even when we do remember it, we are conscious of it as a substantial world in the past. This first *Erinnerung* is quite different from—indeed, it is diametrically opposed to—the philosophical *Erinnerung* in which the remembering of the past is the foaming of the chalice of spirits, by means of which we knowingly constitute ourselves within the community of self-conscious spirit. (On *Erinnerung* as

the principle of the unity of the ego, see H. Schmitz, 1964; V. Verra, 1970; R. Bodei, 1975, 155–83; P.-J. Labarrière, 1979; and A. Peperzak, 1979.)

128. Hegel's "ordinary" usage of *Vorstellung* is well characterized by G.R.G. Mure:

In a narrow sense *Vorstellung* means "imaginative presentation" . . . but Hegel more often uses it broadly to mean a mode and content of experience in which analysis would show a developing series of phases—roughly sensing, sense-perception, memory, imagination (imaging), and thought (understanding)—held together and presenting an object. It is in fact just what the ordinary man calls "thinking" (1965, 15n.).

For the very reason given in Mure's last sentence here, his preferred translation "pictorial thinking" (adopted by Miller in the even more peculiar form "picture-thinking") was an unfortunate (and sometimes misleading) choice.

Willem de Vries (1987) has given a good introductory account of Hegel's theory. For an earlier (and more detailed) discussion see M. Clark (1960). The fullest and most recent account in English is that of de Vries (1988). (For a technically precise discussion of the theory as presented in the *Encyclopedia*, see J. Sallis, 1986, and D. J. Cook, 1986. All of the discussion deals with the *Encyclopedia* rather than the *Phenomenology*.)

129. Even the completely determinate "ideas" that are "the same as the order of things" at the sensible level do not escape from their dialectical character (and so they do not fail to be real *Gedanken*). To refer to "this precise shade," for example, we have to designate it *as* a "shade" (and more fully as "the shade of red on this card"). Our actual "sense-experience" is *made up of* "concrete universals"—i.e., "universals" that realize themselves concretely as "singular" through some "particular" species-type. It is not my task to expound empiricist "epistemology" from a Hegelian standpoint. We shall come back to it briefly in the "Perception" chapter, but the "natural consciousness" of educated common sense is not much troubled by its problems. That is why so much philosophizing is readily dismissed as a kind of "glass bead game." One of the most valuable shapes of intellectual despair in the "Science of experience" is the recognition of how many "glass bead games" there are—including our own, for, as Kierkegaard showed us, the pursuit of "Absolute Knowledge" still leaves the philosophical beggar at the gate of the palace. (This is quite *true*, even though it is not a valid objection against the "absoluteness" of her "knowledge.")

130. Baillie assumed that "what is left over" is the task of subsuming "these forms." In effect, he emended the text. Miller inherited from him the conviction that "what is left over" must be a *task*; but instead of revising the text, he reads *Vorstellung* and *Bekanntschaft* as task words: "to represent and to get acquainted." That this is wrong is rendered quite certain by the discussion of *ein Bekanntes* and *das Bekannte* that immediately follows. "What is left over" is, first of all, not a task, but our *inheritance* from the labor that we have been *spared*. Our *task* is the *höhere Umbildung* of "the forms." "The forms" themselves (as *bekannte Vorstellungen*) are what "is left over" when *Dasein* is transcended. They are what we have in our memory-banks as a result of our pre-philosophical education.

131. The awareness that what was familiar had lost its proper historical vitality was common among the Romantic thinkers. Gadamer (1975, 325) cites the Lyceum Fragments of Friedrich Schlegel:

The two basic principles of so-called historical criticism are the postulate of the commonplace and the axiom of familiarity. The postulate of the commonplace is that

everything that is really great, good and beautiful is improbable, for it is extraordinary or at least peculiar. The axiom of familiarity is that things must always have been just as they are with us, for things are naturally like this.

132. In 1807, Hegel identified this “particular spirit” with “the immediate mediation-process, or the one that is there” (*G.W.* IX, 26, lines 16–17). Obviously, he decided that this adds nothing, because he cancelled it. On the whole, I agree that it only makes his meaning harder to grasp. But it does emphasize the difference between the remembering of past experience in ordinary life—the immediate or *daseiende Vermittlung*—without which we would not have a shared world at all—and the remembering of the past with the object of *comprehending* why the world we share is the way it is (and what kind of community “we” are, who live and move between the worlds we have lost and the one that we perceive).

133. The mistaken claim involved in Collingwood’s “reenactment” theory of history (at least as it is often interpreted) is that the historian “reenacts” the thought of individual agents. The thought that has to be “resurrected” in history is, first of all, that which is the “property of the Substance”—in other words, the world-interpretation that everyone in that “particular” world shares. It is that, for instance, which archaeologists can resurrect—without knowing anything about the “thoughts” of individual agents and having no record of “thought” at all (in the narrow, subjective, sense). We do not “reenact Caesar’s thought” as he decided to cross the Rubicon; and we only invite sceptical satires when we speak like that. We interpret Caesar’s recorded actions in the context of how everyone presumably thought about them at the time; and we make the *same sort* of reasonable (but debatable) hypotheses about what Caesar *intended* (i.e., about what he personally “thought”) that the rest of his world could have made (and no doubt did). But all of this is only the prelude for our historical “comprehension” of Caesar’s world—which is a kind of thoughtful awareness of it that it *could not* have of itself.

134. For the historical evolution of the methods of “analysis” and “synthesis” in Hegel’s studies and works, see the essay of R. Pozzo in M. J. Petry (ed., 1993).

135. I am referring to Socrates as he would have appeared to Hegel (not to the less determinate *elenchus* of the problematic “historical” Socrates). According to my interpretation, Socrates “fought” the Sophists—as Hegel says in his lectures on the *Encyclopedia Logic* (sec. 121, Add.)—because their concern with Understanding was more “vulgar” than his. Like Bacon, they sought for the knowledge that is “power.” But we should not ignore their contribution to “science” any more than we ignore Bacon’s. It is the “absolute power” of the Understanding which becomes, through “determinate negation,” the moving force in the advance of consciousness towards “absolute knowing” (compare R. Schacht, 1975, 52–56). A good exposition of the “place of Understanding” in Hegel’s logical theory will be found in J. W. Burbidge (1990 or 1992, chap. IV). Cf. also the remarks of D. J. Schmidt (1988, 79–86).

136. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A.6 (978b), and elsewhere. As for Socrates having the “greatest strength,” we should remember his prophecies to the judges, in the context of Plato’s remark about the *polis* being *marvellously strong* (*Politicus* 302a—cited by Hegel in the *Natural Law* essay, *G.W.* IV, 460, lines 17–18; Knox and Acton, 106).

137. According to T. W. Adorno (1993, 122–123), Hegel requires an attitude of aesthetic appreciation which reduces his logical progression to a sort of music. This view is just as unsound as the opposite view that the Absolute is “absolute mastery” (see note 106). What he says earlier (1993, 56) is correct: “Hegel was in fact granted something praised, usually without justification, in artists: sublimation; he truly possessed life in its colored reflection,

in its recapitulation in Spirit." Kaufmann (1966, II, 51, n. 30) even finds a reference to Dionysus Zagreus in the *Zerrissenheit* of the Spirit. This is possible, because Truth is soon to be called the *Bachantische Taumel*, but I cannot believe that many readers would have recognized it. Hegel's reference seems, rather, to be to the Roman destruction of political life—and, of course, to *Rameau's Nephew*. (For a strictly "conceptual" account of the "identity of death and life" in the *Phenomenology* see P.-J. Labarrière, 1970b, 54–78.)

138. It is difficult for an Anglo-Saxon reader in the 1990's to enter into the perspective of Jena in 1805–1807, but I cannot help feeling that Hegel would not have regarded Tetens (still less Platner) as part of the essential common stock of his audience. Reinhold, of course, is different, because he was a prominent figure on the contemporary scene. But it is evident from Hegel's language that he is *not* here referring to contemporaries. What Cacciaguida promised Dante in the *Comedy* applies to the *Phenomenology*: "Però ti son mostrate in queste rote/ Nel monte e ne la valle dolorosa/ Pur l'anime che son di fama note" (*Paradiso* XVII, 136–138: "Therefore to thee are shown within these Wheels/ Or on the Mount, and in the dolorous Valley/ Only the souls that are to Fame well known"). Hegel's epic has only the *Gestalten* of consciousness as its characters—"shapes" which are like mantles that can descend on different heroes at different times, so that *names* would have a misleading effect. But he must surely have taken Dante's example all the more to heart.

139. That Hegel *means* to associate the Crucifixion symbolically with the historic downfall of "Beauty" (the perfect harmony of natural consciousness made *visible* by the Greeks) is evident in the body of the work when he speaks of "the night in which substance was betrayed and made itself into subject" (par. 703). It was the subject who claimed identity with the substance who was literally betrayed in the night of Gethsemane, but the substance that was betrayed *into* subjectivity was the Religion of Art (which rose to the intuitive concept of the Ethical Substance and then fell into the personal subjectivity of Art proper). "Beauty" survives in the "element of the subject" until it becomes a mode of religious faith again (the Beautiful Soul) at the dawn of "absolute knowledge." (pars. 703–704 should be examined carefully in connection with par. 32.)

140. When we read of *La belle Wolfienne* in six volumes, by Samuel Formey, we can appreciate the positive contribution of the soap opera to our culture rather better than we otherwise might have done.

141. I take the unmistakable reference to Descartes (and Spinoza) in paragraph 33—"to make the individual into a substance that is thought and thinks" (*G.W.* IX, 28, line 17)—to be a confirmation of my interpretation of the *analytical phase* of culture which produces fixed *Gedanken* above (par. 32).

142. This unmistakable reference to Fichte (*G.W.* IX, 28, line 27) goes a long way to confirm that he is the target of the earlier attack on propositional definitions of God as a fixed-point subject (see par. 23—*G.W.* IX, 21, lines 6–7).

143. Of course, any "Hegelian" who still needs "Faith" can *define* a transcendent "God" in any way that is consistently continuous with these two philosophical poles. What one *cannot* do is successfully *conceive* this being in its transcendent aspect. Thomist theologians—such as B. Welte (1952)—are wise to insist on the distinction between "ontic" and "ontological" identity. But J. Möller (1951, 155–156) is mistaken in maintaining that Hegel begins with an "unproven presupposition." Precisely because he does not do that, the distinction between "ontic" and "ontological" is not possible for him. On the ambiguity of discourse, see D. J. Schmidt (1988, 141–143).

Lauer's title *Hegel's Concept of God* can refer only to Lauer's own *non-Hegelian* concept

of the Christian Trinitarian God which Hegel often discusses. Lauer's "concept" is non-Hegelian because faith in the existence of *this* God cannot be successfully sublated into philosophical consciousness without residue. Hegel's own Concept of God is a matter of *logic*, not of *faith*. If his logic is sound, then we are all obliged to share this Concept. But it has always been clear to those who employ the concept of "Faith" that faith *cannot* be logically obligatory.

144. The "substantial community" that I mentioned previously is *logically* grounded. It is the universal community of rational "selves" living, dead, and yet unborn; but it is a real "substance," not a bare concept or essence. Thus, it is the "subject" that knows itself not only in Logic but in philosophy as a whole. The whole philosophical system is the "actual knowing of what truly is" (par. 73).

145. This identity at the climax is not surprising, because the science of consciousness becomes the "phenomenology of Spirit" as soon as we reach "self-consciousness." But we need to remember it when Hegelian "encyclopedists" try to argue that the "phenomenology of Spirit" is not a necessary science (or that everything necessary in it has been incorporated into the encyclopedic philosophy of Spirit). This thesis can be seen to be logically mistaken.

146. In case anyone thinks that it is odd to include "religion" *within* "the complete *Weltlichkeit* of consciousness," we need only point out that chapter VI, which is the declared "*Weltlichkeit* of consciousness," ends at the same point at which chapter VII ends. The religious may not like to see the "experience" of God comprehended *completely* within our experience of "the world," but we cannot avoid the conclusion that Hegel intends exactly that consequence—and he is confirming it by implication at this point in the Preface (which was, for him, a postscript).

147. There is a recent book by S. Dellavalle (1992) in which this view is half-adopted. In the earlier literature, the relation between the *Phenomenology* and the *Lectures* has been examined seriously by J. Beaufort (1983). But the general tendency even of students who study the relationship is to assume that the Berlin lectures must be the ultimate standard. This assumption leads Beaufort to be satisfied with a merely linear temporal parallel between the two works (1983, 143), and it causes Dellavalle to focus attention exclusively on those sections of the *Phenomenology* that are more or less explicitly "historical." My view is that we must take Hyppolite's assertion (1946, 42; 1974, 38—the position accepted by Dellavalle) that "the *Phenomenology* is not exactly a philosophy of the history of the world" as a *determinate* negation. We must begin with the understanding that the book is a complete "system of historical (i.e., of *temporal*) consciousness, while the *Lectures* offer only the theory of the *Weltgeist* as the perfected *objectivity* of Spirit.

For a good account of how the *Philosophy of History* lectures should be read within the context of the "science of experience," see J. Walker (1989). See also W. Jaeschke (1984) and R. Ahlers (1984). For an interesting critical attack on the *Philosophy of History* lectures, see G. di Giovanni (1984).

148. This is the proper context in which to understand R. Aschenberg's (1976) thesis that the *Phenomenology* is a "pre-categorical" ontology of the *Gestalten des Bewusstseins*. L. B. Puntel develops a significant parallel between Phenomenology, Logic and the "theory of Spirit as such" (1973, 132–173)—see also his discussion of the relation between Phenomenology and Logic (*ibid.*, 47–50). Compare also G. Jarczyk (1981 in 1986, 79–86) and P.-J. Labarrière (1982 in 1986, 96–101).

149. Feuerbach was perhaps the first to see that the concept of God as Spirit has a dialogical theory of truth at its foundation. Compare L. Feuerbach (1846, II, 207, cited by Fulda-Hen-

rich, 1973, 18). But he thought that Hegel's dialectic does not live up to what the justice of dialogue requires. Like most modern interpreters, he thought that the dialectic of experience could be progressive only by being strictly negative. He overlooked two things: first, that every position of finite consciousness is recognized as a necessary truth-position; and secondly, that Absolute Knowing *does* return into its own beginning. Because we are really recollecting a consciousness that is "talking to itself," it is more accurate to call the dialogue "Platonic"—"thought as the dialogue of the soul with itself"—than to call it "Socratic," as do W. Wieland (1966, in Fulda-Henrich, 1973, 70) and Y. Klein (1971, 373–375, 382–383). But see also chapter 4, note 5.

150. R. van Roden Allen (1983) has dealt effectively with philosophical "resolve." There is also an important sense in which the movement from one stage to the next requires the abandonment of a resolve. A. Rosenthal (1971, 205–212) correctly makes the point that the necessity of confronting failure arises from our lives in the world and is not imposed by the logic of our inquiry. But *how* we deal with the failure is a contingent matter of our choice. Kierkegaard was right to argue that Hegel's philosophy *presupposes* "resolve," and wrong to suppose that this is an effective criticism of Hegel's "system." There is a circular relation between *doing* philosophy and "resolving" to do it. We begin to do it "instinctively," and we discover and define the "resolve" as we go. The phenomenology of *Begierde* resolves the paradox. Of course, those who think that the "system" is self-sufficient *without* the *Phenomenology* must deal with Kierkegaard's critique as best they can; see the second part of the final "Ritornello" in *Odyssey*. (The fact that the "resolves" for the two logical sciences are *interdependent* is the truth that is "known falsely" by those who maintain that the *Phenomenology* is only a "self-accomplishing" scepticism" [par. 78] in preparation for the *Logic*. Compare note 109.)

151. I have identified the terms in this way because in "the truth of Enlightenment" Hegel makes these two collapse into one; but their first appearance in our tradition was as "atoms and void" and as the Mosaic Creator, respectively. The "Spirit" first appears in Stoicism and in Philo. But in the very next paragraph, Hegel himself offers us "atoms and void" as the first speculative recognition of the *identity* of the two estranged sides.

152. Only the Epicureans can, with propriety, be said to have "comprhended the *Void* as the moving principle." In their system the atoms all rained *downwards*, and one can say that this directionality belongs to the *Void* (while only the capacity for swerving slightly belongs to the atoms). In earlier atomism every atom had *its own* moving principle. But since the direction of motion was mechanically fixed as soon as collision occurred, Hegel may be ignoring this technical distinction between the schools. I have tried to show in the commentary why it ought not to be ignored.

153. A. F. Ashbaugh (1979) inverts the systematic relationship of Phenomenology and Logic by saying, "the *Science of Logic* establishes the formal foundation for the system of essences unfolded in the *Phenomenology*." It would be interesting to see this thesis made out, but her way of arguing for it is certainly not convincing. (For further discussion of the relation between Phenomenology and Loc, see the "Ritornello" in *Odyssey*.)

Chapter 2

The Preface (ii): Problems and Polemics

As a critical introduction to “Science,” the Phenomenology appears to the naïve reader simply as a great spring-cleaning operation. To make ironic use of a famous phrase of Locke’s, Hegel is engaged in “clearing away rubbish” (quite prominently the rubbish of John Locke and his “incomparable Mr. Newton”). But why can we not follow the precept of Jesus and let the dead bury their dead? Why can we not say goodbye to all that and embark joyfully on a new life in the speculative kingdom of absolute truth? From Hegel’s earlier comments about the Preface itself, and about how the “result” must not be sundered from its total process of development, we can readily supply our own answer. Our survey of the thematic content of the science has already shown that it is by no means merely a negative progress that we are going to make. But the result does seem to be negative. Like Locke clearing the ground for Newton’s methods, the Phenomenology makes a clean slate for a new science of logic. But that is not all that it does. It is a science in its own right; and the critical part of the Preface, which now follows, shows us (in an empirical way) why it is necessary.¹

(a) Some “Fixed Thoughts”: Falsity, Facts and Mathematics

38. *How far Phenomenology is negative or contains the false:* The whole “science of experience” looks like a mere banishing of errors. So why can’t we dispense with it? The answer involves clarifying the relation between truth and falsity. This is ordinarily misunderstood in a way that makes mathematical cognition appear—quite wrongly—to be the ideal of science.

Hegel now begins to clarify the “fixed thoughts” about scientific truth, which he mentioned at the end of paragraph 35. The primitive assumption of the natural consciousness is that mere “appearance” is false and should be got rid of. Why do we need a “science of appearance”? Why can we not just put the mistakes aside and speak of “science” only when we reach “the *true* that is in the shape of the *true*”? The answer is that this involves a misconception of the relation between truth and falsity. The science that is founded upon the concept of truth and falsity as mutually exclusive is mathematics. Philosophy cannot adopt the ideal (or the method) of mathematics.

For philosophy, “the false” is not what is simply untrue, but what is *unphilosophical*; and the sum of what is “unphilosophical” is ordinary human life itself. When Hegel says later that “Truth is the Bacchanalian revel” (par. 47), part of what he means is that philosophical logic is not a “ballet of bloodless categories,” but the interpretation of human life. The revel of the real Bacchantes was as unphilosophical as life can be. But the “science of logic” cannot be mathematical, because logic is “for the sake of life.” The logic that results from the “science of experience” cannot be isolated from the experience that leads to it without being falsified into a kind of mathematics. It is the mathematical ideal itself that is “simply false” for philosophy. “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”²

39. T and F are two of the fixed thought-elements that have to be made self-moving. Truth is not like money; and there is nothing simply “false.” The substantial truth is negative (both as self-limiting and as self-knowing). Knowing occurs in “false” modes. Here the knower must be distinguished from what is “true.” But truth itself is the identity of knowing with the true. This does not mean that the false is a *moment* of the true. To say there is a grain of truth in every error is itself a sceptical error. When we reach the absolute truth, its moments can no longer be *called* “true” and “false.”

In the first place, ordinary common sense is mistaken about its own traffic with the concepts of truth and falsity. It *fixes* them as opposed “values.” Everyone who has ever done an “objective test” knows that the symbols T and F can occur outside “*Principia Mathematica* and related systems” (to borrow an expression of Gödel’s); and those who set the tests know, or ought to know, that the accepted values do change. Many thoughtful students pondering their “scores” are made vividly aware that Lessing’s Nathan was right: one’s genuine knowledge is not like coins in one’s pocket.³

Hegel’s denial that there *is* something false, or something evil, has often been translated into the proposition “Falsity (or, even more frequently, evil) is *unreal*.” But this translation is radically mistaken, since Hegel has all of the plain man’s contempt for any attempt to overlook or wish away the failures, suffering and hardship of human experience—and he exhibits it here. He is only making the logical point that error and evil belong to the side of what *is not*, rather than to *what is*; and the dictum of Parmenides: “never shalt thou say non-being is”⁴—is valid, at least against the theological postulate of a *separate* Devil. But whoever has read this far in the Preface should know by now how important, how real and, indeed, *actual*, the negative is in Hegel’s worldview.⁵

The false is “what is not” or the negative of “what is” (which Hegel calls “the substance”). Substance, however, when properly conceived, is a self-negating process—even the “matter” of the enlightened atheists illustrates this. We have already seen why substance must be conceived as *on the move*.⁶ The substance that is actually subject, the spiritual substance of “experience”—being a process of evolution toward self-consciousness—can only *be* by continually falsifying what it has been. Thus what is taken to be true in one phase of its development is known to be false in the next. But what is *universally* taken to be true in one phase *is* the “truth” of

that phase, and hence it is (at least) an element in the absolute truth about that phase. Without the universal structures of knowledge in any phase, nothing could be known at all. A tribal African *knows* the environment in which she is at home far better than any educated scientific observer parachuted into it can ever come to know it. It can be said of both of them that they “know something falsely.” For we are never going to accept the animist interpretation that my supposed tribeswoman will give of what happens or may happen; but if my observer has really been parachuted in, she must depend for survival in many ways on the *tribe’s* knowledge in preference to her own.

Current orthodoxy generally demands, nevertheless, that we should not speak of “knowing falsely.” For we can only properly speak of *knowing* (so the orthodox say) what we, at the very least, *believe* to be true;⁷ and “knowing” logically entails “believing,” but believing does not entail knowing. Against this view, Hegel agrees with the faithful in all ages and all confessions that “faith is a kind of knowledge,” and indeed that our “faith” is more important than most of our ordinary knowledge. Yet his own belief that “absolute knowing” is possible entails the postulate that faith is not *ultimately* necessary—and hence that what is known as ultimate in faith is “known falsely.”

Since he is doing logical science—even if it is only the preparatory logical science—there is no doubt that Hegel intends to *correct* the orthodox assumption when he says “Man kann wohl falsch wissen.” But there is no need for the orthodox to concede that his mode of speech is *absolutely* correct (or more correct), as long as they will allow that there is after all *no* simply “correct” way of using the word “know”—and that for some purposes we must speak of a “knowledge” which we also declare to be “false” or “mistaken.” For example, if we substitute “believe” for “know” in speaking of the worldview of our hypothetical African tribe (“They *believe* there are spirits everywhere, which are very variously disposed towards them”), we ourselves falsify their experience in a quite radical way. This “belief” is part of the frame of their world; it cannot be falsified in the way that empirical beliefs (such as the expectation that the spirits will send rain tonight) can. Nor is it one of a set of conscious alternatives, and we ought not to apply a word to it that is logically bound up with decision and choice.

Hegel is, of course, fortunate in having two words where we have (in most contexts) only one. It is *Wissen* which he says can be *false*; while the process of discovering the falsity is for him a process of “cognition” (*Erkennen*). But the verb “cognize” enjoys no ordinary currency in English (which makes the task of a properly responsible Hegel translator an awkward one). Since we are not engaged in translation, however, and we aim to communicate with the orthodox rather than to dispute with them, we can make Hegel’s point (and also characterize the purpose for which he needs to have it granted) through the distinction between “knowing as” and “knowing that.”⁸ If we say that the educated community of Dante’s time knew the physical world *as* a system of nine moving concentric spheres, while that of Newton’s time knew it as a great mechanism hung in a vast, presumably infinite, void; whereas we ourselves cannot securely say that we know it *as* anything, because

for us the framing concepts of our perceptual certainty (the space and time of Euclid that Dante and Newton shared) are not employable for the concept of “the world”—if we put things this way, we can without contradiction add that we believe the earlier world-pictures to be “false.” Perception is the model that underlies “knowing as,” but the world of “relativity” cannot be simply “perceived.”

This application of Hegel’s point to natural philosophy has the advantage of clarity (T and F can still be used). But, of course, we need to go deeper. When we consider properly “spiritual” cases it is evident at once that thought revolutions cannot be adequately characterized by the manipulation of T and F. Thus, no one subscribes to Galen’s theory of the humours as a physiological theory now; it has far less technical utility than does Newtonian mechanics (not to speak of Euclidean geometry). But it is by no means useless as a frame for our insight into the play of human moods and feelings; and for that reason it is not unthinkable that some future psychiatric theory may be inspired by it. For the present, however, those who meditate fruitfully on Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* will simply have to concede that they are “knowing something falsely.”⁹

40. *Dogmatism* is the philosophical position that takes the T/F antithesis as basic. Historical and mathematical statements are dogmatic, philosophical statements are not.

Hegel will not allow us to say that the false is a *moment* of the truth (still less that the truth is an element in falsity). The “false” is not a “moment” of the truth, because when it comes to be known for what it is within the truth, it is no longer the simple “falsity” that it was momentarily identified as on the way. To take the simplest and most obvious case, in the “knowledge of good and evil,” evil is identified *as* evil. But the “knowledge of evil” that is a “moment of the truth” is not itself “evil.”

In fact, it is a matter of immediate inference that the false is not a moment of the true, since what is properly “false” is what is *designated* as false within some truth-frame. The false is the “completely other”—and one might express the maxim of phenomenology (where “such otherness has been transcended [*aufgehoben*]”) as *homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puto*.¹⁰ Being human, I count nothing human alien. If I want the truth about humanity, the various human conceptions of truth are not “false”; they are just what I want to see in their true perspective.

It is the *dogmatism* of Gibbon and Voltaire, of Hume and the Enlightenment generally, that distorts their historical judgment. Great historians that they were, they could not write about ancient and medieval culture with proper human sympathy because their own “scientific” truth-frame was for them a “fixed result.” Any deviation from it in the past is therefore simply an *error* caused by “superstition” or some other irrational force or passion. The date of Caesar’s birth and death they may get right, but his mind is not properly open to them.

But if we do not distinguish the science of how the human truth-frame has evolved (phenomenology) from the theory of truth itself (Logic proper, which enables us to complete phenomenology with assurance) then statements about logic proper will be unintelligible on the one hand (because the standpoint of con-

sciousness has been superseded, but how and why this is even possible has not been explained); and, on the other hand, they will be implicitly dogmatic (because in the absence of an explanation of how “otherness” has been transcended any assertion that “*this* theory is the absolute truth” seems to entail that all other truth-claims are invalid).

I have delayed this elucidation of the end of paragraph 39 until now because I think that Hegel’s rude remarks about Schelling’s use of the concept of *unity* in the philosophy of Identity must be studied in the context of his comments about “dogmatism.” Thus, whether we accept the critic’s view of the Absolute Identity, or Schelling’s defence of it, the same result follows. If the “unity of subject and object, of finite and infinite, etc.,” is a “dark night,” then all truth and knowledge is engulfed in its logical unintelligibility; but if, on the contrary, it is “the day in which we comprehend that night, and the miracles buried in it, the light in which we are clearly cognizant of the Absolute,”¹¹ then all other experience is engulfed in the darkness outside of this daylight.

41. *Historical and mathematical truth*: Historical truths are contingent facts, but to establish them is a critically self-conscious activity. The most elementary data are accepted as facts only when grounded somehow.

It is Schelling’s denigration of historical truth (and his high opinion of mathematics) that Hegel now proceeds to criticize. Hegel himself was not merely fascinated by the imaginative problem of the historian; he was an extremely skilful and conscientious historical researcher¹² (though he was also too ready to trust his remarkable memory about any research he had already done). Caesar’s dates may be easy for Schelling to find, but Hegel knows that even they cannot have been established without some use of critical judgment.¹³ It is not the fact but the “reasoned fact” that has the value of “truth,” even when it is only the simple fact that we are concerned to know. This applies to the most elementary statements of “intuition”—whether we mean “*red*, here now” or “*God*, here now.”¹⁴

42. Mathematical truths depend even more on internal necessity. They are not “true” as learned by heart, or as empirical discoveries. But the proof process is not essential once we have gained the intuitive cognition; and necessary constructions are external additions. Mathematical cognition displays the coming-to-be of the nature of the Thing in cognition as such. Philosophy unites this outward genesis of the Thing with the inward genesis of its essence. Thus the philosophical proof-process *is* essential, because it shows the inward essence to be directly a transition into outward being for others, and so shows that utterance to be self-repossession.

Schelling’s “breakthrough” to the intuition of “absolute Identity” was associated with a vivid appreciation on his part of the virtue of Spinoza’s “geometric method.” Putting Spinoza’s philosophical method into the context of the Kantian conception of mathematics as the *construction* of objects in “pure intuition,” Schelling was able to regard his new philosophy as the “construction” of Ideas in

“intellectual intuition.” It was natural therefore for him to set up the *Display of My System* in 1801 as the closest imitation of Spinoza’s *Ethics* that he could contrive. He continued to maintain that philosophy was a sort of royal cousin of arithmetic and geometry in the *Further Displays* of 1804.

Hegel accepts the Kantian conception of mathematics as an activity of construction; but he does not accept the parallel with philosophy, for two reasons. In the first place, the mathematical proof involves “constructions” that go beyond the simple generation of the object (as the “construction” of a *circle*, we may notice, does not); and the supplementary constructions, with all the steps of the proof that depend on them, remain external to the object that is being studied. The proof is not a necessary moment of the result. Theorems (including Pythagoras’ theorem, which is the chosen paradigm) can be proved in different ways. The theorem itself is just the final proposition *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Secondly, mathematical construction is not conceptual. It is a mode of pure cognition, that is, it demonstrates a necessary or universal truth, but that truth concerns only the *Dasein* of the thing, not its “inward essence.” What this “inward essence” would be is a problem in the (Hegelian) philosophy of mathematics, which I am glad not to have to solve (or even to discuss). We can see what Hegel means, indirectly, by considering the extra dimension in philosophical demonstration. Philosophy demonstrates not merely that and how its objects come into being, but also *why* they do so; and in philosophical demonstration the how and the why are all part of one connected process.

Just what the circle of properly philosophical cognition is like, we must wait to see. But it is clear from the short paragraph on historical truths that Hegel is well aware that the *Dasein* of a philosophical *Sache* has a contingent aspect that is not present in mathematics—at least not in the same way. So a lot more could be said about the different “necessities” of mathematics and philosophy. But Hegel does not need to say any of it here. It is enough, at this point, to have shown why mathematical demonstration cannot provide us with the circle of inner and outer explanation that Hegelian “comprehension” requires. Mathematical proof simply does not have the “inner” dimension—or what Hegel here calls the “essential” side—to it.¹⁵

43. Mathematical cognition, being external, must *interfere*. It builds a context in which the elements of one figure become parts of others. This is just as much a *falsity of the content* as the disappearance of fixed thoughts is in conceptual motion.

Mathematical insight is what Hegel calls “external reflection.” Everything that happens in the proof of a theorem is a “falsification” of the intuitive insight into the logical structure of the figure. Looking at mathematics in this way, one can easily begin to believe—as I think Schopenhauer did—that the development of proofs and the study of proof-procedures is for *the sake of* intuitive insight. But Hegel does not hold any view of that sort, since mathematical insight is in his view a *process* of cognition. The externality of the process is a mode of falsity in the properly speculative sense, because the mathematical entity is essentially an *object* of con-

sciousness. It is “completely other” than the observing self, and this otherness cannot be transcended; only “Understanding”—that is, thinking with fixed definitions—is possible in this realm. *Philosophical* cognition should be a process that begins logically from the experience of the Thing itself. Unlike the mathematician, we are not supposed to *add* anything, but just to observe. We shall see the “fixedly meant” (*festgemeinten*) thoughts of the Understanding “disappear” into the circular motion of the Concept that unites each one with its own opposite; and this will happen “necessarily” in a way that we can comprehend, not in the arbitrary way in which mathematical “constructions” are discovered.

44. The real defect of mathematical method is that the proof-procedure is arbitrary. We only see why we had to perform just these operations when the conclusion is reached.

Hegel, who was continually being forced to recognize that his audience did not understand him, liked to repeat his points in different ways. He does less of this repetition than usual in this Preface (because it is already the summary review of a long and complex argument). But here he repeats the point about the externality of mathematical procedure in a new way, before proceeding to show us how, being a sphere of fixed *Gedanken*, mathematical reasoning must sublate itself. The way he describes the student of geometry doing things upon command, in the blind faith that everything will come out, seems almost to suggest that he imagined that all of geometry was first discovered empirically (in the way that Egyptian land-surveyors probably discovered the theorem of Pythagoras). But no serious student of the celestial mechanics of Kepler and Newton—such as Hegel was—could have thought that. At the most, he must only mean to imply that even mathematical geniuses like Kepler and Newton had to begin by doing what they were told in order to discover what mathematical insight is. An attentive reader of Plato’s *Republic* (or of the *Meno*) would hardly concede even that; but the perspective of the *Phenomenology* itself dictates Hegel’s acceptance of the Aristotelian emphasis upon the priority of obedient behaviour as the condition for understanding, rather than the Platonic vision of an intellectual adventure that begins almost in the cradle.¹⁶

But even if we insist that mathematics is an *adventurous* science, Hegel’s point remains valid. Philosophy looks *back*. No one can foretell how quickly the pattern of human development will be recognized. But it can only be seen because it is there; and until the pattern is *all* there, every age *is*, comprehensively, what it dogmatically sees itself to be. That is the truth for it and part of the truth about it (though certainly not all that is true about it). Mathematics looks forward. The practical reason of Kant and Fichte resembles mathematics in its endeavours to *project* the way that the world *ought* to be. Hegel’s insistence that we do not understand a geometrical proof until *afterwards* is an implicit criticism of the supposed adequacy of Reason as a legislative power.

45. The *evident* character of mathematical truth arises from the abstractness of its object. Its *Zweck* or *Begriff* is “magnitude.” Its matter is space and the unit. But the actual is not the mathematically spatial. Neither sense experience nor philosophy is concerned

with the quantifiable. Mathematics remains in the sphere of Understanding, and encounters the true infinite of Reason only in the shape of the “irrational.”

Hegel’s philosophy of mathematics is essentially Aristotelian. All that the mathematician seeks is the truth about external form. If one tells the reader to read Aristotle again after studying Kant’s “Transcendental Analytic,” one has given almost all the commentary that is needed for the understanding of Hegel’s treatment of the subject here. When he says that the “purpose or concept” of mathematics is *die Grösse*, he is properly following Aristotle;¹⁷ and he is trying to be faithful to his own doctrine that the *Begriff* is the *final* cause. But it is not very clear (to me) what he means. Mathematics is a pure science; and Hegel’s saying that its *Zweck* is “magnitude” indicates that the Pythagorean hope of unveiling a dynamic universe governed by *measure* (which is evident in his *Dissertation* of 1801 and still fairly explicit in the “System der Sonne” of 1804/1805) is still present in his mind, in spite of the abstract sobriety of his account of Space and Time in 1805/1806, and during the Berlin years.

But although magnitude is a real Concept—and a necessary moment of *the* Concept—quantitative relationship is just what is “unessential and conceptless.”¹⁸ Mathematical description gives only the abstract or formal character of the object of external experience, the *surface* of it. Measure or Ratio does not enable us to comprehend any purpose. In fact, Quantity or Magnitude is precisely the concept that we employ for the comprehension of the *meaningless* aspect of our world. This is where the “bad” infinite is dominant. *Dasein* is in space; but *Wirklichkeit* is a nonspatial concept (or at least it is not in Euclidean space). Euclidean space is the basic hypothesis of the scientific Understanding in its frozen or pre-dialectical phase. The dynamic physics of force and energy, to which Hegel is committed, must not be conceived as a problem in the geometry of motion (as it is in Galilean and Newtonian mechanics).¹⁹ What Hegel would say about a mathematical physics liberated from this assumption cannot be definitely decided. His logical complaint—that mathematical method is tied to the “formal” concept of identity and “runs forward on the line of *equality*” (i.e., a mathematician must operate with *equations*)—is more general. But modern formal logic and mathematics has proved itself able to formalize systematic relations that are “dialectical” in Hegel’s sense. That mathematical equations—however complex—do not “comprehend” anything (except their own abstract truth) is an empty tautology. But in their “applications,” they are obviously the essential means for a lot of important “comprehension.”

For present purposes, we do not have to worry about many-valued logics, statistical theory, mathematical brain-models, or artificial intelligence—or even about the formalization of Hegel’s own logic. We shall come back to brain-models eventually, at the most important turning point in our Science (*Phrenology*). This is probably the most critical test of Hegel’s concept of Spirit as “self-recognition in absolute otherness.”

The mathematical mode of intuition—whether it is conceived as Kant’s *pure* (i.e., abstractly spatial or temporal) intuition or as a dialectical mode of *intellectual*

intuition—is the limit of Reason, the limit at which discursive meaning and human communication cease. Mathematics is a great adventure of the intellect; and the relations of numbers may be the most important armoury of *instruments* in our practical life. But the abstract relations that numerical or algebraic equations can express are not what life (generally) is about. There will be those who may want to deny this—those for whom pure mathematics is a Platonic Heaven, not a Hell of abstractions. But they are at a *limit* of human experience, and it is only from the centrepiece that the whole range can be adequately comprehended.

Hegel attached great importance, for his own Logic, to the fact that Greek geometers discovered ratios that were not numerically determinate in some of the simplest (most easily intuited) spatial relationships. This was, for him, the fundamental paradigm of the necessary self-transcendence of the Understanding in “dialectic.” It is not certain how he would stand between Hilbert and Wittgenstein on the subject of “Cantor’s paradise” (perhaps he would manage to agree with them both).²⁰ Fortunately, we do not have to concern ourselves with anyone’s philosophy of mathematics (not even Hegel’s), because the object of the present discussion is to show us why mathematics is irrelevant to our phenomenological concern.

46. Pure mathematics does not even deal with *time*. In order to deal with it, “applied” mathematics accepts synthetic *a priori* propositions as empirically established. So-called mathematical proofs are offered (and sometimes accepted) for these propositions, but the procedure is invalid and only shows the desperate need for a better one. Time is the concept itself in being. Mathematics can deal with time only in its paralysed intellectual form.

Hegel himself would certainly have been deeply interested by many developments in modern mathematics—beginning with Cantor’s mathematics of the infinite. We ought to keep an open mind about how he would regard the attempts to formalize his own logic.²¹ He aimed to develop a logic of comprehension. His logic is *logica docens*, which looks back theoretically at what has happened, not *logica utens*, which looks forward to what will happen. But if, once it has been comprehended, it *suggests* modes of logic for use (modes which must, I think, necessarily be formalizable if they are to deserve the name “logic for use” at all), no one, least of all Hegel himself, can rationally object or protest.

His complaint about the bland acceptance of the three dimensions of space is closely connected with his critique of “applied” mathematics in the present paragraph; for the dynamic theory of the dimensions belongs to the foundations of physics. It would be going too far to call Hegel’s natural philosophy of space and time a “relativity theory.”²² But it deserves to be noted that he was an enthusiastic proponent of the conception of nature as an energetic continuum. What he calls “immanent, so called pure mathematics” here is apparently the Arithmetic of Kant. Kant regarded the numbers as the schema of “time.” Hegel’s objection is that the *schema* of simple succession does not adequately characterize the real time of lived experience. His remarks at the end of the paragraph show that, for him, simple succession is the “formal” concept of time. *Real* physical time (which is the

“measure” of the cyclic motion of the Solar System only because it is measured by it) is not “set up” by pure mathematics as its second “stuff.” This “real time” is only dealt with in the applied mathematics of Galileo and in Newtonian *mechanics*. Celestial mechanics takes Galileo’s law of falling bodies, and Kepler’s laws of planetary motion, *from experience*. Hegel’s reference to the principle of the lever (which involves no periodicity or time-reference) shows that he is thinking of mechanics in general.²³

Why he says that pseudo-mathematical “proofs” of such “principles” as the “law of falling bodies” were “often” given is not immediately obvious. But once we know that in the philosophy of nature of 1804, he followed the lead of A. G. Kästner and of Schelling in criticizing a successful “prize essay” on this topic (by G. L. le Sage for the Academy of Rouen, 1758),²⁴ the mystery is resolved. Obviously the successful prize essay was one of several attempts; and if a topic is set for a prize, then the problem is widely discussed and very much in the air. But Hegel’s critique of the essay in 1804 was simply that mathematical attempts to “prove” the law merely *presuppose* it and are in fact just “sensory expositions” of it. Whether he really could add anything interesting to this (or to whatever Kästner and Schelling had already said)²⁵ is a technical question that I shall not pursue. Everyone nowadays would agree that any pretence that the “law of falling bodies” or any of the “laws of motion” can be demonstrated mathematically is absurd. Whatever *a priori* status these “laws” have must certainly belong (as Hegel says) to another *Wissen* altogether. (He means the “philosophy of Nature.”)

All of this critical preamble shows that when he goes on to assert that time is the *daseiende Begriff selbst* (“the way that the Concept itself is there”), Hegel is certainly not referring simply to the lived time of our historical experience (which is what he is mainly concerned with at the end of the book in pars. 801–808). He is thinking, in the first place, of the real physical time of the order of nature. Otherwise, the mention of all these physical concepts (and especially of the *lever*, which has nothing periodic about it and merely exemplifies the balancing of contrary tensions) would be pointless. In the order of nature, time “is there” as the enduring four-dimensional “substance” of the Solar System. Here, every motion is stably periodic; and the “Great Year,” the period that embraces all the periods involved, is the fourth (or temporal) dimension of the “Substance” about which Parmenides truly said “It is.”

But the mind of Parmenides (or perhaps of Xenophanes), who first formulated this truth (like that of every stargazer who intuitively reached for it earlier, and of every scientific astronomer who sought to calculate it precisely later), is the “pure unrest of life and of absolute distinction.” This “pure unrest” is what “is there” for us in the *Phenomenology*. It cannot be brought to its eternal standstill by the Understanding alone. The Preface here *integrates* the “spiritual” doctrine of the book with Hegel’s own philosophy of nature. The book itself requires this, for in the lived time with which sense-certainty begins, the “pure unrest of absolute distinction” will discover physical time as the (Platonic) moving image of eternity, at the climax of the third chapter (pars. 160–165). But without this much simpler state-

ment about real time in the Preface, with its deliberate echo of the last chapter (par. 801), we might not clearly understand that it is the rational self that has already identified itself with the “simple essence of life, the soul of the world” (par. 162), which comes to its own true resting equilibrium through the comprehension of its own history and the logical grasp of its own conceptual development.²⁶

Whether the proposition of Parmenides (“It is”) has a necessary and proper implicit subject is a matter of scholarly dispute. Hegel’s position in this dispute is clear. He accepts from Plato’s *Parmenides* the view that the implicit subject is primitively “the One (and the Others).” In its paralysed form—contrasting with the emphasis on life, activity, dynamic tension and the flowing of blood in paragraph 162—“the One (and the Others)” is what mathematics can and does deal with. Thus, at the end of the paragraph we do finally arrive at a *positive* evaluation of Kant’s theory of arithmetic. Arithmetic sequence is the *formal* model of time, which is thus the “second stuff” of mathematical cognition in this merely formal guise (“*equality* or abstract lifeless unity”). It stands beside the *space* of Euclid’s geometry, the first “stuff.” Hegel calls this spatial “stuff” “magnitude, the distinction lacking a concept” because it is infinitely extensive and infinitely divisible in the “bad” senses. The formal concept of time is similarly infinite in both ways after it has been “paralysed” by the Understanding as a one-dimensional line extending backwards and forwards from the present.

Hegel accepts the Kantian view of both geometry and arithmetic as “constructions in pure intuition.” But any serious student of paragraphs 160–165 will agree that Hegel’s own conception of *real* space and time is a four-dimensional dynamic equilibrium, and that he would have no trouble in assimilating the thought world of non-Euclidean geometries and the general theory of relativity. Even in its most speculative shape, however, mathematical science can only give us the concept of the not-self; and it is selfhood that is the proper topic of the “Science of experience.” It is to this contrast between mathematics and philosophy that Hegel now turns.

(b) *Truth and Method*

47. Philosophy deals with determinacy in its *essential* aspect, or with what is self-actualizing and alive. The process of self-actualization includes negation (or what in abstraction is called “false”). The transience of appearance is essential to it; appearance is *permanently* transient. Truth, as a Bacchanalian revel, is a dance of life that is equally the dance of death. The permanence of the whole depends on *recollection*, the being that is *Wissen*, and the *Wissen* that is being.

All “determination” of mathematical space and time is accidental and arbitrary. “*Let there be two triangles, etc.*,” says the Platonic or the Kantian geometer defining her problem. We can quote Newton against himself here and say, “Philosophy feigns no such hypotheses.” Instead, philosophy deals with how what actually is, does actually define itself. I take it that the expression *das Dasein in seinem Begriffe* (“what is there within its Concept”) designates the conscious-being that is aware of

its own *finitude*.²⁷ What *actually* is, is the conscious-being that is there, alive and positing itself within its concept, or in other words defining itself. Thus, we cannot say that the earth spinning along its great ellipse, or the whole dance of the Solar System, “is there within its concept” unless we consciously refer (minimally) to the presence on the spinning earth of a myth-making shepherd or a God-mindful priest. It is with *them*, wondering as they do at the stately cosmic ballet of the night sky, that “philosophy” begins.

This actuality, which begins with the wonder of the shepherd and the priest, moves towards an adequate self-definition almost as slowly, though hardly as majestically, as the heavens moving through the pavane of the Great Year; but when the human dance has completed itself, it does not need to be repeated. The evolution of human speculation is “the process that begets and traverses its own moments”; and just as the motion that we see in the heavens is really the *being* of the celestial One Substance, so “this whole motion [of Spirit] constitutes what is positive and the truth of the process.”²⁸

In the cosmic pavane, every momentary position is just as essential and just as accidental as every other one. Every observation is as “true” as every other, and all would be equally *false* if we were to take them as “the way the heaven really is.” The way the heaven really is never *appears* anywhere until the shepherd or the priest invents the “myth of the eternal return.” Then at last it “is there” in an image that can be intuited. That is the truth of “Substance as Substance.” Similarly, the truth of “Substance as Subject” involves rising above all of the determinate positions in the cycle and grasping them all as both true and false at once. But in this new (subjective) cycle, the positions are not equal and indifferent. One cannot begin drawing the circle arbitrarily from *any* point on the circumference. The circle of substantial self-knowledge is a circle of circles—moving from a fixed centre in an ever-expanding spiral which embraces and directly involves or implies all of its previous moments at every moment. It is not, or at least it is not *simply*, ever-expanding. The moment comes when it circles back to its point of origin—the wonder of the self-conscious mortal in the presence of the immortals.

At this point we must take note of the other great contrast. In the pavane of the heavens, the positions do not refer to one another, they have no cumulative relation, and there is not even a “position one” from which an arithmetic sequence begins. They are all eternally there, and every position is the end of its own “Great Year”—for the heaven has been *there* before too. But in the “Bacchanalian revel” of conscious life, there *is* a first position; and every logically subsequent position presupposes its predecessors. Also, every element is absolutely evanescent. It “dissolves immediately as soon as it separates itself.” Thus, when the pattern is all there, it *shimmers*, since every moment is appearing and disappearing all the time. It is an “arising and passing away” that *endures*—a great set-piece in a firework display that never burns out. This is what the final position that knows the whole conscious cycle is like. This is the *human* truth, the truth of human existence.²⁹ And except for that final comprehensive consciousness, the participants are all “drunk.” They all identify truth with their own position, and assign truth *from there*—like

the nonphilosophical myth-maker who sees a plough in the stars on one night and a bear in the same place on another. When the Zodiac is drawn, all the constellations fall into their places; and when the philosopher comes, the fantasies of the drunks are known for the moments of *truth* that they are. None of them is false; each is true *in its own perspective*. Each of them *defines* what is false within that perspective; and “falsity” is a concept that only has a determinate meaning within a definite truth-perspective.

Of course the participants in Hegel’s *bacchantische Taumel* are “spiritual shapes”—that is, forms of life or conceptual perspectives on life—not simple flesh-and-blood humans, whether drunk or sober. But just as we cannot *actualize* the cosmic substance except in some *Gestalt* of consciousness, either naïve and intuitive or sophisticated and scientific, so too we must remember that the shapes of cultural life are transient partly because they must be embodied in and sustained by organisms of flesh and blood.

Hegel himself confirms this reading in the interpretation that he gives to the Bacchic revel in the body of the book. In his interpretation of Greek culture as the “living work of art,” the drunken revel of the Bacchic dance is treated as the most primitive level of identification with the divine, the point at which the life of nature engulfs all rational self-control (pars. 723–724). Absolute spirit is disclosed (*verraten*—the secret is *betrayed*) in its most immediate, undeveloped form as the “spirit of nature” itself. Thus when he calls truth “the Bacchanalian revel” Hegel means us to take human experience in its rawest and also its most comprehensive sense, its least self-conscious but also its most deeply felt form. “Drunkenness” signifies the consciousness that will say *of itself* that it is “a tale/ Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,/ Signifying nothing.”

In Hegel’s Euripidean model, the fate of the consciousness that stands apart, supposing himself (King Pentheus) to be sober, is an absolute tragedy; and that is very apt, because this “revel” is a dance of life that is just like the hysterical tarantella in which the fifteenth century peasants of Apulia sometimes danced themselves (literally) to death.³⁰

Paragraph 47 breaks the discussion of “fixed thoughts” of a nonphilosophical type by presenting the vivid image of how philosophy returns at the climax of its self-conscious evolution to the original fluidity of life as *felt* spontaneity. The tarantella of the spirit in time is comprehended as the stable pattern (i.e., the “rest”) of an unresting process. It is truly unresting because the very elements that make it up are *mortal* processes, perpetually coming to be and passing away—this is the “self-conscious restless rest” of paragraph 476.

48. *Nature of philosophical truth and its method*: The full exposition of philosophical method is Logic. But accepted ideas about philosophical method require criticism (as is generally admitted). Neither the mathematical method, nor the loosely argumentative one, is a possible form for truth, since the true is the self-moving. A loose mathematical method may retain its conversational or schooling uses where the requisite fixed points can be established.

Hegel is now ready to go on to the topic of “method.” In terms of the dance metaphor, this is the topic of how the dance moves, and of how the movement is *recollected* into its final stillness. The proper *Darstellung* of this method is the *Science of Logic* itself. At this point, therefore, since he cannot give us the whole of the *Logic*, Hegel is content simply to criticize the conceptual views of philosophical method that belong to the vanished culture. These views are all modelled on the true/false dichotomy of mathematics. So the polemic against mathematical method actually continues. It is mainly Wolff (and his many imitators) who is the target of criticism. But Wolff was, of course, following the great tradition of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz. He tried harder than any of them, except Spinoza, to present his thought in a strictly “geometric mode.” Most of those who followed him argued in the looser conversational mode of Locke. But they continued to strive for, and to believe that they could achieve, a *logical* kind of certainty and conviction. That is why Hegel assimilates their procedure to the “geometric method.”

Hegel knows perfectly well that his own method *is* new and revolutionary; and he knows too that the general run of learned opinion considers the new idealism to be quite incredibly arrogant and self-confident. Hence, his denials are to some extent disingenuous. But he wants his readers to reflect seriously on the fact that he is only saying what most educated people feel and concede about the conceptual armoury of the rationalist tradition. Kant has overthrown Wolff. No one can put that Humpty Dumpty together again.³¹

Of course, the current philosophical method is not simply mathematical. It inherits from Aristotle, and from medieval scholasticism, the technique of offering arguments *for* one view and *against* others. Mathematics has *direct* proofs (of theorems) and *indirect* proofs (reduction of the denial of a theorem to absurdity). This procedure is quite different from the probable arguments of philosophy because the mathematical arguments *are* “proofs.” Hegel’s point is that the argument-structures of the old philosophy implicitly referred to the mathematical model as the ideal. Philosophical arguments were *supposed* to be conclusive. They were presented formally in a conclusive way (e.g. as formed syllogisms). In saying that this method is that of mathematics, Hegel only means to subsume formal logic (and especially Aristotle’s syllogistic logic) under mathematics.

Hegel wants to contrast the formal conception of rationality with his own organic view; he also wants to point out that his own method in this Preface is an example of the old style. At present he is only talking *about* the “true” method and structure of science, as opposed to the “false” one. He is *using* the false method (of arguing for one view and against the other) himself. That is what he is obliged to do in a “preface.” So, again, it is noteworthy that he defends this procedure, as appropriate in its place; the place of this procedure is both prefatory *and* in the return from philosophic science to ordinary experience (in “conversation” and “historical instruction”).

In the only use that Hegel defends, the argumentative method becomes consciously “empirical.” When we are using it, we are well aware that “proof” is not possible and that we can only explain the relation between the methods to those

who *want* to understand it. We can only inform those who want to learn. We cannot *convince* anyone (as mathematical proofs convince us). Whether Hegel clearly recognizes the fact or not, this is a partial justification of the persuasive probabilist approach of the English philosophers (apart from Hobbes), and especially of Scottish philosophy.

It is the pretensions of Cartesian philosophy (and its offshoots down to Wolff) that properly deserve to be condemned. But the empirical method is not, in Hegel's eyes, a philosophical one. Hegel accepts the philosophical ideals and goals of rationalism. Philosophy *ought* to be a *logical* science, a science of conceptual necessity, but the necessity and the logic of philosophical reasoning cannot be a form imposed upon the matter. For whenever logical form is imposed, the free consciousness can break out of the structures imposed at will. If it does not do that, then what makes the conclusions "convincing" is just the fact that they are familiar.

The fixed points are the results of habit. Hegel's list of the stages through which they get *fixed* is: acquaintance (*Kenntniss*), experience, "sensible concretions" (surely rituals, ceremonials, and customary observances belong here), thoughts, and finally "basic principles" (*Grundsätze*). Whatever counts as *vorhanden*, or as a fixed or stable *Sein* ("sensible concretions") or *Wesen* (the *Gedanken* and *Grundsätze*) provides a starting point for a formal chain of argument. But the opposite felt certainty of any moment can break off any such chain; and only the stable certainty of what we are used to makes the argument seem "conclusive." Thus, by Hegel's declared standards, my own procedure, which is a "conversation" about Hegel's argument, designed for "historischen Belehrung," is "more for curiosity than for cognition."

49. The dismissal of these obsolete methods should not lead to the acceptance of the [romantic] non-method of inspired or prophetic utterance.

The loose procedure of my own "argumentative conversation" makes no parade of logical compulsion like the rigid structure of conclusive proof offered by rationalism (which Hegel here calls "scientific pomp"). Clearly, it ranks higher than that pseudo-scientific procedure. But even the most formal parade of "logical proof" is preferable to the quite unmethodical proclamation of one's *insights* or "hunches" in the high prophetic tone of one who is inspired or "has the Spirit."³² Poets and prophets have their place in the economy of human life—and, as we can see from chapter VII, it is a very important place indeed. But they have no place in philosophy. The "inspired" philosopher only produces "formalism" by expressing his inspiration according to the canons of logical proof procedure.

Thus Hegel comes back to "formalism" in philosophy—and especially to the formalism that is "reborn" within the latest speculative idealism. He is speaking of the "monochrome" formalism that drowns everything in "formless white," (the pure light of its divine *Ahndungen*) rather than of the darkness where all the cows are black. But he agrees with Jean Paul about *this* "identity." At this extreme—to which Eschenmayer moved in *Philosophy in its Transition to Non-Philosophy*

(1803)—even the attempt to be scientific is despised. The reaction against old-fashioned rationalism is justified; and hence Eschenmayer's mysticism is the nemesis of the new speculative philosophy, because the formalism that has been reborn in it is just as much a philosophy of external reflection as the abstract logical rationalism of Reinhold and Bardili.

(c) *Against Formalism: Second Round*

50. *Against schematizing formalism:* The true logical form is triadic. But this can become an *empty* formalism, as it is even in Kant who rediscovered it.³³ We shall now characterize this newest formalism in more detail. The technique is to define the *life* of a *Gestalt* by predicating some determination of the theoretical schema. The predicates are taken arbitrarily from experience and are used in their familiarly determined senses.

The attack on “schematizing formalism” is clearly identified here as a specification in detail of the general claims made earlier (pars. 15–16); and the examples given show that it is Schelling's imitators in the field of the philosophy of nature who are the primary target of Hegel's criticism.³⁴ Kant's employment of triadic patterns is clearly said to be formal and schematic in the relevant sense. But Hegel wants to bury him *and* praise him; for without his instinctive recognition of the truth—even if it was expressed in a table of the categories based on the table of the “forms of judgment” in the traditional logic, and in a mechanically syllogistic conception of the relation of the “faculties” of imagination, judgment, and understanding or Reason³⁵—the *organic* concept of philosophical method and science would not have been discovered as it has been. The *degenerate* formalism that has to be attacked is the formalism that has reappeared *since* that discovery.³⁶

It is important to comprehend the Kantian origin of what Hegel stigmatizes as “schematizing formalism,” because it is only the triadic pattern or schema of Kant that he is prepared to dignify as a *philosophical* formalism at all. The pattern of Kant's categorical triads (Reality, Negation, Limitation, etc.) and of his theory of the faculties—the pattern ultimately of the three *Critiques*—is what is both “raised to its absolute significance” in the new speculative idealism and allowed to degenerate into a mechanical formalism again in the prophets and parrots of the new gospel of the book of Nature.

The procedure that is mechanically parodied is, for the most part, not that of Kant but that of the Identity Philosophy. Hegel's general definition of the fault committed is that “the nature and life of a *Gestalt* is supposed to have been comprehended and expressed, when the formalism has uttered a determination of the schema as a predicate of the *Gestalt*.” What is *formalized* is the assumption of the Identity Philosophy that the Absolute Identity manifests itself in a chain of “potencies” of which the natural or finitely apparent side is (in each *Potenz*) a *Gestalt*.

The simple opposition of the phenomenal and the noumenal, the *a priori* and the empirical, the natural and the rational, the one and the many, leaves the rest of

experience quite uncontrolled, so that any rational order that is asserted to exist in the phenomena becomes arbitrary. The father of this “formal idealism” was Fichte, who made the simple opposition of freedom and necessity (in Kant’s Third Antinomy)—or the opposition of subjectivity and objectivity—absolute. But Fichte was at least consistent enough to renounce the comprehension of the order of nature altogether, recognizing only the absolute contrast between the noumenal Ego and the sensible manifold.

Because Fichte’s view left the objective world of experience quite undefined (except as a mass of immediate sensational affects of the subject such as “red, green, blue . . . the sound of a violin”) Hegel stigmatized his “Absolute” as a “subjective subject-object.” He tried, in the *Difference* essay, to show that by ignoring the *life* of nature, Fichte reduced all interaction—including the interaction of human society—to a mechanical determinism, or a lordship and bondage relation.³⁷ But at least Fichte was not guilty of playing arbitrary language games with natural phenomena; and that is what the Identity philosophy of nature is here said to have turned into.

Hegel objects not to what the formalists say, but to the way they establish their conclusions. Magnetism, electricity, contraction, expansion, the “deduction” of the compass points, all of them are fundamental features of what is called “Schelling’s System” in the *Difference* essay. Hegel himself has worked with all of them. He offered a theory of the compass points in the *Dissertation*, and electric polarity plays a prominent role in the theory of the Understanding as stated in the *Phenomenology* itself (pars. 152–159). This is proof enough that these “determinations” are *important* to the new speculative philosophy. It is also true that in the *Phenomenology*, the earlier *Gestalten* reappear as moments of later ones. But neither the concepts nor the phenomenal data can simply be picked up from the riot of experience and used to build a *theory* without further clarification of their meaning. We shall find Hegel arguing later on that the “explanations” given by the Understanding are tautologous and empty, and that is what he says about “schematic formalism” in natural philosophy here.

51. Superficial analogies from sense experience applied mechanically are here called “constructions”—e.g. in Brown’s medical theory. It involves an *imitation* of genuine conception (which does likewise unite opposites); and it *sounds* profound, but the terms are empirically familiar so one can soon learn how to play the game impressively. By painting everything in *stop* and *go* colors we obtain a “sunclear report” [à la Fichte] of the Universe as organism, and a labelled skeleton in display cases—at best the anatomy of a corpse; and the bichromatic organization becomes finally the monochromatic white light of the Absolute Void.

Schelling took over from Kant’s mathematical theory the conception of speculative philosophy as an activity of *constructing* Ideas (syntheses of Concept and intuition) in the sphere of pure thought. When Hegel assures Schelling that he is *not* the target of the attack on formalism,³⁸ it must be this paragraph that he has in mind more than any other; for it is the examples in this paragraph that would make

Schelling see how close the acid comes to touching himself as well as the others.

In the first place, it was Schelling himself who had tried to build John Brown's ideas into a speculative theory of medicine; but he soon gave up that effort in disgust. Then, in the *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), we read that "all quality is simply electricity . . . electricity is precisely that whereby we designate in nature this second stage in construction. One might therefore say that what sensation is in the realm of intelligence, electricity is in nature." And, finally, in the *Darstellung meines Systems* (1801), we find: "With respect to the whole the plant represents the carbon-pole and the animal, the nitrogen pole. Thus the animal is southerly, the plant northerly."³⁹ None of these propositions is as simplistic as the examples Hegel gives. But when the examples are piled up as they are here, the suspicion that Hegel is *parodying* Schelling's earlier work is bound to arise.

What tends to show that the suspicion is mistaken (or at best a half-truth) and that Hegel regards Schelling's own efforts to establish dynamic parallels between the theory of nature and the theory of mind with respect is the curious fact that Hegel himself employs the parallel between electrical force and Understanding in this very book (pars. 152–161). What Schelling had said was different: "that *sensation* corresponds to electricity." Since the difference between the flat statement of identity ("The Understanding *is* Electricity") and what Hegel says later on is obviously of crucial importance to Hegel, we can fairly infer that the difference between Schelling's use of electricity and magnetism as *models* of dynamic unity, and the flat identities that Hegel offers as examples of "schematic formalism" was also significant in his eyes.

This is powerfully confirmed by the context in which we find Schelling's remark about electricity which inspired Hegel's parody of his own later discussion. Schelling's conclusion for that stage of the *System of Transcendental Idealism* was that "the three stages in the construction of matter really do correspond to the three acts in the intelligence." "It is obvious," he says, "that in constructing matter, the self is in truth constructing itself. The third act is that by which the self as sensing becomes an object to itself."⁴⁰ Similarly, Hegel claims that in constructing the conception of the sensible world as the manifestation of physical *forces*, the Understanding is constructing itself.

Hence, if Hegel sets a schematic formula derived from his own argument alongside several others that are derived from Schelling's, the implication is that *neither of them* is a formalist. But it remains an evident truth that it is much easier to reduce Schelling's arguments to formal identities and equivalences than it is to reduce Hegel's; and Hegel certainly means us to see that.

The sarcastic reference to Fichte's *Sun-Clear Report* shows that Hegel regards him as properly deserving some of the blame for the degeneration of speculation into a children's coloring book completed with two crayons (or even with just one). As we know, Fichte combined a fanatical dedication to the ideal of systematic finality with a rigorous separation of rational form (the *a priori* dictates of Reason) from empirical content. This made him extremely sceptical about the possibility of a speculative philosophy of nature. But he remained committed to the Kantian view

that our scientific knowledge of nature rests on the universal validity (*a priori*) of the category of *causality*. This is the basis of Hegel's bichromatic schema: one color is needed for the landscapes of the natural order and the other for the historic scenes of moral freedom. Fichte cannot be accused of reducing the Universe to a labelled skeleton, because he painted only the history of human freedom. But the formalists of the new speculative philosophy of Nature have filled in the green blank on Fichte's canvas with an appropriate natural landscape.

The *Sun-Clear Report* on the Universe as an organism, like the final drowning of all distinctions in a monochromatic Absolute Identity, must therefore be the work of someone fairly close to Schelling, and the best "bichromatic" candidate is probably Heinrich Steffens. Steffens is alluded to here, when "*representing x*" is suggested as the form of difference in identity. He also had a great penchant for arranging natural phenomena in parallel "tables." The first rungs in these parallel series were minerals and geological categories, but the ladders went up through chemical phenomena to the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Hegel criticized one of Steffens's "tables" in his own first exposition of the philosophy of nature; and he will criticize the theory of a phenomenal appearance that "represents" the Concept in chapter V of the *Phenomenology* (290).⁴¹

The "formless white" of the "absolute painting" was referred to as "black" in paragraphs 15 and 16. This "monochrome" extreme is ashamed of being scientific at all. The Absolute is grasped here only by the "non-method of presentiment (*Ahnung*) and inspiration" (49); and "knowledge" at its limit passes over into faith. Among the adherents of the new idealism, it is Eschenmayer who displays this transition particularly clearly, and he is important because of his influence on Schelling. Having been, initially, an important contributor to the theory of the *Potenzen*, he becomes at about this time a major influence in pushing Schelling beyond the Identity Philosophy into the Abyss of Boehme's Theosophy. There are others—Görres, for example—who say the same things about the transcendence of scientific cognition in religious faith. But it is Eschenmayer whom Hegel sees as Schelling's evil genius.⁴²

It is mildly ironic that once schematic formalism has set in, Hegel has to agree that the religious reaction, the rejection of this schematic cognition as a dead formalism of external reflection, is justified. The logical criticism is correct. But the conclusion that *Wissenschaftlichkeit* itself should be despised (par. 49) is the verdict of a "non-method" which Hegel will now go on to expose as the expression of a Satanic pride that is radically anti-human.

52. What is excellent must always be done to death like this. This fate is evidence of its power over hearts (if not over minds), and does highlight the truly *systematic* form of science.

The metaphor of "what is excellent" being flayed and its skin used to wrap a "lifeless knowledge and its conceit" develops the thematic contrast between the science of biology and that of anatomy, which Hegel introduced at the very begin-

ning of the Preface. But there is also an echo here which connects this theme to the historical genesis of the new science of the “Organismus des Universums.” The last sentence of Spinoza’s *Ethics* sticks in the mind of many readers: *Sed omnia praeclara tam difficilia, quam rara sunt*—“But all things excellent are as difficult, as they are rare.” When we remember that Lessing had said that for more than a hundred years Spinoza was “treated like a dead dog” in German philosophy, we can recognize the *living lion* being flayed in Jacobi’s *Letters*—where Spinoza’s system is reduced to a mechanical fatalism in forty-four propositions⁴³—as the paradigm case of what must happen to *das Vortreffliche*.

The religious critics of philosophical “science” bear witness to its true *excellence*, as much as the speculative formalists who make the religious reaction seem dialectically legitimate. That Spinoza’s *Ethics* does pull at the heartstrings (*Gemuth*, a word which I find quite untranslatable) of many whose minds are quite set against his peculiar preconceptions about the universe is vividly illustrated in our own century by the reaction of Bertrand Russell. But Hegel is not thinking of a genuine case of “self-recognition in the other” such as that. And it was not Jacobi’s object to deck himself in the fine feathers of a virtue that he did not have. Rather, his motive (as Hegel analyses it at length in the parallel case of his attack on Kant)⁴⁴ was an envious determination to deny scientific cognition as such. His religious scepticism is a mysticism based on the understanding in Hegel’s view. More than anyone else—except perhaps Fichte—Jacobi inspired the “rebirth” of the *religious* (“monochrome”) interpretation of “schematic formalism” The religious Absolute of Görres and Eschenmayer is just like the logical Absolute of Reinhold and Bardili; and Jacobi’s mysticism is the most obvious connecting link between them. Hence, the Absolute Identity of the schematic formalists is “all just as much a dead Understanding as the other, and just as much external cognition” (par. 51).⁴⁵

53. What the formalists use as a *label* is a living force in true science. Life unfolds and returns to itself with different functions of negation in the opposite movements. The Understanding substitutes a listing of types etc., with no sense of necessary order. Thus Magnetism is a living determinacy which Understanding treats as a property of some bodies. In philosophic cognition we identify with the life of the object, and this cognition only returns to itself when the logical evolution of the object brings it back.

True speculation adopts the Aristotelian view of the “form,” which the Understanding treats as a fixed mechanical content. The Aristotelian form is a living power of nature, which can be comprehended in the mind but must not be frozen into stillness by the process of abstraction. Thus, Science (as the system of rationally comprehended forms) must be organized as the self-consciousness of the life of nature. *Rational* self-consciousness is the highest level of *that*—the “subjectivity” for which living nature as a whole is the “substance” (again we can recognize a Spinozist theme). If we are allowed to ask what the Hegelian *Begriff* is the concept *of*, the answer must be “Life”; the “life of the Concept” is just the fulfillment of the life of nature. It is the same in substance, but is a higher “potency” of natural life as

an activity. The life of the Concept is the evolution of Reason as the *self-consciousness* of the life of nature.

This is easy enough to see and say. One can imagine Steffens saying that he agrees with every word of it; and adding that nothing but a mysticism of the "divine life," such as that which we find in Eschenmayer, will be possible if his own way of showing the truth by a tabular overview in which every *Potenz* is properly "represented" and the analogous relation of the different levels is made clear is dismissed as inadequate.

This is where Hegel disagrees. What he claims is that the unfolding of the universal concept of "Life" can be *experienced* as a continuous process in the consciousness of the rational living thing. The process is one of expansion by double negation. The universal life is in us. That is what we mean by claiming to be *rational* while knowing by experience that we are *alive* (and hence *mortal*). Our Reason is the "self-moving soul of the [scientifically] fulfilled content." It is our own *self-concept* that must become other than itself and posit for itself a true concept that is *there* for us; then, in the process of experience, the positing self and the posited concept are united in a higher concept that is more comprehensive. This new self-concept is what Hegel calls "the coming to be of the determinate *simplicity*").

We shall (for instance) come to Magnetism (or Schelling's Polarity) in our rolling progress through the "experience of consciousness." The human Understanding is, at a certain point, recognized by us, the speculative observers, to be *identical* with this principle. The mind is in a polar relation with itself as the lawful order of forces. This is the key to the puzzling moment when the world of forces *inverts itself* so that "the Infinite" can emerge as the "determinate *simplicity*" that is the final result of theoretical Consciousness as a whole. As compared with this way of "conceiving Magnetism," the tabular view of Steffens is a piece of external reflection to the effect that "polarity" is a rather important heading in the "table of contents" of the book of Nature. For us, polarity is an experience. The Understanding is a polarized relation in which "consciousness" begins as one of the poles and ends by being recognized as the whole relation, or as the "point of indifference" between the poles of the Concept as a universal magnet.

It was no accident, therefore, that Hegel chose the example of Magnetism. For when we generalize from the theory of Consciousness as "Infinity" that results from that argument in chapter III, we can see that the principal thesis of Hegel's book is implicit in the present paragraph in the following way: "The movement of what is"⁴⁶ is the movement of consciousness towards self-comprehension. "The world" (or "Nature") is our world, the substance of *our* selves, *flowing in upon us* (hence "immanent") as the content of our consciousness.⁴⁷

This is Spinoza's "God or Nature" subjectified as "the stream of public scientific consciousness." Spirit appears primitively in the shape of the world that we all observe and in which we move and interact. The separation of "the world" from the self, as "something that is there," is the first "negation." Defining it—saying, for example, "here is a tree"—is the *second* negation in a formal mode, the constitution of "consciousness" proper. It is *my* consciousness, *my* world, that I define, and

I make it into a “determinate simplicity” by making myself into that same being.

That the world, the content flowing in on me, simply *is* a mass of determinate beings—things that “are there”—is the illusion of Understanding, which “keeps the necessity and the concept,” that is, the whole framework of interpretation, “for itself” in its philosophizing. It has no original consciousness of doing this, because the awareness of being caught in the necessary flow of time and engulfed in space is our most primitive “certainty.” Only as a result of Hume and Kant does the Understanding come to “understand” this. The Kantian critical philosophy actually “keeps the necessity and the concept for itself” consciously; and it is only when we compare this “critical” consciousness with our “ordinary” consciousness that we realize that our framework of interpretation is not a pattern of *a priori* intuitions, but the product or *result* of the whole process of Consciousness.

The “house” that Sense-Certainty begins from is the home that we have to have before we can start “wondering” about the world and so embark upon philosophy; and the “tree” that we see when we turn around is, of course, the tree of knowledge. This “absolute reflection,” this speculative consciousness of the world, seems to be lost in the whirl of molecules, atoms, and electrons. But the “simple self-surveying whole” of Sense-Certainty will emerge again to justify it in the end. (This paragraph first gives the logical structure of the initial situation of sense-certainty, then describes the movement of Understanding as it is rationally comprehended by Reason, and finally restores the sensible world. In its briefest, most abstract form, this is “the life of the *Begriff*”).

(d) *Speculative Philosophy*

54. This return happens because Substance is implicitly Subject. Whatever is, subsists so far as it is self-identical. But self-identity is the *fixity* of thought. Most talk of the identity of being and thought is uncomprehending. This abstract self-identity is opposed to concrete knowing—which is self-positing *activity*. Our idealism is not a *dogmatic* idealism but is cunning enough to follow the dialectic of this opposition between thought and life. It shows how the determinacy of concrete life brings itself to death in order to become a moment of the whole.

This conception of consciousness as the interpretation of its world by a rationally scientific community is the properly conceptual account of the “identity of thought and being.” Ever since Parmenides laid it down that “It is the same thing to be and to be known” (or “The same thing is for being and for knowing”), the identity of being (in reality) with truth (in thought) has exercised the conceptual abilities of those called “idealists” because they regard this identity as fundamental.⁴⁸

Aristotle’s view that what is identical in thought and thing is the “form” is the basis of Hegel’s interpretation. A living thing is not identical with its “form” in the Aristotelian sense. It is a *moment* of the form as a self-realizing process. Hence, its death is just as essential to it as its life. The “form” can only be what it is—a self-realizing process—through reproduction.

Hegel's account here does not begin with the organism. He is concerned with the rational living thing; and the identity of thought and thing begins with experiences much simpler than the comprehension of what a living organism is. I have begun with the concept that involves death because it will help us to grasp the difference between dogmatic idealism and speculative idealism (or communal spiritualism).

Hegel's own discussion (in the book) begins from the *self-identity* that everything in the world of naïve consciousness has; this is the abstract thought of identity. This thought-criterion of Sense-Certainty is not *absolutely* satisfiable at all. It is a strictly *relative* concept. Thus, when I want to decide whether this is the "same ball" that I saw under the tree yesterday, I am in no doubt about the identity of the tree, but I must look for a sensible mark by which to identify the ball. But I can also ask whether the tree has "stayed the same" since yesterday, or last week, and then I must look for the sensible marks of change. A weak identity is a thought, because it abstracts from changes whether I notice them or not. But the stronger the identity in which I am interested, the more it becomes a function of conscious thought—a function of my memory or of my records (all of which are abstract thoughts). The permanence of things, upon which the Understanding builds, is all in thought; thus all Understanding is subsistence in the absolute flux of living experience as the flow of real time. What makes the thing "identical" is the name, or the name of the mark; what makes it different within its identity is the new mark that I can name. Things, marks and names all subsist in the "abyss" of *Verstand*, the abyss of *Verstehen* as a thinking activity that makes things "stand still"; or, to follow the impulsion of the English word, it "stands under" them.

Nothing that is alive—indeed, nothing that is really "there"—stands still in reality. But to "understand" is to bring to a standstill so that we can see and know what "is there." The "identity of being and thinking" (the one which Hegel here claims is overlooked) rests on the fact that it is thinking—even the quite spontaneous and unconscious interpretation of the flux by naïve consciousness—that makes things *be* in the first place; and their being in thought (when we understand them) is radically opposed to—indeed it is the logical opposite of—what thinking tells us about their being in the real world. Thought and Being are identical because they are different, and because it is thought that tells us what "being" is, and because nothing can "be" what thinking says it is except a thought, and because the way things "really" are is the way that only thought *is* (in the world of "being" as defined by thinking). The important point to Hegel here is that the real world is dialectical and dynamic, just as actual consciousness reveals itself to be; and the world of stable beings is the *product* of the thinking activity through which alone we learn what the real world is like.

With the advent of self-consciousness, the evolution of the "concrete" universal begins. What is crucial now is the natural disparity between living form and living matter. the Infinite of Understanding was a simple identity of thought and being, but the rational living organism is a *dialectical* identity. The thought of the Infinite is an "abstract" identity for the living thinker, who is only a *mortal* being. The dogmatic rationalism of Descartes overcomes this problem by positing two substances.

The mortal body of the thinker becomes not a stable “being,” but a transient moment in the substantial reality of the Infinite of Understanding, while the thinking self is aware of its identity with God, who is Himself the concrete identity of thought and being. The Identity of God and Nature as One Substance is restored by Spinoza, and the Cartesian conception of the thinking subject as a substantial being within that absolute Unity is restored by Leibniz.

In Fichte’s theory of the Ego, the free spontaneity of self-assertion is given the foundational role that properly belongs to it. The self is now certain that it “is” as a free self-positing *activity*. It is not just an eternal moment, in a paralysed Infinite of Reason as Understanding. Thus, the “dogmatism of assertion” (*behauptender Dogmatismus*), which rests—in Spinoza and Leibniz—on the *fact* that there is a self-knowing (or self-thinking) Infinite, becomes—in Fichte—a “dogmatism of assurance” (*versichernder Dogmatismus*). This development rests on the certainty of the self that it is a free self-positing activity (cf. par. 234).

Fichte’s clear assertion of the primacy of subjectivity (or freedom) is unsatisfactory. His thinking subject has to transcend experience—which brings it face to face with death as an embodied certainty and with its own failure to be a source of universal law—by *postulating* an immortal soul of the Cartesian type. Rational assertion is replaced by the assurance of Faith.

Instead of this degenerate moral rationalism, the *Phenomenology* offers us an idealism that is “cunning.” We shall simply *watch* how the Infinite Substance of theoretical Understanding becomes a communal subject which posits the world of “spiritual being” freely. We shall see how, when we remain within experience and refuse to let our rational certainty degenerate into faith, what emerges is the Infinite Subjective Community of Leibniz, no longer paralysed but free.

The Infinite as a self-concept is *ourselves* as scientific observers. We “stand in for the Concept” at the beginning of chapter IV and watch how the blindly practical self-assertive will which knows only that it is “free”—that is, not bounded by the natural purpose of the living form to preserve itself—gradually creates a spiritual world in which it can enjoy a substantial immortality of the Spinozist type. The natural self spiritualizes itself in this way because it has to reconcile its own absolute freedom with the experienced bounds of natural life. Without any conscious intention to do so, it creates a free community instead of the instrumental system upon which it is consciously intent; and this higher Spirit creates (or re-creates) the natural “self” as a “rational being.” Thus, the process of experience, rationally observed, shows itself to be the generation of “Science”—a stably reconciled identity of being and thinking—out of a dialectical identity of opposites: being and negation, life and free-will, substance and subject, truth and cognition.

What distinguishes this cunning idealism is that it possesses the “concept of experience” as this dialectical unity. The *Phenomenology* begins by “constructing” the Understanding as the experience of rational observation. We are only able to carry out this construction because we already know what scientific observation is. Bacon and Descartes successfully described rational observation as a *standpoint of consciousness*—that is, as an activity directed towards an object other than itself. The

transcendental turn that barely begins with the *Cogito* of Descartes is completed by Kant and Fichte. They formulated and bequeathed to Hegel the concept of philosophical "Science." "Science" is the knowledge that the Understanding can achieve by *observing itself*. When it observes itself consciously as the "identity of thought and being" it becomes Reason. This understanding of ourselves as "rational beings," the interpretation of Reason as an autonomous activity of the whole world of experience, is the shape in which "the Absolute must be present with us at the start." The *Phenomenology*—Hegel's Science of Experience—would be inconceivable in a cultural world that did not already have the three Critiques and the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

55. The Understanding fixes what is as Quality, the *thought* of self-identical determinacy. Thus "What is" is absolutely *Nous*, more determinately *Eidos*, or *Idea*, i.e. *specified* Universality. What is there is a "species," while *Nous* is substance. So as self-identical the universal concept must dissolve its own specific identity. Even Understanding is a *process* (and as such it is *Reasonableness*).

Hegel described the Understanding earlier (par. 32) as the "absolute power" that freezes the flux of living experience into universals which belong to the eternal "being" of pure thought. This is its "significance on the side of the self-consciousness of substance." "Being" (*Sein*) is itself a thought produced by the Understanding. Nothing in experience itself is "substantial." Substance "stands under" the flux of our experienced life in time.

But now (in par. 54) we have come to an understanding of what this absolute power itself does, or of how the Understanding itself generates the thought of Being (the objective Infinity). When the flux of experience has been frozen into namable "qualities," we become aware that what is there *substantially* is not just the divine life, but the divine Reason, the *Nous* of Anaxagoras.⁴⁹

This *Nous* is the identity of being and thought as it appears in Plato and Aristotle. Plato developed it into the "theory of Ideas," which Hegel interprets as the *specification* of the self-positing *Nous*, or Mind, into its *types*, or *Arten*. He uses this word for the different *species* of a biological *genus*, so he probably means us to think both of the divisions of the Living Thing Itself in the *Timaeus* and of the Aristotelian *forms* in the actual order of nature. He sets these biological concepts off here against the value-concepts which fill the edifying discourses of mystics such as Eschenmayer and a flock of Romantics (including Fichte).⁵⁰ Among these value-concepts only "beauty" can be sensibly embodied—or so Plato thought.⁵¹ But what is more important is that sensible reality cannot be specified under them. Instead of leading us towards sensible reality, as the biological terms do, these value terms lead us away from it. It is surely not accidental that *das Schöne*, *Heilige*, and *Ewige* are the key-names of the concrete Absolute in Art, Religion, and Philosophy, the three moments of Hegel's philosophy of *Absolute Spirit*. They do not apply properly to *finite* spirit at all, but they are the "species" of the Hegelian Idea.

When Hegel goes on to insist that philosophy should use *native* terminology, he is pointing a finger of scorn at his own Hellenic learning. Just as the triad of the

Beautiful, the Holy, and the Eternal is not accidental here, so too it is no accident that in this paragraph Hegel has transliterated the three Greek words *nouw*, *eidow*, and *idea*. Speculation, he seems to be saying, must have its roots in the tradition, but it must not hide behind it. The transliteration itself is the first step in bringing the past back to life as part of the *present* world of consciousness; and the strangeness of the language—which is made all the more apparent because (in his text) we can all read the letters and make the sounds—images the estrangement of consciousness, which our familiarity *conceals* in the world of naïve consciousness. The stable world that Understanding establishes appears to us here as the abstract description of an alien power. But like the alien words, the conceptual world of Understanding is only our own thinking in an unself-conscious form. What Anaxagoras said about *Nous* ordering all things in the beginning is what we have to recognize in our talk of the “order of Nature.”⁵² The *stopping of the world* which “is there” for naïve consciousness is the “simplicity” of thinking. What discursive thinking unpacks is what has already gone into our unself-conscious activity of “perceiving.” “Everything is what it is,” said Bishop Butler, “and not another thing.” According to this maxim of the Understanding, everything *is* some determinate “species or kind” of “being.” But the Understanding itself is the *Nous* that identifies the “kinds.”

Hegel has already said that *Dasein*, as fixed by the Understanding, is “quality.” A quality that is “truly taken” by the Understanding in Perception is Plato’s *Eidos* or *Idea*, the “whiteness” of the snow, which “flees” when it melts but cannot cease to be whiteness. In *Nous*, it is substantial (eternal), like the permanent substance that is manifest as snow, water, or steam, according to the energetic condition of the physical Infinite. It is the same Infinite that has a thought-aspect and an extended aspect, and the energy that displays all of its perceptible conditions is the *simplicity* of a self-moving power which “contains its otherness within itself.” Not only does it contain all the “otherness” of the different conditions, but it also contains the logically essential otherness of object and subject, thing and thought, being and being known. “What is” is *necessarily* “what can be known.” That was the insight of Parmenides.

56. *Logical necessity* is just the structure of “being one’s own concept.” Speculation is the self-conceiving of what essentially is; and whatever *is there* for consciousness has a *logical* essence. This is the *inward* formalism of logic.

The coming to be of the *known identity* of what is and what is known is the object of philosophical logic. We *can* envisage a world without consciousness. Indeed, our biological and physical sciences oblige us to envisage it, for they tell us that living things *evolved* out of a preorganic environment, on the one hand; and that our local energy-system must eventually run down into a cold death, on the other. But we envisage these conditions (and affirm them as scientific knowledge) consciously. These truths about our own non-being “are for us.” Thus, the Parmenidean dictum that “what is” is “what can be known” (because it is “what is *true*”) remains unvio-

lated. The understanding of this necessary relation between “what is” and its “truth,” the truthful comprehension of how truth can *be* at all, is *speculation*. When self-consciousness dawns in an animate creature, then the “concrete shape” of the self-moving Infinite makes itself into the “simple determinateness” of a thinking truth-knower. This is the moment in which “being,” “substance,” and so forth—all the categories of “what *truly is*”—are born. It does not matter, philosophically, exactly when or why this happens. Just what does happen (or *how* it happens logically) can be observed as an “experience of consciousness.”

All that is logically necessary for the existence of “truth” is that consciousness belongs *necessarily* to “what is.” It is “experience” that tells us that what is conscious is an animate creature. I use “creature” to designate a mortal organism, something “created” by the flux in which there is no true “being”; the “creature” is something destined to vanish back into that flux. By logical definition, the flux itself is the unknown and the unknowable. The sphere of *truth*, of logic, and of logical necessity is the sphere of cognitive experience. Truth is “for consciousness.” Thus the absolute structure or necessity of the “experience of consciousness” is the simple logical truth about how being and truth come to be at all. The knowing of this necessary structure is absolute knowing. There is no need to *impose* a logical form on experience (as Steffens did in his tabular surveys), because the experience of rational consciousness has its own necessary structure already. We only have to watch it *form itself*.

57. This truly scientific method is displayed in speculative philosophy. Our mere assertion does not make it so, and arguing empirically against our assertion won't affect it. Neither rebellion nor revolutionary enthusiasm is relevant.

In Hegel's “Speculative philosophy or Logic” (as he conceived it in 1806), there was a one-to-one correspondence between the embodied *Gestalten* of the “Science of experience” and the pure categories of the “Science of Logic” (par. 805). Hence, he can properly say that the implicit rational form of consciousness has its “proper display (*Darstellung*) in speculative philosophy.” But what the claim that experience contains its own form means can only be shown by carrying out the programme, and only by doing this can the truth of the claim be established.

The truth cannot be established by our present way of *talking about it*; but neither can it be sensibly attacked in the argumentative way. Adopting an attitude of practical partisanship, whether of conservative opposition or revolutionary enthusiasm, is inappropriate. But, as we shall see in the next paragraph, sympathetic dedication is called for. The logical form both *is* and *is not* separable from the content of experience. Scientific method determines its own rhythm through itself; that is how we can distinguish it from other forms of discursive communication. In the *Phenomenology* we learn the rhythm; in the *Science of Logic* we follow the self-exposition of the concepts that we have thus learned to distinguish; and, finally, in the *Real Philosophy* (with Nature and Spirit as *its* two parts) we observe the concepts moving in their developed content.

Hegel seems to expect that the party of “immediate rationality and divinity” (par. 14) will attack his new “science of experience.” One has the impression that the attack on his *logical* science has already begun—and it would be surprising if this were not the case, because Hegel himself has been attacking the “formalists” of the philosophy of nature for about three years. Polemic comes naturally to him. He believes that experience is a continuum of developing truth; but the dialectic of saying what is *wrong* in the opposed concept of truth is the means by which the continuum develops. We should notice, however, that Hegel condemns the enthusiastic declaration that some new concept is *right* in the same trenchant way that he condemns all conventional reactions of rejection. Revolutionary fervour in philosophy only produces in the mind the same blank slate that revolutionary terror produces in the world.

(e) *Argument: Philosophical and Unphilosophical*

58. *Requirement for the study of philosophy.* What is relevant is hard thinking about logical forms and logical necessity. Pure concepts have their own *life*, which is different from the arbitrary grounding of arguments. One has to be willing to give up one’s formal freedom, and let the Concept follow its own evolutionary course.

The concepts that constitute pure logic are high-level abstractions which remind us more of Plato’s *Sophist* than of Aristotle (even in the *Metaphysics*). But when Hegel says that they could be called *souls* because they have a life of their own, he is reminding us forcibly of the Aristotelian character of his philosophy.⁵³ His logical “Forms” do not enjoy the luxury of a world of their own; they are the forms of life in this world, and the logical ones that we are interested in are the absolute structures of this world’s unity, and of its fulfillment as self-comprehension. As logical forms, they are higher than *souls*, because they do not inform *bodies* (as the forms of lion, oak, iron, etc. do); they *constitute* the worlds of nature and spirit, and inform the continuum of rational consciousness.⁵⁴

In the Platonic tradition there is again an analogue for this status. What is above Soul in the neo-Platonic scheme of things is *Nous*, which brings us back to the reason Anaxagoras is one of exactly a dozen “souls” who are actually named in the *Phenomenology*.⁵⁵ *Nous* is the classical name for Hegel’s speculative Idea, and Anaxagoras was the first to use it in reference to the invisible *moving* force of the Idea—the *Begriff*.

To identify with these forms in their spiritual embodiment is very hard. We do not normally think of “concepts” as super-souls, with angelic missions of their own; and if we are told that our whole community of philosophical debaters is the expression of a thought that enjoys absolute “freedom from the content [i.e., from ‘what truly is’] and vain superiority about it,” we may well laugh at such pretentious talk. The temptation is to retort that the significant difference between ourselves and Hegel is that we know whose life the concepts live by, while Hegel does not. That would be a mistake. But there is no point in arguing about the differing

views of how the concepts live by us, and we by them. Those who object to Hegel's logical procedure should study just what the supposed angelic mission of the logical concepts *is*. They must not stop at the Preface, in which the "motion of the Concept" is only discussed. They must see what sort of "logical necessity" it is through which we get to "Science" (and whether the Science is worth having when we get it). If the verdict of this examination is positive, then the futility of "problematic argumentation" about the stages will be obvious in one way; if it is negative, then the futility of discussing Hegel's work "problematically" will be obvious in another way.⁵⁶

The academic world of "formal thinking" does not change much. I am not sure whether Hegel simply wants to divide the professors into the "Wolffian" rationalists and the empiricists of the "Scottish school"⁵⁷ by making a distinction between "formal" and "material" thinking here. This may well seem more likely (especially in the light of the following discussion of method) than the more "Aristotelian" view that he means to distinguish between "the many" and "the wise." We might think that he could hardly have expected that his work would receive much notice outside the circles of professional philosophers. But we must remember both the many "popular philosophers" who wrote for a general audience and Hegel's own ambition to "teach Philosophy to speak German," and to see it "possessed by the people."⁵⁸ He did believe that, in the end, the new philosophical approach would become familiar to everyone. Hence, he probably includes both the "school" of common sense and the educated common reader when he speaks of the problem faced by the "habit of running forward in representations." This is, after all, the "habit" of the *religious* consciousness generally, and he certainly hopes to raise the consciousness of the clergy to the level of the *Begriff*.

In any case, the present commentary is directed at the educated public in the same universal spirit—and with the same modestly sceptical expectations that Hegel expresses at the end of the Preface (par. 72). But my attitude to *Vorstellungen* is different from Hegel's. It has to be, since my own philosophical formation, and that of my likeliest audience, has been the *empiricist* tradition. Hegel wanted his readers to make the effort to manage without *Vorstellungen*. He had a strong bias towards the rationalist tradition.

One main object of the present commentary, however, is to put the pictures back into the conversations; but this should not be done in a bad or formalist way. Since the object of Hegel's book itself is to enable consciousness to "lift its own self up purified from the material and be by itself," we must avoid turning the "appearing of Spirit" into "the Greatest Story ever Told," just as we must avoid turning it into a textbook full of logical and psychological terminology that can mean anything or nothing.⁵⁹ Hegel's ideal of logical study is to *observe* the concepts moving through their own course of development in the content. Anyone who seeks to light the stage better must do it in a way that helps to make the motion more clearly visible and its form more easily intelligible. The "matter" is certainly not what matters in the end; but we must always be mindful of the inseparability of "process" and "result."

59. *Argumentative thinking in its negative stance*: Conceptual thinking differs from formal reasoning in two ways: (a) formal thinking is critical, refutative. This is sceptical, not progressive. Conceptual thought advances by *determinate* negation, i.e., it generates a new *position*.

Hegel now begins to characterize the “argumentative” mode of reasoning (which is exemplified in this Preface). This mode of argument is the weakness of prefaces generally. It is informative but not conclusive. Anyone can argue on the “other side” in response. The most that one can do in this mode is to show that a position is *not valid*, and that does not tell us what to do next. As an *affirmation* it is merely self-satisfied. It is never “in the thing” but only beyond it in the void. This void is the emptiness or “vanity” of the thinking self. What *is* true does not matter; all that matters is that I can prove that *this* here is not true. But if I commit myself to the truth of a position, then its experienced failure has import for me. That failure is now my truth. This is the path of determinate negation.

We can identify the “argumentative” position in its negative aspect as the *Gestalt* of Scepticism as such.⁶⁰ It needs the dogmatic opposition (Stoic rationalism) in order to subsist. And when they both collapse, the self-conscious state that results from the collapse of the actual commitments, pro and con, is Unhappy Consciousness, or the *despair* of the lost soul. But at the finite level, dogmatic commitment never collapses. Therefore, we shall never lack for arguments that cannot be settled; and we can afford to smile gently—with every sincere religious believer—at Findlay’s suggestion (Analysis 230) that a “mechanist” who despairs of establishing his position may be in a state of Unhappy Consciousness.⁶¹

60. *In its positive stance; its subject*: Positively, rational argument deals with a *represented* substantial Subject for which the thought-contents are accidents or predicates. Speculative thinking dissolves this fixed subject into the life of the object, so that it loses its transcendence, and its thoughts cease to be accidental properties. But on the other hand, the objective content ceases to be a manifold, and becomes the *substance* of the moving Ego. The argumentative consciousness is affected by this, because it can no longer escape into sceptical indifference. It has to *identify* with the absolute self of the content. The thinking Subject has its own Substance as its objective content.

Reflective argument never achieves “its own negativity as its content” (par. 59), for it is not often that a sceptical professor arrives at *despair*. The knowledge that the sceptic says we do not have is something that she feels we can very well do without. The denial costs the sceptic nothing personally, and her dogmatic opponent is just as comfortably off. The opinions of both of them are things that they can, indeed, do without; they are only opinions. Even the high-minded Stoic is only talking about a “represented Self,” the God of which both his Reason and that of his sceptical opponents are just accidental sparks.⁶² “God is not mocked,” he can say comfortably, when he fails to convince his opponents.

I have deliberately taken the Stoic as the model for the “thinking apprehension of the Idea” because the many followers of Wolff (and Wolff himself for that mat-

ter) are unfamiliar to us, while Stoicism is the historic model of formal thinking that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* provides for us. This model also has the advantage of bringing us back into the historical sequence that began with Anaxagoras, Plato, and Aristotle in paragraph 55. It is that earlier sequence which Hegel refers to as the “essence of the Idea as expounded above,” so we are following the historic flow in which his own positive “argumentation” is running.

The Sceptic reasons argumentatively about himself and his own situation. The Stoic begins from God (the Cosmic *Nous*) as “a represented *Subject* with which the content is connected as accident and predicate.” Comprehending thought (*begreifendes Denken*) behaves differently. The *Begriff* is the *self* of its object, so the thinking must identify itself with the object, not reflect upon it from outside. It is obvious, therefore, that the experience of consciousness must be complete before any “comprehending thought” of this kind can even begin. What is required is that, instead of thinking *about* “God,” I must think with and for God. The “passive subject” which the reflective reasoner thinks *about* must “perish.” “Comprehending thought” is the motion of the substantial-Subject of logical thought as such. This is the “self-movement” of the Hegelian *Begriff*. The *Phenomenology* teaches us how to make the transition from ordinary reflective reasoning of the *positively* argumentative kind to this *speculative* thinking. In the book, it is always (and only) our own *Begriff* of our own experience that is evolving. That is why we, as the observers, need to have the Fichtean formal concept of the Ego as a *Tathandlung* (with all of its Kantian ramifications as a theory of “experience”). Possession of this self-concept enables us to observe the “object consciousness” reflectively without being guilty of “external reflection,” like the Stoic. It is always (and only) our own consciousness that we are observing.

What we observe is the *coming to be* (*Werden*) of a new self-concept out of the one with which we began. “Experience” is the growth process of the subject in which the *Begriff* transforms itself by incorporating its experience into itself as its *Bestimmungen*, its new self-definition.

The “passive subject” perishes, because it is the *motion*, the *experience*, of the subject that “we” need to be conscious of as observers. The passivity passes over from the “subject” that we reflect on to ourselves as observers. *Our* reflection is passive, not actively constructive (in the way that ordinary reflective argument is active and constructive). The subject that we are observing constructs *itself*, and that subject cannot be anything except what it determines itself to be, for it does not have *predicates* (which may be noticed or unnoticed). It has only *experiences*, and it can only be the self-concept that results from those experiences.

This contention is easier to accept in the systematic *Logic* than it is in the *Phenomenology*. When we reach the explicit observation of the *Weltgeist*, it is obvious that there are many “experiences” of the *world* which we are asked to ignore in each phase as irrelevant. When we reach the life-story of “God” (in chapter VII), Hegel himself admits that we must deliberately *select* the moment that our phenomenological progress needs from a concrete whole that contains all of the moments of Spirit (pars. 679–680). What justifies our selective arrangement we shall see when

we get there, but it is obvious from what is said here that *no* selection can claim *absolute* validity. To put the point concretely, we cannot perfectly comprehend anyone's "world" or anyone's "religion" except our own.

But it is only our own world, the spiritual universe of our own life, that we want to comprehend. "We" are always some finite community, but as philosophical observers with the *Wissenschaftslehre* under our belt, we aim to be, and to speak for, the absolutely universal human community. Hence, when Hegel says that the content is not "dispersed" and that it is "not the universal which, free from the subject, could belong to several," the ultimate necessity of the experience of "mutual forgiveness" is foreshadowed. For we can only experience our own world; and if we are not windowless monads but can indeed establish the absolute perspective of God upon our necessarily prejudiced communications with one another, then not only must there be an experience in which the necessary limitation implied by the concreteness of experience is comprehended, but also the forgiving of bias and opposition must be involved in the final transition to the *absoluteness* of spiritual cognition.

The fact that we are always thinking about our own life-experience sets a limit to the reflections that are relevant. We can always think of other things to say about the "experience" that we observe; or we can frame it in other "shapes." But "representative thinking is hemmed up in its running on" because at every stage the concept completes a *circle*; and it is generally not difficult to see that everything else that might relevantly be said falls either within that circle or within some prior or subsequent "experience."⁶³

Everything I have said applies to the "Science of Logic" as much as it does to the "Science of Experience." Indeed, we have already seen that Hegel's claim that philosophical "experience" is self-defining applies more readily to Logic than to the concrete cultural experience of the *Phenomenology*. What he says about the *Gegenstand* that representative thought encounters repeats his point in another way, and again it is easier to validate for ourselves in the *Logic* proper. All of us must read the *Phenomenology* in a "representative" way, but generally we reject the claim that we "suffer a counter-thrust." We are supposed to find that, as a result of the "experience of consciousness" which we have observed, we have lost the subject we began with, and that in our final result (the predicate) we have a new subject for observation. But we cannot help being aware that "subjects" such as the one that has sublated itself in our thinking still exist all round us in ordinary experience, and often we cannot see how our new "subject" still contains the old one. So, far from being held down by the ever increasing weight of the subject that we are observing, the vanity of our own free thought suggests to us that we could easily go in another direction if we liked, and that Hegel's own thought is only "roaming around freely." What he says here should teach us that for Hegel this suspicion implies his own absolute failure. Hence, we ought not to give in to this suspicion lightly. For whatever other virtues we may find in Hegel's work, it has no virtue at all in his eyes if it lacks this one.

"In the old days [*sonst*] the subject is first laid down as foundation as the *objective* fixed self." The reference here is to the "analytical" procedure of the precritical

metaphysics (par. 32). Wolff still had many followers in Hegel's world; and beginning from God in a reflective way was still the normal way to do philosophical theology. But with Fichte's attempt to reorganize Kant's philosophy of experience by beginning with the thinking ego of the philosopher, speculation took a crucial new turn. After the bar, or *Gedankenstrich*, in this paragraph, Hegel makes a clear acknowledgment of what his new method owes to Fichte. Instead of the "*gegenständliche* fixe Selbst"—the God of dogmatic rationalism—speculation begins with the "wissende Ich selbst." But this *wissende Ich* has a different destiny from that which Fichte gave it. It *watches* its own self-positing in empirical consciousness. Its transcendental activity is confined to the awareness that what is positing itself *is* the absolute Subject.

This is the *religious* consciousness of the Absolute as "Spirit" that we have to have "at the start." But it is certainly not the case that we need to be Christian believers in order to comprehend the argument of the *Phenomenology*. In fact, the assumption that Hegel himself was a *believer* because he said explicitly that he was a Lutheran has seriously impeded the understanding of chapter VII in accordance with the methodical requirements laid down in this paragraph. We need to know only the history of philosophy from Descartes to Fichte (at least in the schematic textbook fashion in which Fichte himself knew it) in order to understand our own situation as "observers." It is only because we know what every contemporary reader of Hegel's book is assumed to know that we can see more than the consciousness that we are observing.

We can see that every philosophical effort to discover the absolute truth is conditioned by the experiences already gone through, whereas the consciousness that we are observing makes *the same* effort at every stage to rise out of its "finite" experience to the "infinite" Concept.⁶¹ It is as Fichtean self-observers that we are obliged to link each "predicate" in turn to the "subject." For when we become the absolute subjectivity of our world, that subject does not cease to be ourselves as freely self-positing rational agents. It is Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* that frees us from any need to be Christian believers. Fichte himself was a *rational* believer, but the methodical movement of the *Phenomenology* will free us from the need for any "belief-postulates" at all.

(f) *The Speculative Proposition*

61. In formal terms, the differentiated structure of the propositional judgment is destroyed by the speculative proposition. The maintaining of identity involves the counter-thrust. But this is the wrong way to view it. Speculative identity is a harmony of differences as the determinate accent of the judgment.

Hegelian logic—whether in experience or in pure thought—continues to use language in outwardly ordinary ways. The *Gegenstoss* against the externally reflective freedom of representative thought can be expressed formally by saying that the identity of the experiencing and observing subject throughout the process in which

the formal consciousness gradually becomes filled or realized by its experience becomes the “counterthrust” against the difference between the subject and the predicate that is explicit on the face of any synthetic judgment. In this way the “nature” of the judgment is “destroyed.”⁶⁵

In more material terms, the speculative judgment *changes the subject* by development. It does not “predicate” something newly discovered about the stable subject that was there already. As Hegel puts it here, identity and difference are present in the way that metre and accent are present in good verse. In verse, there is a “floating middle” which unites metre and accent to give a “rhythm.” Similarly, the identity of the concept unites the speculative identity of the judgment (as a statement about the Absolute) with its difference (as the predication of an “attribute”) to give us the “rhythm” of the concept.

In the “system” of philosophy, this “rhythm” becomes a forward motion. But Hegel did not invent the “speculative judgment.” Speculative philosophers have always used it. Hegel now wants to explain how Spinoza and Leibniz could make “speculative propositions” about “God” as a “represented subject.” The speculative judgment is a balanced whole that is “true”—a statement of inward or conceptual identity—which we are forced to recognize through the *circular* motion of our thought. This confirms the interpretation that we gave for the first sentence of paragraph 20—any true philosophical proposition makes a “whole.”⁶⁶

62. For example, “God is Being” *reduces* subject to substantial essence; but also the “being” of the thinker is implicitly absorbed by this motion; and “the actual is the universal” is not like “the rose is red.” It asserts the truth of objective idealism.

Thus, when speculative theology formulates what God said to Moses as the identity statement “God is Being,” all of the Spinozist consequences seem to follow because God is *defined* by the predicate *das Sein*. A closed circle is created in which there is no room for the argumentative posture. When we try to comprehend what is meant, we have to realize that it comprehends us. Instead of a concept in our own minds, we are faced with the “Being” that comprehends all our finite thinking.

Similarly, “the *actual* (*das Wirkliche*) is the universal” does not mean that what is actual has the quality of universality, but identifies the *working* force in “what is” as the universal concept.⁶⁷ Hegel’s doctrine—which is surely correct for the procedure of Spinoza and Leibniz at least—is that speculative propositions are conceptual definitions that are “ontologically necessary.” Ockham’s view of concepts is rejected in favor of “comprehension” as a free act of transcendental imagination. In our effort to comprehend “what is,” we have to start somewhere else than where Ockham started. Starting where Ockham does we could *never* comprehend the proposition “God is *das Sein*.”

63. This is what makes philosophy hard to read. We learn by experience that it means something other than we thought (in terms of our ordinary expectations about propositions).

Hegel calls the ordinary assumption of empirical consciousness (that in using language we add new predicates to a stable subject) “die Meinung.” The attempt to use language to do ontology overturns this assumption. Instead of saying things that can be confirmed “by experience” (or by referring from the word to the thing meant or to the real “state of affairs”), we are talking about the reality-structure *within which* experience occurs. There is nowhere we can go for confirmation of what is asserted outside the proposition itself. The proposition is “synthetic”; it tells us something that we did not know before, but it is nevertheless a *conceptual* truth. The predicate *develops* our concept of the subject. There is a kind of shock-reaction (the proper translation of *Gegenstoss*) involved in running up against a proposition of this kind, a proposition about the whole self-world structure within which ordinary propositions are formulated. Hegel’s last sentence describes this shock and explains how it leads to an increase in our knowledge. The best commentary is a literal translation, though the mode of speech is too peculiar to be bearable in an English version of the book: “Its [the proposition’s] philosophical content destroys this relationship [of subject and predicate] and the supposing [*Meinung*] of it; the supposing experiences that it [the relationship] is otherwise supposed, than it was supposing, and this correction of its supposing compels the knowing to come back to the proposition again and to grasp it now differently.”

The compulsion to return is not absolute. But the alternatives are to trivialize the proposition by taking it as a stipulative definition or to reject it as obvious nonsense.⁶⁴ The first way out is the easiest with “God is being.” We say, “That is what the word ‘God’ means, it is what the *name* refers to”; and we simply do not reflect that if we take this proposition seriously, it follows that *only* God can say “I AM.” Spinoza accepted that consequence. But it consorts very awkwardly with our natural Cartesian self-confidence—and Leibniz did not manage to harmonize the two positions comfortably. Hence, we just play a game with words until some proper nominalist such as J. L. Austin tells us that Moses should have responded to God with, “You are *what*?” That question will either “bring us back to the proposition to grasp it differently” or cause us to reject it as nonsense (as Austin intended).

But the “nonsense” reaction will not do, as we can see by examining any case in which it is *spontaneous*. Hegel’s second example is such a case. If a Scotist says, “The actual is the universal,” the Ockhamites will tell him that he is a dunce. But it is quite obvious that not all Scotists are dunces (John of Duns, for one, was no dunce). Therefore, the statement must mean something that is not obvious nonsense; for that reason, we should try playing Hegel’s *different* language game in order to find out what it really means.

64. One should not mix the two meaning-modes. Only pure conceptualizing is plastic.

Obviously, the *theory* of “what is” should not be mixed up with the practical discovery and description of *how things are*. Philosophical discourse is the *remolding* of concepts that are truly “plastic.” The proposition “God is being” ought to

make us reconsider what we remember of our scriptures, or what we say and do in church. "What works is the universal" should cause us to think again about our bruises, our factories, and our invading forces. But the story of Moses does not establish the former proposition any more than faith-healing can establish the latter one. All such supposed "evidence" for propositions of this kind can only confuse the issue. One *practical* reason why philosophy ought to be done systematically is that the systematic organization of it separates it off and eliminates this confusion, whereas one difficulty about doing it Socratically is that we are continually obliged to go over the same ground, to repeat the same lesson, to clarify the same point.

65. Non-speculative thinking has its rights. We ought not simply to *utter* philosophical propositions (as in "God is Being"). What the philosophical proofs were supposed to provide once, must now be set forth as the dialectical movement of speculation. An appeal to intellectual intuition will not do. The true (as subject) must be expressed as a self-generation.

The fact that J. L. Austin was within his rights in retorting as he purportedly proposed to do to the God of Moses is another reason why speculative thought—the attempt to *mirror* the total situation within which we are talking—should be separated. But it is also a reason why the speculative talkers need to explain the relation between what they are doing and the ordinary empirical uses of language.⁶⁹ In the older tradition, the philosopher attempted to "prove" the existence of God. Except in the case of Anselm's proof this involved a confusion of the kind condemned in paragraph 64. The standard "refutation" of Anselm's proof, however, consists precisely in the introduction of that same confusion (treating "God" as if he were another "island," as Gaunilo does).⁷⁰ That is why the *proof* procedure is no good. The self-contained or circular character of what is said must be shown. It must be put out there on the paper so that we can see it.

In any *simple* philosophical proposition its speculative character is only an inward "penning up." We are pent-up by it and have nowhere outside it to go for confirmation. The return of our thinking to the beginning so as to develop has no *Dasein*, no finite way of showing itself. Either there is *no* genuine growth of our comprehension (as in the limiting case of a formal tautology) or we have not yet said what the growth, the new experience, is. Thus, the question Austin wanted Moses to ask is the right one not because it is unanswerable, but precisely because there is an answer that can be given. The answer, when given, will not be satisfactory; it will give rise to new questions. But the road of *exposing* the argument is preferable to an appeal to inward "transcendental" or "intellectual" intuitions (such as we encounter in the *Difference* essay). God's answer to Moses provides the starting point, because the awareness that the Absolute is *subject* (as well as substance) is the way in which the (religious) Absolute is "with us from the start."

For Hegel's time, this two-sided certainty was expressed by Spinoza and Fichte; for the history of philosophy in the West, the symbolic names are Parmenides (IT

IS) and Descartes (I AM). But in chapter VII, Hegel will trace the certainty that “God is Being” to Persian and Greek *religious* experience. Moses, Anselm, Thomas, and Pascal are hardly visible in his book. This is because the I AM tradition of the Bible is an *alienated* form of the truth. It receives its recognition here, in the context of Hegel’s discussion of empirical argumentation (which is the other side of the alienation). It is only when God is *separated* from the world and the self that His existence needs to be “proved.” The thinking discovery of the dialectic of consciousness spells the end of the old method of proof, because the new method is the key to the overcoming of the alienation produced by consciousness as a relationship of *mastery* (vis à vis the world as substance) and *service* (vis à vis God as Subject).⁷¹

66. The movement is all expressed in propositions, so we seem to be involved in an infinite regress. But this is a problem of *external* cognition. We must stay inside the *self*; therefore, because the concept is self-moving, we must begin with concept names (e.g. Being, One) and not use the proper name “God” which is a static predicate-bearer. This saves discussion from falling into mere edification.

The argumentative method is caught in an infinite regress (or progress) situation. Philosophical “proofs” always had to start with principles that were “granted.” But the granting is arbitrary, so doubts can always be raised. The dialectical movement, in contrast, is a dialogue of the soul with itself (Plato’s definition of thought); therefore it has a content which is “implicitly subject through and through.” The *Begriff* is the thinker’s self-concept. It is not just *my* self-concept, but it must start with me, this present thinker trying to decide what the truth of *my* experience is. It does not start either from “God” (the absolute subject) or from “Being” (the absolute predicate); hence it does not concern itself with “speculative” propositions, but only with the content of experiential propositions.

Because the proposition is to be merely a form for the growing self-comprehension of the thinking subject, the dialectic will not be expressed in propositions about any subject except us, the thinkers. “God,” the absolute subject, will be replaced by “the Concept” and by appropriate concept-names until we are finally able to explicate how the experiencing subject is identical with the absolute subject.⁷² “The Concept,” *der Begriff*, is the name of thoughtful experience as a self-conscious moving whole. This whole can have a singular reflective—that is, *alienated*—subject (as in Observing Reason), a finite communal subject (“the City” as in “True Spirit”), or the infinite community (of “humanity”) as its subject. But only what has already been *comprehended* by the process is admitted, and it is admitted only in the way in which it is comprehended. The proper names of the *Begriff* are Self-Consciousness and World-Consciousness. When these two coincide fully, the “dialectical movement”—the movement in which philosophical experience continually negates its own concept and replaces it with a new one—will come to rest. Then the name of the “resting subject” can be introduced. Then “God” can appear in his community, and the motion can be gone through from the other side (the side of substance).

(g) *Misology: Common Sense and Inspiration*

67. Common sense certainty is as big a nuisance as non-speculative argument. Conceptual thinking is a skill like shoe-making, while natural reason is only a standard (like one's foot for shoes). Real philosophizing is not abstract but interprets empirical knowledge so that it becomes science.

The Preface now approaches its conclusion. Having shown the relation of his new method of argument to the traditional method, Hegel has only to dispose of two ways of settling philosophical questions without any method at all. The first of them is by appeal to what is "obvious" or to "what everyone knows." Here Hegel's argument echoes the Socrates of Plato (by whom it is obviously inspired). Philosophy is just as much a skilled profession as shoe-making, and just as we know we have a good shoemaker when his products fit our feet, so we know we have a good philosopher when his work fits our world. Like the Platonic Socrates, Hegel makes his point only by implication, but the implication is a necessary one, because the *Begriff* is *universal* Reason.

As for the commonsense view that philosophy is superfluous, what needs to be understood is that there cannot be any true "science" at all until we have a properly scientific comprehension of the life- and thought-context within which our putative science is to be understood. The philosopher has to grasp the fundamental pattern of our actual world-consciousness (that is, the pattern in which the empirical sciences—both cultural and natural—are to be understood) in order to put all of our empirical knowledge and research into the proper perspective. This philosophical context is not an abstract form (like Kant's table of the categories) which can be constructed without reference to content, and if it so constructed, it cannot be accepted.

68. *Natural philosophizing as common sense and as genius*: Revelation and common sense are offered as chicory-substitutes for the coffee of comprehensive science. But *genius* is even less productive in philosophy than it was in poetry earlier.

Philosophy only achieves absolute status by comprehending the whole cycle of experience. It is logically impossible to arrive at a comprehensive consciousness by means of any intuitive leap. There are two opposite forms that a pretended leap can take: the faith in common sense and the faith in "genius." Common to them both is the ideal of a natural integrity of consciousness, the ideal of a world in which philosophy is not *necessary*—the world of Eden. Hegel pours scorn on this ideal and even impugns the cult of genius in the sphere of poetry. (He despised "chicory" and its defenders.)⁷³

The "common sense" school of philosophy had existed in Germany for about fifty years. They opposed the new critical idealism of Kant, though some of them produced "common sense" readings of it; and, of course, they laughed heartily at its "speculative" development. On the other side, because of his reference to the "new philosophical age of genius" in the *Wastebook*, we might think that Hegel has

in mind the same crew of Schelling-imitators who have reduced the new speculative philosophy to a game with words.⁷⁴ But the metaphor of his climax is directed at Friedrich Schlegel, who had claimed in 1800 that the time had come to unite philosophy and poetry; and when we look at the aphoristic “Ideas” in which this claim was advanced, we find among them the following gem:

To have genius is the natural state of man; he too must come sound from the hand of nature, and since love is for the woman what genius is for the man, we must think to ourselves of the Golden Age as the one where love and genius were universal.⁷⁵

This “Golden Age” in which all enjoy the “genius” of “sound common sense” is just what Hegel is attacking in the present paragraph. He is not now repeating his earlier attack on “formalism,” but is attacking the Romantic contempt for form in one of its major representative figures.

69. Common sense philosophizing offers only trivialities. When reproached it appeals to our hearts, conscience, etc. But there is no need to tell us what we *must* all know. We can easily bring out the dialectical character of these certainties. Then common sense cries “foul,” and tramples on the roots of humanity (the quest for agreement) by refusing to argue.

The Scottish school, led by Thomas Reid, had many adherents in Germany; but the representative of “common sense” in Hegel’s own critical writings is a Kantian of sorts named Wilhelm Traugott Krug. Even the critical editors have spared themselves the labour of hunting for rhetorical appeals to the innocent heart and the pure conscience in his work (or in other writings of the same ilk); and I shall spare myself likewise.⁷⁶ I find it interesting, however, to reflect that the most important defender of common sense philosophy in our century—G. E. Moore—was an intuitionist in ethical theory. Instead of attacking the ethics of all who disagreed with his logical intuitions, he impugned the logical capacity of all who were dissatisfied with his ethical intuitions. There is no doubt that (in the Hegelian perspective) this is an advance, but the basic pattern is the same.

In Hegel’s view, common sense philosophy is superfluous, because what it seeks to defend must already be institutionalized in the objective fabric of social life (and especially in religious education). It is *reactionary* in that it is a rearguard action on the part of what Plato called “right opinion” against the transition to dialectic. When Socrates made this transition in the history of Greek culture, he was put to death as a “sophist” and an unbeliever. At Jena in 1798, Fichte was driven from his professorship as an “atheist” (thus becoming Spinoza’s twin).

When Hegel stigmatizes this intolerant reaction of those whom Plato called the “watchdogs of society” as “trampling underfoot the roots of humanity” he must be consciously indulging his irony. For he has just called the poetic philosophy “the arbitrary combinations of an imaginative power that has been disorganized by its thoughts,” which is just what the plain man says when he calls philosophy *Träumen* [dreams]; and Hegel has likewise jeered at its claim to be “freedom of thought

and toleration.” What he holds against the “genius” is exactly what he holds against the plain man. They *both* refuse to join the dialogue of philosophical thinking which is carried on in the scientific community. Instead, they appeal to their “feelings,” which are the subhuman, natural aspect of their existence.

70. Common sense is the best “royal road” to science (along with prefaces and reviews). Revelation and genius are the “sacred way” of the high priest. Conceptual discipline is the only real road. Only this produces the truth that can be the property of all Reason.

Hegel jotted down two aphorisms about the “royal road” to philosophy in his *Wastebook*. The one he used here was “The usual royal road in philosophy is to read prefaces and book reviews, in order to get a rough and ready picture of the matter.” But in his notebook he added: “The last royal road in study is thinking for oneself.”⁷⁷ The two poles are both present here, but “the usual road” is identified now as that of following common sense. Reading prefaces is ancillary to this. *Selbstdenken* has here ceased to be a form of thinking proper and emerges as the way of the high priest. This is the way of poetic intuition taken by Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis.⁷⁸ They wear a priestly robe here because of their penchant for Indian and Egyptian wisdom. They live by their own “Ideas,” which come to them through poetic inspiration, without any need for the hard labour of systematic thought.

Schlegel’s aphorisms are full of things that both Schelling and Hegel had agreed on in earlier years; and Schlegel acknowledges debts to Novalis and to Schleiermacher. These are the self-conscious “great minds,” the *prophets* of the time. But in those same years, the unknown lecturer, ignored and despised by all the people who were too clever to be capable of real wisdom,⁷⁹ was struggling painfully to make a logically coherent system out of these skyrocket glimpses of the “Universum.” He was certainly no poet, but he could make his own skyrockets if he wanted to. It is obvious that this was one function of his *Wastebook*. But then he took the skyrockets and wove them into the fabric of this argumentative Preface. He united the approaches of common sense and genius in order to turn them against themselves. We can see here finally what he would say about those who study and admire his Preface but reduce the book itself to “skyrockets,” if they read it at all. His Preface ends as it began, by denigrating (not itself but) those who think they can use it as a short cut.

(h) *The Advent of Science*

71. *Conclusion: Relation of the author to his public.* This doctrine of the self-motion of the Concept is new and unfamiliar. But Plato’s inspired excellence—even the conceptual dialectic of the *Parmenides*—has sometimes been appreciated for the right reasons (as well as for wrong ones); and our best philosophy now is scientifically inspired. Truth triumphs when its time is ripe. My audience must judge—but not my reviewers—for only time will tell.

Unfortunately for Hegel, both common sense and genius are more readily accessible than a continuous chain of reasoning that is directed at establishing the identity of one's world-knowledge with one's self-knowledge, slowly and painfully, without ever letting one slip back into the comfortable conviction of Stoic and Sceptic alike that what happens, or has happened, in one's world does not really matter to one. This is the conviction upon which the ordinary argumentative method rests, and even the ironic superiority of the Romantic prophets is a form of it.

The contempt that Hegel here expresses for Plato's myths arises from the aid and comfort which the poet-philosophers of the latest ages derived from this great example. We need to remember how often Hegel's metaphors are derived from Plato's myths (as well as how many of Schlegel's aphorisms are absorbed into his arguments) in order to see this polemic in its true perspective. This paragraph shows how deeply aware he is that his "philosophic science" springs from the same fountains as the Romantic fairy-tale philosophies, and how clearly he recognizes that the parentage of both is legitimate.

His philosophy is inspired by neo-Platonism, by Aristotle, by the German mystics,⁸⁰ and by Boehme. All of them, except Aristotle, are *poetic* thinkers who give every encouragement to an approach like that of Friedrich Schlegel, who is again the culprit who considered Plato's "scientifically valueless myths" to be what was most excellent in his work.⁸¹ The fundamental conception (or image) of the "divine life" is what Hegel shares with the Romantics. He admires Plato's *Parmenides* because he takes it to be a rigorously *logical* attempt to express the "One" that embraces everything within itself. He knows that the truth of a culture can come to self-conscious expression only when the educated public is ready for it, and he knows that the one who expresses it must sometimes wait a long time for any general recognition that it is the truth. But until it achieves that recognition, it is *not* the truth. He has no alternative, therefore, but to press on. The time *is* ripe for him, because he has the absolute consciousness that he wants to make universal, and it dictates absolutely how it is to be expressed.⁸²

Hegel must have been grievously disappointed by the reception that his book received, but he cannot have been altogether surprised. He was not afraid of the public, but only of the self-elected critics who would tell them that his work was unintelligible.⁸³ Left to itself, he thought, the book would gradually make its way; and he was right—at least in the sense that it did gradually gather an audience that it has never lost—while the noisy spokesmen whom he feared long ago lost all the audience they ever had.

72. The community is now what matters, so the individual's influence is small. This makes the achievement of logical impersonality more important; but one must ask less of oneself, and claim less for oneself.

Hegel's belief in the "universality of the Spirit" marks him as a child of the Enlightenment. "Singularity has become indifferent"; that is, the kind of originality, the aristocratic privileged vision, upon which Schlegel and Novalis prided

themselves (and to which Schelling also was inclined to lay claim) was not important. Romanticism, with its instinctive élitist bias, is not important in philosophy as compared with the intellectual democracy of the Enlightenment. What is important is scientific neutrality and complete indifference to personalities. But this impersonality exists on quite a different level from that of the ordinary common sense which the Enlightenment accepted as its touchstone. And because of that, Hegel's work has (paradoxically) become the philosophy of a self-conscious intellectual élite; while, of course, it remains a favorite butt of all enlightened common sense. On the whole, the "spokesmen" Hegel was afraid of did not make much noise at the time. But the "dead men burying their dead" have not been lacking in later days, and as long as this is the case, we can hardly say that the truth has prevailed or that its time has fully come. We have no recourse, however, except the one of which Hegel speaks: to do our best and then to be humbly patient.⁸⁴

Notes

1. This view that the *Phenomenology* is a science in its own right has often been denied—compare note 109 to chapter 1 above; and specifically the essays of K. Dove, W. Maker, and R. D. Winfield listed in the bibliography (particularly W. Maker, 1990). Their exclusively negative and preparatory view of the book is denied by Hegel himself (pars. 35–36). For a good discussion of the transition actually made by Hegel, see C. Willett (1990) and the commentary of G. di Giovanni (1990).

2. Mark 2:27. R. C. Solomon quotes the second half of paragraph 37 and comments: "Here Hegel is telling us not only that the *Phenomenology* is a mere preliminary to the system proper, but that the *Phenomenology* is not 'Science' at all; it is only 'the system of the experience of Spirit,' 'the *appearance* of Spirit' and so something 'false'" (1983, 265).

Any careful reader ought to be outraged by this, since Hegel called the *Phenomenology* "the *science* of the experience of consciousness" (my italics) in the preceding paragraph. Where did this wise king learn the logical principle that tells him that if there is a "science of logic" there cannot *also* be a "science of experience"? Not from Hegel, but only from some very aberrant "Hegelians." It is true that Hegel frequently speaks of "Science" in the singular. But the singular is only properly "absolute" when it means the *whole* system that begins with the "Science of experience" and ends with the "real philosophy" (of Nature and Spirit).

3. Hegel is echoing lines from *Nathan the Wise* that haunt his writings from the Tübingen seminary onwards: Saladin asks Nathan which of the three religions of the book is the "true" one. Nathan muses: "I came prepared/ For money, and he asks for truth—for truth!/ And wants it paid in ready cash, as though/ The truth were coinage" (Act III, Sc. 6, trans. W. A. Steel, Everyman, 165). Compare the "Tübingen Fragment" (Nohl, 15; *Toward the Sunlight*, 492–493).

4. Cf. *D.K.* 28, B2.

5. For Hegel's view of *evil* (and even of the devil), we have to wait a long time (see pars. 775–780).

6. As "a *simple* distinguishing, i.e., as self and knowledge in general," consciousness is not "false." This is the level of immediate certainty, where "falsity" can only enter through deliberate misrepresentation. Whatever may happen to what is known at this level (in psy-

choanalytic interpretation, say) can happen only on the basis of its acceptance as a datum. It is the “distinction and determination of the content”—i.e., its interpretation within a conceptual frame—that gives cognitive consciousness its different “shapes.” This is where “knowing falsely” enters—as soon as one “shape” of consciousness is in conflict with another. Even Perception distinguishes what *is* from what *seems to be* the case in Sense-Certainty; and this motion in which interpretations are continually corrected is, of course, the “essential momentum” required for (and still maintained in) “absolute knowing.” Compare the argument of G. Varnier (1990, 253–256).

7. Whether, and in what way, the belief needs to be *grounded* before it can be called “knowledge” is more controversial territory. But since I think that even the basic consensus needs to be reconsidered, I shall not concern myself about that. Some aspects of the problem are noted by K. Westphal (1989, 102).

8. There is something paradoxical about saying that “we once *knew* that something was so” after we have changed our minds. But in general, I think that the categorical way in which much contemporary conceptual analysis is done (or attempted) is misguided. It would be better to return to the Aristotelian (and Scholastic) habit of *distinguishing*. Thus, in one way we can be said to “know falsely” and in another way we *cannot* (or perhaps more distinctions are needed). But it is appropriate to speak of “knowing falsely” if the substance of what was “known” remains important even after the error is discovered. Thus, in *Nathan the Wise*, Recha discovers that Nathan is not her natural father (as she believed while she was growing up). But this does not affect her way of referring to him (and we all agree that she is right).

9. What comes later is not necessarily better. I would not say for Gall’s phrenology what I have suggested for Galen; and (purely for the sake of illustration, rather than as the indulgence of a prejudice) I will hazard the opinion that those who read alchemical literature under the guidance of Jung are knowing something *more* falsely than they are if they study alchemy on its own terms. (This is a reflection upon what I perceive as a lack of logic in Jung. But I am quite conscious that I have expressed a prejudice—or, in other words, I know that I may be mistaken. And I do not deny that Jung’s work may have other important values—for instance, the enrichment and stimulation of the imagination. The theories of Gall and Lavater seem not even to have that virtue—but compare G. Tytler, 1982.)

10. Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, 77.

11. *Fernere Darstellungen* (*Werke* IV, 405). (Bonsiepen and Heede direct us to the same work [*Werke* I, 362–364, 370–371] for the expressions Hegel uses at the end of par. 39. It is particularly instructive to compare the views in the first of these passages, which is about “the knowledge that one achieves by the usual paths” (“no true knowledge”), and about mathematical knowledge “which stands beside philosophy,” with those expressed by Hegel in the paragraphs that here follow. (There is a brief but interesting debate about these paragraphs between R. C. Solomon [1975b, 704–705], M. J. Inwood [1977, 272–274] and J. McCumber [1994, 33–40].)

12. There are some outstanding instances in his surviving papers both of careful historical research and of remarkable critical insight.

13. As Kaufmann remarks (1966, II, 63, n. 2), when Mommsen applied his powerful critical faculties to the problem of Caesar’s birth the conventionally accepted date became controversial. My own reference book (*Chambers Biographical Dictionary*) says, cautiously, “100 or 102 B.C.” Hegel probably learned “100 B.C.” Mommsen argued for 102 B.C.

14. For a closely analogous comment, see K. Westphal (1989a). (I had not seen this when I wrote my own commentary.)

15. If I have understood Hegel's point correctly, his way of expressing himself is colloquial rather than logical in his own strict sense. In the terms of his own logic, mathematical proof deals with "essences" but not with "concepts." But he wants to be understood without having to explain the logic of the concept in more detail at this point.

16. The Platonic view would perhaps come into its own if mathematics were surveyed from the aesthetic perspective in the philosophy of Absolute Spirit. For it is certain that Hegel himself enjoyed mathematics. (But see the *Wastebook*, aphorism 42; Rosenkranz, 545 for Hegel's own comment on his experience in the study of mathematics.)

17. See, for instance, *Metaphysics*, M 3, 1077 b, 17–20: "the universal part of mathematics deals, not with objects which exist separately apart from magnitudes and from numbers, but with magnitudes and numbers . . ."

18. Already in the 1812 *Science of Logic*, Hegel reserves the word *Verhältnis* (relationship) for the concept of a "ratio" (compare its use in par. 47 below). Hence, his mode of expression in paragraph 45 is clearly marked as colloquial. The very fact that the concept of "magnitude" is immediately said to be a "relationship" that is "conceptless" indicates that "relationship" and "conceptless" are being used in a fairly loose way. The field of mathematics is only relatively "conceptless." The context makes clear that the important relative sense is that quantity is more *abstract* than quality. It is "impoverished" even by comparison with sensible intuition. The "Concept" that is lacking here is precisely the Self-Concept that is a logical motion towards concreteness. In mathematics, that Concept is still present (as the *Cogito* argument of Descartes shows), but it has gone into reverse gear, so to speak.

19. For Kant's own belated recognition of the problem, see K. Westphal (1993) and the work reviewed therein.

20. David Hilbert is supposed to have said, "No one is going to turn us out of the paradise which Cantor has created." Wittgenstein's comment was: "I wouldn't dream of trying to drive anyone out of this paradise. I would do something quite different: I would try to show you that it is not a paradise—so that you'll leave of your own accord. I would say 'You're welcome to this; just look about you.'" (See R. Monk: *Wittgenstein*, New York, Free Press, 1990, 416.) Some recent work with which I am myself sympathetic puts Hegel firmly on Wittgenstein's side—see P. Stekeler-Weithofer (1992).

21. For a brief survey of the attempts to formalize Hegel's *Logic* see J. McCumber (1994, 123–127). For fuller critical discussion see D. Lachterman (1980). Only P. Thagard (1982) has worked specifically on the *Phenomenology*, and only T. Seebohm (1976) has used analytical tools that Hegel would recognize.

22. On this problem see D. Wandschneider (1982).

23. What he calls the *Verhältnis* of space and time in his reference to the law of falling bodies is the *square ratio* in the acceleration of free-fall motion.

24. *G.W.* VII, 210, 5–8 (and the editorial note, *ibid.*, 373–374).

25. The references supplied by Horstmann and Trede are Schelling's *Ideen*, 2nd ed., 1803, 292ff. (E. Harris and P. Heath, 161–169) and Kästner's "*Prüfung*" in J. A. de Luc, *Untersuchungen* (übersetzt von J.S.T. Gehler, Leipzig, 1778, part II, 660–668).

26. It appears to me that Heidegger *identifies* natural with spiritual time in his critique of Hegel. I find myself in full agreement with D. J. Schmidt (1988, 55–62). For further discussion and references, see the commentary and notes on paragraph 801 in *Odyssey*, chapter 13. (On Hegel's concept of "time," see now J. F. Hoffmeyer, 1992.)

27. What has *Dasein* is, paradigmatically, the *thing*. Conscious-being only passes over to “thinghood” when it reaches the limit of its *Dasein*. Then it “is there” for itself as the skull-bone. The true *Dasein* of Reason is a real “infinity” for which finite consciousness provides the necessary moment of self-recollection. As Hegel says at the end of paragraph 47, it is *Erinnerung* that constitutes the identity of *Dasein* and *Wissen*. Compare further the references in chapter 1, note 127.

28. Miller reads “positive [in it].” But this is illogical, because the “it” does not refer to anything. The motion as a “whole” is not *in* anything; it constitutes first “the positive” (as history) and then the *truth* (of its positive achievement) in our recollection.

29. Werner Marx (1975, 25) identifies the transition from each *Gestalt* to the next (with the “dropping out” of the sublated shape) as the “Bacchanalian revel”; and J. Hartnack (1986, 96–97) takes “Truth” to be the final figure left standing when all the drunks have collapsed. These are misleading views. “Truth” is the *whole dance of life*. Every *Gestalt* is essential to the ring-dance of the science as a whole; and “natural consciousness” obstinately maintains each one (precisely as “natural”). R. Heiss (1975, 50–52) has the idea right but does not emphasize the *circle*. “Phenomenal knowledge,” seeking instinctively for “absolute truth,” moves around the circle until it is complete. Hence, there is a sequence of sublation and “dropping out” in time (par. 808). Marx (1975, 29) quotes the passage that demonstrates the “truth” of his thesis. But that succession cannot be called Truth simply. It is the “truth of history,” not the “truth of life.” (Against Hartnack, one can even consistently maintain that the final position is not a *Gestalt* at all—as K. Dove, R. Winfield, and W. Maker do.)

30. For a useful discussion of how this doctrine of perpetual restlessness is reconciled with the holism of truth (par. 20) see M. Westphal (1984b or 1992, chapter 5). Compare paragraph 476 below for the pavane of nature and the tarantella of spirit described abstractly in terms of rest and motion; and paragraph 46 above, where Hegel speaks of “that pure unrest of life and of absolute distinction.” (The peasants who died were probably exhibiting the symptoms of ergot poisoning rather than dancing. But they originated a dance, and their mode of death is an apt image of our natural life.)

31. In the *Science of Logic* (1816) Hegel himself says that the geometric method was “exploded by Kant and Jacobi”—*G.W.* XII, 229, lines 4–6 (Miller, 816). Already in his “Introduction” (of 1812) he remarks:

The other sciences have on the whole discarded the rule-following [*regelrechte*] method, that is, a sequence of definitions, axioms, theorems and their proofs, etc.; so-called natural logic now has its own validity in the sciences and manages to get along without any special knowledge of the nature of thought itself. But the matter and content of these sciences is held to be completely independent of logic and also has more appeal for sense, representation [*Vorstellung*], and practical interest of every kind (*G.W.* XI, 28, lines 19–26; Miller, 58).

The *regelrechte* method is that of Understanding (which can give us the Newtonian celestial and finite mechanics); but the “so-called natural logic” of the empirical sciences generally is “instinctive Reason” (for which see chapter 11).

32. Because the discussion of “formalism” as an internal enemy of the new idealism is about to be renewed, I have followed the Critical Editors in assuming that “*die Unmethode des Ahndens*” refers us to Jacobi and Eschenmayer. But Kaufmann (1966, II, 75, n. 8) points to the work of J. F. Fries, *Wissen, Glaube und Ahndung* (Jena, 1805). Considering that Hegel

loathed Fries, it seems to me very probable that he intended this jibe for him (as much as anyone). Compare chapter 1, note 115.

33. Kaufmann (1966, II, 75, n. 11) is surely right in suggesting that Hegel speaks of “rediscovery,” because he credits the neo-Platonists (especially Proclus) with the original discovery. Probably Fichte, and certainly Schelling, are credited with “elevating *Triplicität* to its absolute significance.” (No student of the *Difference* essay can doubt Hegel’s intention to compliment Schelling.)

34. Glockner (1954, II, 460) got this right. Kaufmann (1966, II, 77) will not have it that *only* Schelling’s imitators are meant; and we must concede that, “as Hegel saw it, Schelling himself had not always retained the *niveau* of his own greatest contributions to philosophy: again and again he had fallen to the level of a mere Schellingian”—cf. chapter 1, notes 60 and 61. Unlike Hegel, however, Kaufmann sees nothing wrong in playing the moral valet and attacking great men on their weak side; Hegel *apologizes* for, and excuses, Schelling’s moments of weakness. (But several of the early reviewers took notice of Hegel’s attack on “formalism” in the philosophy of nature. They recognized that he was separating himself from Schelling and the “School”—see W. Bonsiepen, [1979. So the “breach” was not surprising.)

35. See the Preface to the *Difference* essay (*G.W.* IV, 5–6; Harris and Cerf, 79–81) and the account of Kant in *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 325–346; Cerf and Harris, 67–96) for the justification of this reading of what Hegel means here. Compare also the Introduction to the *Critical Journal* (*G.W.* IV, 120, 122–123; Di Giovanni and Harris, 278, 280–281).

36. The heading: “against schematizing formalism” is assigned by Hegel to LIX. But no paragraph begins on that page. Paragraph 50 begins at the foot of LVIII, and the attack on formalism begins after the first *Gedankenstrich*—actually, on LIX. If we take Hegel’s indication to be *precise*, then he does not mean his remarks about Kant’s rediscovery of “triplicity” to be counted as part of the polemic. Kant’s theory is certainly a “formalism” in Hegel’s view, but it is only the formalism of Schelling’s disciples in the philosophy of nature that is attacked as “schematizing formalism.” (As we shall soon see, it is especially the “schema” of the Third Antinomy—as applied by Fichte—that is fundamental to “schematizing formalism.”)

37. See *Vocation of Man* (*Werke* II, 206; Chisholm, 41–42); compare *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 53–60; Harris and Cerf, 162–163); and *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 53–60; Harris and Cerf, 142–151).

38. Letter 95, May 1807 (*Briefe* I, 162; Butler and Seiler, 80).

39. *Werke* III, 452 (Heath, 91); and *Werke* IV, 207.

40. *Werke* III, 452–453 (Heath, 91–92).

41. Compare the “Guidelines for the *Journal*” (1807), which condemns Steffens only “for the most part” (*G.W.* IV, 511, line 28–512, line 19; *Clio* 13, 1984, 411–412). Hegel’s earlier criticism (of Steffens’s theory of the metals as a *series*) can be found in *G.W.* VI, 126, lines 5–18; in August 1806 Hegel spent an evening discussing Steffens’s newest treatise with Goethe (G. Nicolin, reports 101–102). See *Night Thoughts*, LX, 227n. I have discussed Hegel’s attacks on “formalism” and “schematizing” formalism more fully in H. S. Harris (1988 and 1989). (See chapter 1, note 62, above.)

The *Critical Edition* refers us to Steffen’s earlier work *Inward Natural History of the Earth* (1801) at this point. The editors point out that Schelling’s own polarity theory was influenced by it; hence, if Hegel does mean to attack Steffens but not Schelling, we are faced

with the curious spectacle of a speculative theory deriving inspiration from a formalism that it has itself generated. But the general relation of the new organic idealism to Kant's "formalism" certifies that there is nothing truly paradoxical in that.

42. Bonsiepen and Heede give some apt quotations from *Philosophy in its Transition to Non-Philosophy* (G.W., IX, 489–490, note to 36, lines 13–16). But the short account of Eschenmayer's work in J. Esposito (1977, 139–142) is especially valuable. His first attack on the Identity Philosophy in "Spontaneität = Weltseele" was of crucial importance; and Hegel's doctrine of "Religion" in chapter VII is a reinforcement of Schelling's initial response (*Werke* IV, 79–104). But what Eschenmayer was saying in 1803 seems very like what Schelling was writing, but not publishing, thirty or forty years later.

43. Jacobi, *Werke* IV, i, 172–205 (trans. by G. di Giovanni, 1994).

44. See *Faith and Knowledge* (G.W. IV, 361–378; Cerf and Harris, 116–141).

45. The reference of "als das andere, und gleich äusserliches Erkennen" at the end of paragraph 51 is not very clear. But I take Hegel to be saying that the whole content and procedure of the "white light" formalism is as much a matter of the Understanding faking a copy of genuine speculation as the procedure of the "dark night" formalism (pars. 15–16).

46. *des Seienden* (G.W. IX, 38, line 25) is not Miller's "a being that immediately is," but "that which is in being."

47. Similarly, in paragraph 54, the knowing self is the "immanent self" of the content. It *flows into* the world by comprehending it.

48. *D-K*, 18, B3. Hegel uses the term "idealism" in an extremely general way that is peculiar to himself. He can consistently maintain that all authentic philosophy is "idealism," and that the opposition between "idealism" and "realism" is a mistake. For a good short exposition of his general use of "idealism," see K. Ameriks (1991)—and P. Eisenberg (1990). The difficult question is "What *kind* of idealism is *Hegelian* idealism?" That is fundamentally a matter of Hegel's relation to Kant (about whom Ameriks thinks he was quite confused).

49. Hegel is influenced here by what Aristotle says about Anaxagoras appearing like the first sober man among all his drunken predecessors who thought that "what is" could be explained in material terms, without reflecting that explanation itself is a thinking activity (see *Metaphysics* A 3, 984, a15; also Socrates in the *Phaedo*, 98). Anaxagoras is here because he bequeathed the concept of *Nous* to Plato and Aristotle. It is with them, not with the rather Fichtean dualism of Anaxagoras himself, that Hegel wants to connect the new speculative idealism. But, because of Aristotle's remark about his sobriety, Anaxagoras serves nicely to make the transition from the poetic intuition of life as the *Bacchanalian revel* to the intuitive understanding of it as intelligible substance.

50. Bonsiepen and Heede do not refer to the *Way to the Blessed Life*. But it is certainly in Hegel's mind along with the works of Eschenmayer, Görres, and J. J. Wagner. The "beautiful souls" (Novalis and Hölderlin) should not be forgotten either (as in par. 32). But it is probably Eschenmayer who is directly contrasted with Anaxagoras and "those after him."

51. Among value-concepts, only Spinoza's "intellectual love" is "absolute" as the *goal* of development, which is identical with its beginning (in Plato). All others (particularly the Good) are radically dialectical at their point of origin in experience. We can accept Beauty as the primitive shape of philosophical intuition (as Aristotle does in the first sentence of the *Metaphysics*). But it would be a mistake to think that we must therefore accept the Pythagorean-Platonic theory of what Beauty primitively is. Only *experience* can teach us what range of shapes our delight in our senses can take, and the verdict of experience is

clear: the beautiful is as radically dialectical as the good. Hegel's *Aesthetics* is a phenomenological science of his world's experience of beauty. It must fall to us to decide how to employ the logical concept that it generates for the aesthetic comprehension of our world.

52. R. C. Solomon (1983, 269–270) very sensibly directs us to what Hegel wrote in the *Science of Logic* about Anaxagoras (*G.W.* XI, 21, lines 22–29; Miller, 50). But we should also read the following paragraph there, which is about Plato's Ideas. Because of the “separateness” of the Platonic Ideas, Hegel thinks that Plato's theory is capable of interpretation as if they were “tangible” (*handgreiflich*). The *Nous* of Anaxagoras lays the foundation for an *Intellectualansicht* of the world precisely because his *Nous* is a living power in the tangible world; it cannot be *metaphorically taken hold of* as if it were a mental thing. (One could argue that Anaxagoras was a “dualist,” because he admits the separateness of *Nous*. But it is plain that Hegel takes him for a true “idealist,” because his *Nous* is not actually separate, like the God of Moses.)

53. I say “Aristotelian character” in deference to the ordinary view (established by Aristotle himself) of the difference between Plato and Aristotle. But Kaufmann (1966, II, 89, n. 2) very properly reminds us that the identification of “soul” as “self-moving” is Platonic. (He refers to *Laws* X, 895–896; but see also *Phaedrus*, 245e.)

54. Hegel's Concepts do not inform singular bodies in the way that Aristotelian soul-forms do, but they inform *communities of minds*. The true “Concept” (singular) informs every mind that can properly be called “human.” But when we speak of “concepts” in the plural (as Hegel does at the end of par. 58), it is legitimate to distinguish finite communities (or mind-worlds) in which the *specific* concept is a shared structure that is universally present and effective. Hegel's plural designates the *stages* in the evolution of Spirit's appearance.

55. Those mentioned by name are: Anaxagoras, Aristotle (twice), Caesar, Descartes, Diogenes, Euclid, Kant (twice), Lichtenberg (twice), Origen, Plato (twice), Solon, and Sophocles. Of these references, Caesar occurs in a logical example (of historical knowledge) and Euclid occurs as the name of the textbook from which one learns geometry. Origen's name serves as a way of mentioning something not directly namable in polite discourse (self-castration), and Diogenes illustrates the impossibility of escaping from one's time. Thus, there are, in fact, precisely eight named contributors to the argument. Of these only Descartes, Kant, and Lichtenberg are moderns; Kant and Lichtenberg join Plato and Aristotle in the quartet of figures who are mentioned twice. (Neither Socrates nor Jesus Christ nor Luther is referred to by name, and no living person is named.)

56. Someone like Michael Inwood, who takes it for granted that the freedom of thought is the *element* (as Hegel would say) of all philosophical discussion—so that *Räsonniren* is the only possible “method” for philosophy—is bound to find Hegel's lack of interest in all the other things that might be said about the self-moving life-principles in his “speculative philosophy” puzzling. See his *Hegel* (1983, *passim*). (He virtually ignores the *Phenomenology* there, so perhaps he has not fully grasped the significance of Hegel's antipathy towards “arguing back and forth.”)

57. A good survey of these two “schools” among the enemies of Kantian idealism will be found in Frederick Beiser's *The Fate of Reason* (1987, chaps. 6 and 7). The influence of the Scottish Common Sense school is analysed and described in greater detail by Manfred Kuehn (1987).

58. The principal documentary evidence of this ambition is Hegel's letter to J. H. Voss (letter 55, May 1805, *Briefe* I, 95–101; Butler and Seiler, 104–108). But see also the report of Hegel's lectures in Rosenkranz, 181–182 (Harris and Knox, 256–257; October 1804).

59. The reduction to a play of abstract concepts is well illustrated by Findlay's "Analysis"; Lowenberg's "dialogues" can stand as an example of the extreme of "running forward in *Vorstellungen*."

60. I agree with Kaufmann (1966, II, 91, nn. 9 and 10) that Glockner's attempt (1954, II, 464) to read this paragraph in terms of Kant, Fichte, and Jacobi is a mistake. Everyone normally argues in this way. Kant is only relevant because his "antinomies" restored the method of *ancient* scepticism.

61. If he has a healthy mind, such a one may become a cheerful Sceptic (like Carneades). "Unhappiness" in his case would be unhealthy, and the Unhappy Consciousness (in its proper place) is *not* an unhealthy condition. The friendly smile that I have suggested belongs with Hume's "dinner and a game of backgammon." We must concede, however, that Hegel calls the *Phenomenology* "a highway of despair" because of the way "determinate negation" moves. The great conceptual disagreements (e.g., between "believers" and "materialists") that create the "need for philosophy" are the "despair" of the World-Spirit.

62. It is essential to remember that Hegel is always discussing "*scientific* cognition"—in other words, systematic philosophical cognition. Thus reflective argument in its *negative* posture is represented by the philosophical sceptic who is satisfied with his own Reason; and in its positive posture it is the Stoicism that takes any reasoning power to be a spark of the cosmic Reason. Cosmic Reason is the "represented Subject" for which the Stoic's arguments provide predicates. Only if we take Hegel's argument this way can we see how the *positive* procedure of argumentation has the "remarkable nature" that "expresses the Idea" in spite of being radically opposed to the truly philosophical procedure of committing oneself to the content.

63. The most interesting cases concern matters which Hegel himself draws to our attention but which do not form part of the transition to the next "shape of consciousness." Thus, the Stoic experience does not directly contain the liberation that the serf discovers in "labour." (That is the beginning of the "experience" of *Bildung*.) We shall have to see why the direct transition from Lordship and Bondage is to "Stoicism" when we get there (but the long and short of it is that the movement of our "Science" is determined always by the "desire for truth"). What the serf discovers comes upon him by the "cunning of Reason." He has no "desire" to reform his own consciousness until he becomes a saved Christian, and at that stage the Unhappy Consciousness is behind him, not still ahead of him.

64. The transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness is exceptional, because the only "effort" involved in being a natural "self-consciousness" is the metaphysical effort of everything to "persist in its own being." It becomes an effort towards "truth" only in the boundary-situation in which life is threatened. Then, of course, it is the *supreme* effort to assert the "truth" of human freedom. But at either of the extremes (no conscious effort or a supreme effort), the natural self-consciousness rises out of a finite world that does not need to have been organized by the Understanding. That is at least part of the reason why "we" have to "stand in for the Concept" at this point. It is only "we" who can carry forward the "experience" of Consciousness. For the natural Self-Consciousness, the theoretical development of "Understanding" proceeds concurrently with its own self-development. (For us, it is "Reason" that is born when the natural self-consciousness achieves "self-understanding.")

But when we view the "science" as the comprehension of our own cultural world, the anomaly vanishes. For in the world-historical perspective, the full development of "Consciousness" belongs to Greece; that of "Self-Consciousness" to the Roman world (Empire and Church); and that of Reason to the "modern" world (since Luther, Bacon, and Des-

cartes). The “experience” of the World-Spirit really is cumulative in the methodically appropriate way.

65. Compare the doctrine of the “speculative proposition” in *Difference* and in the *Logic and Metaphysics* of 1804—see *G.W.* IV, 23–27 (Harris and Cerf, 103–109) and *G.W.* VII, 128–138 (Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 133–144).

66. There are good discussions of the “speculative sentence” by J. Surber (1975) and S. Houlgate (1986, 141–156); see also the interesting comments of G. Rose (1981, 48–49, 92–95, 112–115). For a theologically oriented application of the doctrine to chapter VII of the *Phenomenology*, see G. Wohlfahrt (1981). Compare also the discussions of J. Simon (1970, 1983), I. Soll (1974), and R. Heede (1974).

67. S. Houlgate (1986, 268, n. 104) comments that “the actual is the universal” will not fit into Hegel’s own *Logic*. I hope that my discussion shows why that does not matter.

68. To call such statements “stipulations” is to make the mistake of giving primacy to the free choice of subjective argument. We do not primitively have any free choice in such matters. To call them (more neutrally) “definitions” is to give absolute status to the “freezing” power of Understanding. Instead of trying to cut off the life of the Concept at the root, we must accept these ontological propositions as the conceptual “discoveries” we experienced them as; and we must then see what “life”—what capacity for development—they have in them. This is, in essence, how Hegel’s “method” differs from the “external” approach of ordinary subjective argument, with its finite context and its instrumental goals.

69. Since Austin also wanted to talk *about* the logical context in which language is ordinarily used, he was one of the speculators. He was quite well aware of this, and it shows in the peculiar terminology which he partly invented and partly revived from older sources now out of fashion. In the story, however, he adopts the plain man’s assumption that “being” means “being determinable.” He also knew, of course, that there is a long tradition of answers to the question he supposedly wanted Moses to put to God. And he was far too humanely rational, far too deeply respectful of the fabric of human communication, to think that “religious talk” as such could simply be dismissed. Hence, he would not deny that Hegel’s *project* has a certain validity.

70. The response that God is not like an island has some tremendous implications, of course, for the “separateness” of God. Gaunilo was advancing the cause of speculative understanding too, though that was not obvious for a long time.

71. Labarrière notes that the word “dialectic” occurs rarely in the *Phenomenology*. He lists the occurrences of *Dialektik* and *dialektische* (see 1982 in 1986, 90, n. 8).

72. Kaufmann (1966, II, 101, nn. 47 and 48) is very good on the problems of “proper names” and of the fall into edification (instead of clarification). His work is readily available, so I have spared both myself and the reader some repetition here. We should remember, however, that “edification” was dismissed as unphilosophical at the beginning (par. 9). Hegel’s own science is “edifying” in the etymological sense. It aims to build the mind up to the true consciousness of what it means to be human (not to build up an alienated consciousness of the holiness of “God”).

73. See letter 233, 29 April 1814 (*Briefe* II, 28; Butler and Seiler, 307). Kaufmann (1966b, 105, n. 3) quotes aphorism 24 from the *Wastebook*: “A *Gedankenblitz* is Capaneus who imitates this heavenly fire [of science] in a spurious, vanishing way, one who annihilates formally and can come to no stably subsisting life.” But his explanation is not very clear. Hegel is thinking of the contrast between the real lightning that struck down Capaneus and the

Gedankenblitz of his initial defiance, which struck down nothing. (See Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*, 423–450.)

74. See Rosenkranz, 539 (aphorism 9). There is a hint in the same source that the “genius-poets” of a *former* time belong only to one generation or so earlier. See Rosenkranz, 555 (aphorism 79; *I.J.P.* III, 5). See also *T.W.-A.* XX, 418–420 for the philosophers of genius and common sense (Haldane and Simson, III, 510–512). But there, too, it is Friedrich Schlegel who leads the crowd. He is the one who “thinks himself too good for the Concept.”

75. See “*Ideen*” (*Athenäum* III, 1800) in *Werke*, Berlin-Weimar, Aufbau Verlag, I, 265 (aphorism 19). Compare aphorisms 34, 48, 57, 62, 67, 89, 90, 96, 108, 123, and 149 for the doctrine of philosophy as “transcendental poetry. Hegel’s condemnation of this doctrine by name, as “neither fish nor flesh, neither poetry nor philosophy,” is in *T.W.-A.* XX, 417.

76. W. Bonsiepen (1979, 18–19) thinks that the polemic of this paragraph is largely directed against J. Salat. For the story of Scottish Common Sense in Germany, see Manfred Kuehn (1987). Krug is not an important enemy. It is worth noting, perhaps, that it was Reinhold who had “nothing further to say” to anyone who did not share his “faith in truth as truth” (*Difference*, *G.W.* IV, 83; Harris and Cerf, 182); and that Hegel frequently attacks Jacobi for the *moral* tone of his resistance to speculation (see *Faith and Knowledge*, *passim*, but especially the *Wastebook*, aphorism 45, Rosenkranz, 545–546; *I.J.P.* III, 3, n. 4).

77. Rosenkranz, 550 (aphorisms 52, 53; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 4). Both Reinhold and Krug prided themselves on “*Selbstdenken*,” but they follow the road of common sense.

78. See Schlegel’s “*Ideen*” (note 73, above) and especially the closing dedicatory note to Novalis. The word *Centrum* is another indication that Schlegel is meant—it recurs often in his “*Ideen*”; for example, 45, 85, 100, 109, 114, 117, and 155). Finally, the reference to “die Genialität tiefer origineller *Ideen*” is unmistakable. (As the critical editors say, the “Empty-rean” is an echo of Görres, but the “skyrockets” are the aphorisms of Schlegel and Novalis. Hegel’s language comes from the *Wastebook*, but he has improved his aim. “Rockets” and “formalism” do not go together.) We should never forget that Hegel shared the Romantic view of the time as a birthtime—compare paragraph 11 and notes 49–50 in chapter 1.

79. See the *Wastebook*, aphorisms 16, 79 (Rosenkranz, 540, 555; *I.J.P.* III, 1, no. 7; 5, last aphorism).

80. As Bonsiepen and Heede say, it was the neo-Platonic philosophers who “esteemed Aristotle for his speculative depth in a time of *Schwärmerei*,” but I suspect that Hegel is also thinking of German mystics such as Meister Eckhart.

81. See *Gespräch über die Poesie* (1800); also *Fragmente* (1798) (*Werke* I, 212–213, Fr. 165). Because of the “quarrelsome” polemic at the end of the Preface, some writers have treated the *Phenomenology* as part of Plato’s “age-old war between philosophy and poetry.” This is valid only in a very restricted sense. On the one hand, Hegel’s “Science” deals with much nonpoetic “experience”; on the other hand (*pace* Shapiro, 1986, 178), it fights no “dragons of poetry.” Experience criticizes itself; and the philosophical *observer* shows us how to reconcile (and be reconciled with) all the “shapes of truth.” This Preface is polemical. But the recollective *science* is not. In the book itself, polemic raises its ugly head only when the object (e.g., “schematizing formalism” in chapter V or the “Beautiful Soul” in chapter VI) is not being “recollected” because it is only too obtrusively present. (For an exhaustive analysis and commentary on Hegel’s Plato comment here, see C. Jamme, 1980.)

82. Kaufmann (1966, II, 109, n. 2) says that the sentence beginning “We must have the conviction that it is of the nature of truth to prevail . . .” is “plainly untenable.” But he did

not read carefully enough. All Hegel says is that if you believe you have discovered the truth, then you must believe that the world is ready to receive it. That the world receives it is what proves that it is the truth for this time. There is nothing “untragic” or “extreme” in this. It is a simple reassertion of 3 Esdras 4:41: *Magna est veritas et praevallet*. That is why it is couched in the religious language of “conviction” and is followed by a humble insistence on the smallness of any individual’s contribution. There is more pride in the echoing of Jesus near the end of the paragraph: “Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead” (Matthew 8:22). But notice that it is the dead burying their dead who make all the noise. Faith is quiet (and willing to speak in the future tense, as Thomas Brooks did in his more familiar rendering of the Vulgate text: “Great is truth and *shall* prevail”—*The Crown and Glory of Christianity*, 1662).

83. The early reviews of the *Phenomenology* have been reprinted and discussed by W. Bonsiepen (1979). This Preface received more attention than anything else in the book. Hegel’s “the feet of them that shall carry thee out” is an ironic citation of Peter’s prophecy to Sapphira (Acts 5:9). Ananias and Sapphira sold property and gave only part of the price to the Christian community. For this, God struck them dead, at the word of St. Peter. Hegel’s use of the story is neatly circular. The critics strike books dead on the instant, but it is they who will be stricken soonest. Cf. aphorism 69g in the *Wastebok* (*Hegel-Studien* IV, 13; *I.J.P.* III, 4, no. 15). (The first two aphorisms that Rosenkranz omitted from the biography I have put in place as 1a and 74a. The remainder I count as 69a to 69r—for these see F. Nicolin, 1972.)

84. It is sad to see R. L. Perkins (1989) arguing that Hegel’s system is not “true” because it was never “finished,” and that the point at which Hegel arrived was simply where *he* arrived. If Perkins thinks that we can go along with *him* in his argument, then surely he can see that we *could* all go with Hegel to his point of arrival. But, of course, we have to know why we are going, and if we want the logic that teaches us “how to live,” we must already know how it can be grasped as a whole, even if the logician who devotes her “life” to it comes to her death still dissatisfied with her actual presentation of it (compare chapter 1, note 88, above).

On a happier note, there is a passage in the “Fragments of Historical Studies” that can serve very well as a commentary on paragraph 72:

... no one has *totally* performed any action. Because the whole of an action, of which only a fragment belongs to each actor, is split up into so many parts, the entire work is thus a result [made up] out of so many individual actions. *The work is not done as a deed but as a result which is thought*. Consciousness of the deed as a whole is present in none of the actors. The *historian* knows the work by the results and is made attentive to what the deed brings about as something already present in what has preceded. (Rosenkranz, 529 [the emphasis may be his]; trans. C. Butler in *Clio* 7, 1977, 113–114.)

The Hegelian philosopher actually produces the only possible self-contained historical deed: the comprehension of what historical action is. Cf. D. R. Lachterman’s comments (1980b) on H. M. Sass (1980).

Chapter 3

Hegel's Introduction

(a) The Part-Title Page

Only after the Preface was written and printed did Hegel come to a final decision about the title of his introductory science. Initially the book was printed with the part-title "Part I: Science of the Experience of Consciousness" between the Preface and the Introduction. A new part-title "I: Science of the Phenomenology of the Spirit" was issued together with the list of printing errors for the volume.¹ But the main title page always carried the subtitle "First Part, the Phenomenology of Spirit."²

*The printing of the book began in February 1806, and Hegel used the available sheets as a textbook for his lectures in the Summer semester of that year.³ The lecture announcement for that course (on "Speculative philosophy or logic") speaks simply of a "System of Science, soon to appear." The subtitle *Phaenomenologia mentis* appears in the announcement for Winter 1806/7. The Winter course (which Hegel probably did not give) was now called "Logic and Metaphysics or Speculative Philosophy" and the "phenomenology of mind" is only *praemissa*, i.e. it is a prelude to logic proper. The text is now designated as "the soon to appear first part of his book System of Science." He probably intended to give a rapid overview of the Phenomenology which was there to be read, and to devote most of his lectures to the properly speculative logic for which it was only an introduction. This is just the opposite of what he had done in the Summer. Then he had expounded the "science of experience" fully and summarized the speculative logic in whatever time was left.⁴ But Hegel typically adapted his class procedures to serve the needs of his own ongoing research.*

"Science of the experience of consciousness" was the book's logical title. The "Introduction" is designed to explicate this title. There was no compelling reason why Hegel could not have retained it as the title of the "science," even after he had decided to call the book itself by the material subject name "Phenomenology of Spirit." It looks as if he decided not to do that only when he set himself to write the publisher's announcement for the book. He must have been influenced by the thought that readers would be confused by the use of two different titles. But it is also clear that he came to feel that the confusion was not worth courting (or risking) because the logical character of the book did not deserve quite so much emphasis. This is evident from the lecture announcement for the Winter term, and it is confirmed by the contrast between the "Preface" and the publisher's "Announcement." The Preface itself seems to be designed to lead us naturally

from the book's title page (explicated in pars. 17–37) to the part-title (explicated in pars. 36–71). But in the announcement the book is characterized exclusively in terms of the “shapes of Spirit as stations of the way into itself, through which it becomes pure knowing or absolute Spirit.” The three prespiritual chapters on “Consciousness” are lumped together in the announcement as one “main division.” The existence of subdivisions is referred to; but chapter V itself is treated in the *Anzeige* as a judgment (i.e. it is divided into its “observational” and its “active” halves) and chapter VI is presented as a syllogism (“ethical, cultured and moral Spirit”). This implies clearly that chapter IV (“Self-Consciousness”) is the “concept” which has gone through its own abstract or logical evolution in the three chapters on “Consciousness.”⁵

The *Anzeige* treats this strictly “logical” part of the work as an introduction to the “real” phenomenology of Spirit; and the original *Einleitung*—which receives a title only in the “Table of Contents”—confirms Hegel's basic concern with this “real” phenomenology by introducing the metaphor in an explicitly religious way. The “shapes of consciousness” are “stations” on the “way of despair” (pars. 77–78). Nothing like despair is actually to be found in the chapters on “consciousness.” The theme of “despair” only emerges in the “Unhappy Consciousness”—i.e. at the climax of the development of “Self-Consciousness.” This “Unhappy Consciousness” is the concrete expression of the experience of Scepticism. The “despair” is ontological. “Natural consciousness” does not feel “despair” except during its conversion experience from academic scepticism to religious trust. But in its drive towards “true knowing” it must go through the sceptical experience in a range of determinate forms. Scepticism is the emergence of “ontological despair” about the fulfilment of our human vocation (the “desire to know”); and when Consciousness reaches its last fortress—the Beautiful Soul that cannot be touched by conscious despair because of its “unity with God”—Hegel explicitly tells us that it has actually fallen into the last and deepest pit of its “unhappiness” (pars. 658, 668).

The *Einleitung* is about the concept of “experience.” It is through “experience” that the sensory consciousness becomes “spirit”; and “despair” is the experience that makes spirit finitely self-conscious (which is why we can recognize the world of Unhappy Consciousness so readily once more when we come to the discipline of “Culture”). Thus (like the Preface) the *Einleitung* goes from one characterization of the book to the other. But the Preface goes from “Spirit” to “consciousness” without a mediating concept. It is written from the “standpoint of consciousness”; and in place of real despair we have only literary irony expressed in comedy and satire. This is how the happy consciousness of science expresses itself: by turning the world of common sense upside down and laughing at it. The *Einleitung*, on the other hand, goes from “consciousness” to “Spirit” through the mediation of “experience”; hence despair becomes crucial as the mode of experience through which the transition is made.

Thus the *Einleitung* binds the theoretical evolution of “consciousness” to the practical “phenomenology of Spirit.” Without it, we should find the connection between them even more difficult than it is. The theory of Consciousness evolves (as theory must) in the context of a spirit that is fully evolved. This is true, whether we read the first three chapters in terms of the natural *Bildung* of Greek consciousness, or the spiritual *Bildung* of modern universal enlightenment. But the practical evolution of Self-Consciousness is

more easily recognized in the experience of the world that is still *ungebildet*. As the actual shape of the Reason that is fully *gebildet*, Faustus does not begin by putting his life on the line in hand to hand combat; and if Socrates still does that, he does it only for the City. With the pride and the wrath of Achilles it was a different story.

In my view, therefore, Hegel should have retained the original part-title. His book is both "the science of the experience that consciousness makes" (par. 36) and "the phenomenology of the spirit" (pars. 27, 37). The titles designate the science from the point of identity which forms both its beginning and its end. That point is where the philosophical "self-consciousness" returns to its moment of origin in "consciousness." "The experience that consciousness makes" begins with the certainty of sensible intuition; the "phenomenology of the spirit" is complete when the skull-chalice foams forth the whole history of humanity as the certainty of aesthetic intuition. Without the reference to "consciousness" (as well as "spirit") there would be no circle of science. There is no logical circle from "absolute knowing" back to the self-certainty of the warrior. For Socrates that circle was "natural." But for Hegel and for us, the spiritual model is Faust, who has no civic "loyalty to the death," but is philosophically reconciled at the end of his life to his own natural death.

Hegel retained the phrase "Werden des Wissens," the "coming into being of [absolute] knowing" for the designation of the scientific identity of beginning and end. We should note that "the theory of the appearing of the spirit" properly occupies only chapters IV–VII; it is only the topic of "the coming into being of knowing" that unifies the whole book. This unity of the whole is more adequately expressed by the concept of "experience" than by that of "Spirit," because "experience" has an essentially two-sided character as the theoretical possession of what has been done and lived through. In the title "Science of the experience of consciousness" the end ("science") and the beginning ("consciousness") are properly in balance.

But in this title the name of the "Thing itself" as an object of "consciousness," the substance that becomes self-conscious, is lacking. "Phenomenology of Spirit" reminds us forcibly that it is the incarnation of God in man that is the topic. We can only recognize the concept of consciousness as an actual whole, we can only be confident that we have comprehended the actual range of "experience" fully, when we take the philosophical comprehension of the religious *Vorstellung* of God as "Spirit" as our conscious object of concern. The title "Phenomenology of Spirit" not only reminds us of the most important nonphilosophical way in which the Absolute is present with us at the start; it tells us also how the Absolute is present. So it was always right for the main title page of the book.

Without the original part-title, however, we are all too easily able to ignore the unity of the whole; and then we are tempted to regard "Spirit" as something that comes into (or supervenes in) consciousness, just when consciousness passes beyond its given sensory environment. Those who are deeply conscious of the absolute meaning of "Spirit" may often want to take it in this way because they are unwilling to see the (objective) religious transcendence of the Spirit finally sublated. We cannot say for certain that they are mistaken. Perhaps—to use the symbolism of the *Vorstellung*—the Ascension is the truth of the Incarnation. But whether this view is right or wrong, it does not square with what Hegel's book says. The immediately sensible certainty of "this, here, now" (which is

masked by the intellectual tone of the Cartesian cogito, and unmasked in Augustine's Si fallor, sum) is the primitive mode of Wissen. It is only as the "science of the experience of consciousness" (an experience which may, as Descartes realized, be demonic in its origin) that the Phenomenology can be comprehended as a unity.

Of course, there are also those who want to read the title page as if it were directly equivalent to the suppressed part-title. They would like to treat the article in "der Geist" as if it were as neutral and insignificant as the article in "das Bewusstsein." But the book itself shows that this view is illegitimate. There is an unmistakeable reference to Paul's doctrine of the Risen Christ in Hegel's initial definition of "Spirit" as "the I that is We, and the We that is I" (par. 177). This is echoed and the reference to Jesus is made plainer, when God appears in his community as the "reconciling Yes" of forgiveness (par. 671); and it is finally confirmed when the phenomenology of Religion itself terminates at this same point (par. 786). As a singular function consciousness can only comprehend the range of experience abstractly (or as Kant's "possible experience"). It is the "reconciling Yes" of God in the community that gives us self-conscious and actual control of experience; at that moment the two sides of the judgment recognize their identity. When we have seen the community get control of itself as the "We that is I and the I that is We"—after suffering revolutionary destruction through the dialectic between "Self" and "It" that is implicit in its unselfconscious identity—then we know that the concept of "experience" is actually realized in a way that can be rationally "comprehended" so that the whole standpoint of "consciousness" is aufgehoben.

This is the concept that must now set itself forth as "Science"; and therefore it is just as impossible to evade the substantial or religious dimension of the Phenomenology as it is to evade the complete resolution of the religious dimension into human subjectivity. The destiny of the stably substantial world of conscious experience is to carry the resurrected identity of God and man "in the Spirit."

[Introduction]

This was written early and printed first. Hegel gave it no heading at that stage. It did not need one until the "Preface" was added (after the whole manuscript was completed and delivered to the printer. It is first designated as the "Einleitung" in the Table of Contents. It begins with a brief dialectical attack on "critical doubts," and then provides a short account of the evolution of consciousness into "Science" (Hegel discussed this again at greater length in the Preface). The principal topic, however, is the method involved in this Bildung, and in our scientific exposition of it. This part of the text has been studied and expounded more often than any other part of Hegel's text.

(b) The Dialectic of Doubt

- 1./73. Before we attempt the cognition of what truly is, it seems reasonable to ask whether this is possible. Perhaps there is a special mode of cognition for it. But scepticism about it seems more reasonable, because if our cognition is an instrument it must affect what it is used on (which is therefore not absolute); and if cognition is a passive

medium, then what we know is “what is” *qua* “knowable.” Can we knowingly undo this qualification of “what is”? Then it is “unknown” again. Can we regard cognition as “drawing near” to the Absolute? Then it could escape unless it is necessarily with us already; and if the “medium” *refracts* it, then the “correction” would give just a straight ray (of activity) or a blank space (for the object).

As the approach to an *absolute beginning*—the simple immediacy of the “experience of consciousness”—Hegel’s “Introduction” is dialectical in an Aristotelian sense.⁶ We begin with a rapid survey of the views of “the Many” and “the Wise”; and out of the comparison we derive, by introspection and the sort of reflective observation that we employ throughout, a *concept* of the “experience of consciousness” which validates itself empirically by comprehending both what “the many” take for granted unreflectively, and what “the wise” have concluded by reflective observation. The views taken under our observation are diametrically opposed to one another. “The wise” are observed at their most sceptical extreme, and “the many” at the extreme of naïve confidence. But since the two extremes are both explained by our concept, and both are present in our actual beginning (when we come to it) the fact that both parties actually exhibit a continuum of views that runs from one extreme to the other is neutralized.

The fact that we do have the capacity for rational introspection, and that we can use this capacity in a critical way, is taken for granted from the first, as the common ground shared by the many and the wise even in their most radical opposition.⁷ That we are, spontaneously and intuitively, speculative self-observers is—as we shall discover in the end—the *philosophical* sense in which the Absolute “is and wills to be *schon bei uns* in and for itself.” The *religious* presence of the Absolute is a dialectical one—for both among the many and among the wise, there will always be doubters and agnostics. We all possess the *Vorstellung* of “God as Spirit” and we know the *story* of how he has appeared. But we have a variety of attitudes toward that story and its phases; and many of those recognized as most “enlightened” (whether they are Deists or Materialists) regard it as no better than a fairy tale. But that variety of attitudes is possible and necessary only because of the capacity for free subjective reflection that is always “beyond” the *Sache selbst* (par. 59). That “Reason” can be used, and that its free use must be respected, is the unrecognized presence of the Absolute *bei uns*—at home with us in our own house.

And in this case the dialectic of doubt (which remains possible) operates in favor of the actual presence that is claimed. Anyone who denies that the free self-critical and self-observing capacity of thought must be respected as an “absolute” can do so only in the precritical confidence of religious faith. It is only when God is with us in one way (the way of the many) that He *can* be absent from us in the other (the way of the wise); with some of us, of course, He is present in both—the “science of experience” will make that universally the case.

The Aristotelian dialectic begins (as it must) on the side of the wise. For it is only after the birth of critical doubt that the need for a dialectical approach to what is primitively known for certain can be perceived. The need for a speculative cri-

tique of Reason (which the *Phenomenology* plainly is) cannot arise until someone claims that we do not have speculative knowledge at all. Only then does it become a "natural idea" (*Vorstellung*) that we need to study our own faculty of cognition before we start making knowledge claims.

The problem of scepticism can, of course, arise without any division between ordinary certainty and wisdom. The suggestion that there are different kinds of cognition is a commonsensical one. That someone is "not religious," and remains blind to the truth of the faith for this reason, belongs to the dialectic of ordinary consciousness. But it is not in this ordinary sense that Hegel raises this possibility first. He is concerned rather with that party among the learned which "boasts of its immediate rationality and divinity" (par. 14). It can be thought that the "cognition of what truly is" is the function of an immediate insight which only a specially favored élite actually enjoy.

This invocation of the "philosophical genius-period" serves only to set up the critical wisdom of the learned at its proper extreme. The enlighteners were all of them opposed to "enthusiasm"; and on that front Hegel is as whole-hearted as any of them. We can easily "grasp clouds of error instead of the Heaven of truth." Therefore, we must agree that the empiricist critique of "humane understanding" which Locke began, and Kant brought (apparently) to a decisively sceptical conclusion (as far as any "absolute knowledge" of Reason is concerned) was entirely right and proper.

The *locus classicus* for the beginning of the attack upon any supposed intuition of absolute "Being," in the interest of a philosophy of "experience," is in a passage in the first pages of Locke's *Essay* which Hegel himself cited in *Faith and Knowledge*:

For I thought that the first step towards satisfying several inquiries the mind of man was very apt to run into was to take a survey of our own understandings, examine our own powers, and see to what things they were adapted. Till that was done I suspected we began at the wrong end and in vain sought for satisfaction in a quiet and sure possession of truths that most concerned us, whilst we let loose our thoughts into the vast ocean of *Being*, as if all that boundless extent were the natural and undoubted possession of our understandings, wherein there was nothing exempt from its decisions or that escaped its comprehension. Thus men, extending their inquiries beyond their capacities, and letting their thoughts wander into those depths where they can find no sure footing, it is no wonder that they raise questions and multiply disputes which, never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to continue and increase their doubts and to confirm them at last in perfect scepticism. Whereas, were the capacities of our understandings well considered, the extent of our knowledge once discovered, and the horizon found which sets the bounds between the enlightened and dark parts of things, between what is and what is not comprehensible by us, men would perhaps with less scruple acquiesce in the avowed ignorance of the one, and employ their thoughts and discourse with more advantage and satisfaction in the other.⁸

This programme is the conceptual context for Kant's "Copernican revolution" in Philosophy.⁹ But it is obvious that the projected critique of our cognitive facul-

ties presupposes that we do already know (or can at once decide if we are challenged) where the boundary is between what we truly know, and what we do not; and it is equally obvious that that presupposition itself cannot pass, and has never passed, unchallenged. Locke's programme presupposed that the content of our knowledge was all *Vorstellungen* derived from "experience." But Plato had long ago argued on the contrary that our very "experience" of all such *Vorstellungen* shows that they cannot be the objects of true knowledge. According to him, we do know *a priori* what real knowledge is, and hence we know that "experience" itself is not the source of it. Aristotle had already striven to mediate this conflict between naïve experience and the critical reaction to this naïve assumption; and Locke was naïvely presupposing the correctness of Aristotle's definition of our situation when he set out to make his new survey of it.

According to the view that Locke inherited from Aristotle, our sensory experience is what all of our knowledge depends on, and is derived from. On this view, the human cognitive faculty is the *instrument* by which we derive knowledge from experience. According to the view that Descartes inherited from Plato, on the other hand, our cognitive faculty is the transparent medium through which we *see* what the knowledge of true being is, and are consequently enabled to settle the rather lowly cognitive status that is to be assigned to sensory experience.

Kant inherited both traditions, and sought (like Aristotle before him) to mediate between them.¹⁰ Like Aristotle, his object was to raise the cognitive status of our empirical knowledge, and to rescue it from the sceptical attack of an ultimately Platonic "pure Reason." The whole project of the "critique of Reason" exists in the context of a higher (purely rational) knowledge that we do not have and cannot have (except in the negative sense that we can achieve a logical—i.e. a rationally intuitive—certainty that we cannot have it). This is as evident in the case of Locke—whose *Essay* begins with a great polemic against the Cambridge Platonists—as it is in Kant.

Hegel's "critique of Reason" is the first in which this concept of "Reason" is completely absorbed into "experience." Much of his overt criticism is directed at the Kantian mediation of the perennial struggle; but his aim is to make the Kantian critique more radical, to make it comprehend the rational context of the older attempts to define the *limits* of human cognition. Hegel is the first to deserve the title of "radical empiricist"; and the *Phenomenology* is the first system of "radical empiricism."¹¹

In order to be radical we must surrender the fear of error which makes us cling to an unexamined criterion of intuitive certainty by which we define the bounds of our knowledge. For experience shows that if we surrender to the fear, and cling to our intuitive criterion, we shall find that the bounds of our certain knowledge shrink to the vanishing point. This was true in the history of Greek speculation. It was validated again in Hume's critique of Locke; and the same sceptical dialectic is visible among the followers of Kant.

The fear of "grasping clouds of error instead of the heaven of truth" is a Kantian critical one.¹² The conviction that "the whole project of securing the in-itself

for consciousness through cognition is contradictory in its very concept" can be recognized in Kant; and Hegel poked fun at Reinhold's formulation of the incomprehensible *Urwahre* in the *Difference* essay.¹³ This "arch-true" is "inconceivable"; yet it is "to be discovered and established along with the true, and the true is to be discovered and established through the arch-true." Hegel shows, in his criticism of this paradox, that upon this view "Reason cannot assume an active relation to the Absolute. So philosophy means absorbing into oneself with absolute passive receptivity something that is already fully completed knowledge." This passive receptivity is not what the critical philosophy itself means by cognition, however. Thus Reinhold's programme really brings us to the sceptical mysticism of Jacobi with respect to all finite knowledge that pretends to be scientific. "Our sciences are games . . . in which the human spirit *organizes only its ignorance*."¹⁴ The very fact that all empirical cognition is finite shows that whatever we receive through the "medium" of the senses is not "truth as it is in itself."

Fichte sought to obviate this problem about the finitude of all theoretical knowledge, by making the world of theoretical cognition a mere stage or practice ground for *practical* Reason. Thus in our moral activity we have genuine access to absolute truth. But we have to subtract everything that derives from our own desires and our empirical circumstances. These finite aspects cause a *refraction* of the ray of absolute truth; and if we remove them we are left with the bare forms of moral subjectivity (the Ego as a mere direction of activity) and worldly objectivity (the *Ans-toss* or obstacle "thing in itself" upon which the Ego's activity strikes).

Just whose theory is portrayed through the metaphor of catching a bird with a lime-twig I am not sure. The point of the comparison is that we draw the truth toward us. Speculative reason is supposed to bring God near to us, and enable us to see the truth from close up.

Hegel's own procedure in the dialectic of "Consciousness" does show us how the organization of sense-experience could be viewed in this way; and he needs to mention the view that cognition is a way of "bringing the Absolute nearer" precisely because his own procedure certainly looks a bit like that. So he has to point the contrast as sharply as possible; one thing that he shared with Jacobi was the conviction that we are always as "close" to the Absolute as we can ever get. It is already "with us" (*bey uns*)—or we are at home in it—at the very beginning.¹⁵

In Hegel's procedure, our initial sense-certainty has to be gathered up, comprehended and retained as an essential moment—the existential foundation in fact—of our "absolute" knowledge. The Spirit comes to self-possession in and for a self-certain consciousness which sleeps and wakes in a house with a tree outside it, and which possesses all the natural appurtenances that that implies. It exists "now" and "here" and we do not have to be "freed from the body" or to clarify any aspect of experience away (as the supposed cause of "distance") in order for it to be present to us and in us.

The passage about the "ruse" (*List*) which the Absolute would "jeer at" (*spotten*) is the only part of this paragraph in which Hegel himself is being "critical." It seems that he is attacking the recrudescence of "enthusiasm" (as "genius-philoso-

phy”) after the Kantian revolution. The rest of the paragraph is purely descriptive. It offers only a bird’s eye view of the sceptical results of Kant and Fichte (as the critical heirs of Rationalism and Empiricism) as far as “absolute knowledge” is concerned. So it is misguided to regard it as a serious criticism of the epistemology of Kant and Fichte. The “instrumental” view of knowledge belongs to Empiricism as a whole (in which the only furniture of the mind is “ideas” that *represent* things) and the “medium” view belongs to Rationalism as a whole. There is no intention to characterize anyone’s view precisely in its details; the object is only to show why scepticism about the cognition of the absolute is the necessary and appropriate stance of “the wise.” Unless one thinks that Kant’s “representative” doctrine of the unknowable Thing-in-Itself, or Fichte’s “medium” conception of the self-positing spontaneity of the Ego, is seriously misrepresented here, there is no point in attacking this paragraph.¹⁶

- 2./74. Why should we not mistrust this mistrust, since the assumptions make cognition self-contradictory? The assumption of the empty self, as instrument or medium on one side, and the Absolute to connect with on the other side, is wrong.

The ideal of knowledge as *comprehension* overcomes the mistake involved in conceiving cognition either as an instrument, or as a medium. Both views take for granted the very thing that ought to be regarded as problematic; and the fact that the answers can be and are taken for granted in quite opposite ways is what shows how problematic they are. Once we assume that the truth is somewhere “outside” or “above” us, the criterion by which we know this will always suffice to guarantee that the relation (of externality or inferiority) is maintained. It is the criterion itself by which we certainly know this that needs to be examined. We must turn our critical eye upon the mistrust that led to the critical reaction in the first place. This applies both to the reaction of Plato and Descartes, and to that of Locke and Kant. But it is the Kantian reaction that is now present.¹⁷

In paragraph 74 Hegel is defending the view of all orthodox religious members of the community that “we live and move and have our being in God.” According to this religious conviction of “the Many,” the mistake of critical Reason which gives rise to scepticism is the initial assumption that any object of cognition, including the Absolute, must be an *object* of consciousness (like a tree for the empiricists or the theorem of Pythagoras for the rationalists). The great range of views that Hegel sums up telegraphically under the headings “instrument” and “medium” all assume that the structure of consciousness (a knowing subject reflecting upon an object “externally”) is the structure of cognition. Only Fichte with his theory of reflection itself as a self-positing act is on the verge of a different view. By bending “the pure direction” of Fichte’s active Ego back upon itself we can obtain a “place” that is no longer blank or empty. Then the view of the wise will come to a true coincidence with the religious intuition of the many. What justifies us in standing by the religious optimism of pre-philosophical consciousness is the fact that even the rational sceptics hold that their critical Reason does give us

knowledge; but what makes it *necessary* to see if this “negative knowledge” can be turned over is the rebirth of the supra-rational “enthusiasm” that despises critical understanding.

- 3./75. Only what is absolute is true, and vice versa. All talk of nonabsolute truth and cognition remains obscure until the meaning of absolute truth and cognition is established.

It is possible to read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as a defence of the validity of finite knowledge in the absence of any absolute knowledge. Kant himself—with his “regulative principles” and his “postulates of practical reason”—certainly did not pretend that we can maintain our scientific and civilized life without making some “absolute presuppositions”. But many empiricists have believed that science can go ahead without troubling about the problem of justifying its assumptions. Hegel implicitly concedes that this is possible. Philosophy becomes a *need*, only when some serious tension in the regulative ideals of science and society has emerged. But when *that* happens, something better than a shifting back and forth in our speech (*hin- und herreden*)—a shifting between the phenomenal and the noumenal realms for example—is required.¹⁸ The unity of cultural consciousness must be reestablished now from its conceptual foundations. The recognition that this is the task of *philosophy*—that it can no longer be achieved by a *faith* of any kind—is the climax of the evolution of scientific self-consciousness.

Because of the vacuum created by the sceptical conclusion that Kant gave to the rationalist tradition in fulfilment of Locke's philosophy of experience various forms of *religious* philosophy have emerged. Kant's own *Religion within the Bounds of Reason* carried on a tradition that began in Locke (if not earlier). But even while Hegel was writing this Introduction, Fichte's *Way to the Blessed Life* proclaimed his adherence to the romantic religion of immediate feeling. This return to “immediate rationality and divinity” was the real enemy against which “humane understanding” now has to defend itself. Kant was proud of having “made room for faith.” But we can see from the Preface that in Hegel's view that boast was Kant's greatest mistake. We must test whether the religious assumption can be validated by Reason itself, instead of simply assuming that philosophy cannot transcend the “standpoint of consciousness.” Otherwise the “unclear (*trübe*) distinction between what is absolutely true and what is true in some other way” will give us no peace.

- 4./76. We could simply reject and ignore all this critically sceptical talk that takes its own clarity for granted; and we could ignore the mystical anti-scientific talk with an even better right. But this would make our absolute Science itself unscientific. Absolute science itself appears. Hence the ordinary position which it calls “appearance” can with equal right call it “nonsense.” So we must display *how* scientific knowledge appears.

For the first readers—the students in Hegel's class—this paragraph was probably rather opaque until he gave more details in his lectures. But our comments can be brief because Hegel has already developed the argument of this paragraph in the

Preface. We can point to such post-Kantians as Reinhold and Schulze as examples of those who make the babel of the tradition into the occasion for “serious and zealous toil” which avoids the “toil of science” itself.¹⁹ But if we simply expound our new systematic (and hence “scientific”) concept of truth, then all the existing unscientific concepts can stoutly maintain that they have as good a right to exist as it does.

Both Fichte and Schelling had tried to dismiss ordinary unphilosophical common sense and its truth as something quite different from philosophical cognition and not relevant to it. At that stage Hegel himself (with Schelling’s approval) distinguished between the “unphilosophy” that must simply be subdued in a life and death struggle for recognition, and the imperfect forms of speculative philosophy which can be integrated into the self-recognition of the absolute Idea.²⁰ He returns to this same theme here. A struggle for recognition is necessary to establish which is the “reality” of knowledge and which is the “appearance.” Science itself is the appearing of the truth of the world—so that in an important sense we can say that subphilosophical experience is the *reality* that appears in it. If Science claims, on the contrary, to be the “noumenal” reality that appears in all phenomenal experience and consciousness, it must appear to do so without warrant, since both it and the ordinary knowledge of which it claims to be the ground are equally simple phenomenal data as far as their immediate being is concerned (compare further par. 234 below).

The way of dealing with the many sceptical epigones of Kant that is suggested here was the one that Schelling and Hegel had largely followed in the *Critical Journal*. “Creating the incapacity of Science out of the presupposing of these relationships of a finite external consciousness” was “rejected out of hand as accidental and arbitrary” (just as Hegel says it should be).

But within a year or two (while Hegel himself was trying to build a critical logic that would provide “answers to all this” systematically) a group of religious philosophers had emerged right inside the camp of the new idealism who were opposed to “Science itself” and who wanted to “ward it off.” Hegel suggests that the “ideas and ways of talking” adopted by this group could be ignored “with even better right.”²¹ But this was just the “faith” that Kant has “made room for”; that is why—as the Preface has shown—what could at first be greeted with qualified enthusiasm in Schleiermacher’s *Addresses*, and then rejected as “accidental and arbitrary” in the long critical attack on Jacobi (*Faith and Knowledge*) must now be answered “scientifically.”

All views maintained by rational thinkers have the same right to exist and be respected as “opinions”; so the scientific answer must be one that visibly *removes* “Science proper” from the sphere and level of mere opinion. “Opinions” like those of Eschenmayer and Görres make it vividly evident that “Science coming on the scene is not yet science followed through and spread out in its truth.”

Any attempt to justify the supposedly noumenal truth by appeal to the “intimations” of it that can be identified in phenomenal experience (Fichte’s *Vocation of Man* is a clear paradigm of this procedure) is obviously invalid in the way that

Hegel points out. But the very attempt testifies implicitly to the fact that there is something logically wrong with just leaving them side by side. The *Phenomenology* does proper justice to the actual reciprocity of science and experience. Each of them is shown to be both the appearance and the reality of the other.²²

(c) *The Bildung of Consciousness*

- 5./77. This display does not look like the free self-development of Science, but it can be taken as the way by which natural consciousness forces itself to knowledge, or the way [of the Cross] by which the natural soul purifies itself into Spirit, and comes through complete experience of itself to awareness of what it is in itself.

This paragraph may seem to suggest that the *Phenomenology* is not “philosophic science” at all, but only the way of approach to it. Actually (as par. 81 tells us) the topic that begins here is “the mode and necessity of the progression” from ordinary phenomenal knowledge to the noumenal “Science” that has just made its own “appearance.” Hegel regarded his book as the first part of logical science. So he has to explain the relation between the “science of experience” and the *free* self-movement of the Concept in the “Science of Logic.” The movement of the Concept of Experience is tied down to the historical record that the *Weltgeist* has actually made. The *Phenomenology* is the scientific comprehension of *time* (as opposed to the exposition of the eternal standpoint of “pure thinking” in the *Science of Logic*). Our human logic articulates the eternal standpoint of pure thinking *in time*. So the approach to it must show how the eternal standpoint is in time, by comprehending *this* time, the very time in which the concept of the *Weltgeist* has been born. This time contains (and hence it can *comprehend*) the whole genesis of the *Weltgeist* (which has occupied about 2500 years). The *appearing* of the “Absolute as the True, or the True as the Absolute” among the other theoretical views is the signal that the true comprehension of “what is” as Spirit is now possible.

The “display of knowledge appearing does not *seem* to be the free science moving in its own peculiar shape,” says Hegel. He has gone over this ground in more detail for us in the Preface, spelling out how the *Phenomenology* is both the introduction to logical science and the first part of it. Here he gives us a very precise definition both of the conceptual scope of the “first part,” and of the phenomenal territory over which it moves. It is “the way of the natural consciousness to true knowledge” or “the way of the soul journeying through the sequence of its configurations as stations posted for it in advance by its nature in order that it may purify itself into the Spirit.”²³

The “natural consciousness” is primitively “the human soul” in its Aristotelian sense.²⁴ The human soul is the “form” of a natural organism that is capable of Reason. But *this* “nature” lies far behind us in our ordinary consciousness of everyday life. We shall begin with our ordinary consciousness and find our way back to that “natural self” when it becomes necessary. Before that we shall have seen how every “shape of consciousness” takes itself to be in possession of the “truth of human nature.” In this sense every post on our journey is a “natural consciousness.”

"The natural consciousness" (Hegel tells us in the first sentence of par. 78) "will prove itself to be only the concept of knowing not real knowing." Here he is referring directly to the plain "common sense" with which the journey of the soul begins. Every subsequent position of "consciousness" necessarily contains sublated within it, the "sense-certainty" of a self that lives and moves among its own things (*Sachen*) upon the turning earth. Even the *primitively* "natural" self is aware of this. The primitively natural consciousness does not know (for instance) that its earth is "turning." That is a discovery of Understanding. But the Sun comes and goes to light the world of the natural self's house and home. So that is where the "appearing of knowing" begins.

What has to be shown is how this "appearing" of the "natural consciousness" which remains constantly present in all other "shapes"—however much the interpretation of its "truth-value" may change—is identical with the scientific knowing that has made its appearance quite recently. Hegel's "science of appearing knowledge" aims to show that what seems to have appeared only yesterday has actually been appearing progressively ever since the *primitively* "natural" self first asserted itself. The "shape" of absolute knowing's first appearance is still with us, and we are going to observe the whole course of its "wandering progress" until it reaches the "shape" of the scientific knowing that presently faces that "first appearance" as a seeming opponent. In paragraph 76 we had two forms of "appearing knowledge"—the "true" (or noumenal) knowing of philosophical "Science," and the "untrue" (or empirically phenomenal) knowing of ordinary consciousness. Now (and from henceforth) we have only one *erscheinende Wissen*.²⁵

The "natural consciousness" will go on a pilgrimage. We are to observe the human consciousness that "drives forward" towards the goal of its nature which is to "know truly." In this drive consciousness does not cease to be "natural." It will have only one "truth" at a time as its nature. But *we* shall preserve for it the whole history of its *Durchwanderung*; and we shall show it in the end how every one of the "stations appointed for it by its own nature" is necessary to it (just as every phase of growth is necessary to the plant). In particular, we shall show that the first "station"—which the pilgrim knowledge can never really forget (as it does forget other stations), and which is there at the end like the acorn hanging on the mature oak—is not opposed to the last "station" at all. On the contrary, just as the acorn was for the sake of the oak at the beginning, so the oak is for the sake of the acorn at the end. The whole cycle will then be seen to be for the sake of "free science in its own peculiar shape." But it will also be the "Science of appearing knowledge" in its own right.

It should be noticed that *we*, the scientific observers, are already in possession of the "science" that has just now appeared; and it is Schelling's science that we have, even though Fichte is the inspiration of our "absolutely reflective" self-observation. Without Schelling's philosophy of nature we could not "stand in for the Concept" and make the transition from the "infinite of Understanding" to the living rational organism. But our clear understanding of just when knowing first became self-consciously "absolute" is no less important. That is why Hegel put "Spirit"

into the title of the book. The appearing of absolute knowing, which has reached its self-conscious shape in the Identity Philosophy, began as a religious experience with Jesus.²⁶ The Spirit appeared (as a sense-certain experience) at Pentecost; and it was for the sake of that appearance that Jesus died. Hence our journey from common sense to Science can be regarded as the World-Spirit's "way of the Cross." The "science of experience" explicates the universal meaning of the Passion story. Reason will reenact for us the drama of Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension into Heaven, and finally Manifestation as Spirit.

- 6./78. Natural consciousness will show itself to be the concept of knowledge without the reality. But since it takes itself to be real, this will be an experience of properly sceptical despair, not of [Cartesian] theoretical doubt, nor of [Fichte's] self-resurrection by simple decision. The sequence of the shapes that are its stations, is the *Bildung* of consciousness up to Science. The project of following only one's own conviction does not necessarily do more than replace traditional authority with personal vanity. Here scepticism brings itself to full completion, and makes the Spirit properly competent for the first time to test what "truth" is.

The natural consciousness certainly takes itself to have real knowledge. This is true in all its "stations," beginning with the sense-certain acquaintance with real people and things that we have before we begin philosophizing, and that we can never lose. Let us take the step into philosophy from there, and accept the view (supported by the Preface in several ways—see pars. 22, 55, 71) that Aristotle's philosophy was the perfection of the natural consciousness as cognition. It is easy to pick up the story of sceptical experience from there, as it unfolds upon the "way of despair." Alexander and the Romans destroyed the illusion that the *polis* was the perfect expression of human nature and the fulfilment of the human purpose. The Stoics formulated the Concept of "wisdom" according to which the sage was to assent only to a "comprehensive presentation," a *cataleptic phantasy*. The Sceptics argued, in a compelling fashion, that no such reliably comprehensive presentation of anything was to be had, so that the Stoic logic could never make the necessary secure contact with a sense certainty that remained always dialectical and deceptive. Hence the Stoic physics remained a mere hypothesis, instead of providing a solid basis for "following Nature" in Ethics. Thus the philosophy of the natural consciousness entered upon the "way of doubt"; and the way of doubt became a "way of despair" when all the structures of natural autonomy became the prey of one military conqueror after another.

The triumph of the Christian Gospel was the first moment of *conscious insight* into the "untruth of the appearing knowledge"—for the Christian consciousness is on a pilgrimage to the heavenly kingdom beyond all mere "appearance," where the will of God is truly done. That is the *ens realissimum*, even though it is "in truth rather only the unrealized concept." Conscious insight into this contradiction is the object of every stage of the *Phenomenology*;²⁷ and the contradiction must be experienced, it cannot simply be the subject of a thought experiment (as it is in the *Meditations* of Descartes).

The way Hegel speaks of Descartes' project (*Vorsatz* should be translated "project" rather than "resolve") is interesting. His final formulation "to produce everything oneself, and take only one's own deed for the true" represents the Cartesian analysis of ideas into "clear and distinct" elements fairly accurately, even if it transposes Descartes' *theoretical* (Augustinian) project into the more practical language of Fichte. But the formulation that leads up to this constructivist rewriting of Cartesian mathematical method reminds us of the genuine moral resolves of real life, and of the very things that Descartes does *not* doubt, but merely puts in brackets while he is meditating in his study: "to test everything oneself and to follow only one's own conviction." This language is *not* appropriate to the Cartesian project (which rejects even such sense-certain "convictions" as G.E. Moore's "This is my hand"). It is the language rather of religious experience, and specifically of the Lutheran Reformation.

The implicit point is that Luther did, in real life, something analogous to what Descartes projected in the abstract realm of mathematical reason. The Reformation was the moment when conscious insight began to transform the unhappy situation of the Christian consciousness, by seeking to make the "appearing knowledge" true, or to *realize* its own *Begriff*.

But Luther is part of Hegel's "way of despair," not part of the more formal scepticism with which it is here contrasted. The formal scepticism of Descartes and the programmatic "resolution" of Fichte are part of the surface "flurry" of Enlightenment (par. 542). The real historical experience of consciousness, which is its formation (*Bildung*) into science, is subphilosophical. The Lutheran project was to read the Scriptures for ourselves; the project of Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant and Fichte was that we should trust only our own Reason. Hegel is here concerned to contrast the evolution of theoretical scepticism from Descartes to Kant and Fichte—the story of what he called (in *Faith and Knowledge*) the "reflective philosophy of subjectivity"—with his own history of the desperation of consciousness. What makes a clear statement difficult, is the fact that every aspect of the cultural process is a necessary moment in the total picture. Rameau's Nephew is a voice of despair; and the placidity both of Faith and of Pure Insight are part of the motion of salvation. Finally, it is in the critical philosophy of Kant that "natural consciousness" shows itself to be only the "concept of knowing" not "real knowing." For in Kant's view, all of our cognition is only the knowing of "appearance"; and "what is most real" (Kant's God, the *ens realissimum*) is only a problematic object of thought—or "the unrealized Concept." It is Fichte's philosophy which does "better yet" than Descartes by "producing everything oneself and counting only one's own deed as what is true."

The discovery that "natural consciousness is only the concept of knowledge" was the necessary precondition for a recollection of the real cultural process from which that discovery resulted. Only in that conceptual context could the "*Bildung* of consciousness to science" can be properly appreciated. We have to experience Augustine's despair and Luther's salvation—and then to see how the Enlightenment brought that salvation to earth, only to come to the guillotine. The story of

the "concept" is in Chapter V, that of the "reality" in Chapters IV and VI. Chapter VI, in particular, teaches us that there is more to *Bildung* than the simple *Vorsatz* with which Kant's "What is Enlightenment" concludes. *Really* knowing involves comprehending how we came to have the "daring" to try for it. "Science" (or real knowing) will restore to us all of the "truths" that the natural consciousness has to lose in learning that it is only the "concept of knowing."²⁸

- 7./79. The completeness of the series of forms of unreal consciousness will be proved by the necessity of the progression and linkage. This is because our scepticism is not simply negative (as it appears to natural consciousness). Negative scepticism is one of the stages we shall go through. For us, even that is a determinate form of negation. As the negation of the *preceding shape*, our result is always a new definite shape (until the series completes itself automatically).

A clear analysis and summary of this paragraph seems to be almost all that is necessary. Only the argument of the book itself can show whether what it asserts is true. It is important to realize that our real appreciation of the "way of despair" overcomes the merely despairing aspect of it. We might think that our lingering recollection of the real *Bildung* of consciousness was the "realization" of the despair itself. But actually it will show us that what seems to be lost on the journey is preserved and carried with us. As we form (*bilden*) the "concept" of absolute knowing, we are also accumulating the content.

The straightforward sceptical progress of philosophical consciousness from Descartes to Fichte does not seem to be despairing at all. Only for the natural consciousness of ordinary life does the progressive loss of the content matter. The ordinary consciousness sees the philosophers emptying out and casting away all of its certainties, cutting it off from God and leaving it with the logical certainty that it dwells in the world of its own "appearances." When we put this experience into the context of the fall from the original happy Scepticism into the "Unhappy Consciousness" on one side, and the tragic downfall of the Enlightenment into the Terror on the other, the despairing aspect of the whole experience becomes fully apparent. But the salvation of the natural consciousness is also at hand.²⁹

If we call the perfected "natural consciousness" of the Greeks by the name of "natural Reason," then we can say that natural Reason is the consciousness that employs the logic of understanding, the traditional logic which always continued to be taught in the name of Aristotle (even though in fact the Stoics made important contributions to it). Dogmatic scepticism was the last specifically Hellenic form of this "natural consciousness." Its naturalness was precisely a trust in nature which made *despair* impossible. Thus the philosophic sceptic does not despair, but simply says stoutly that Reason tells us that the pretence that anyone can be wise in the Stoic way is absurd, and that wisdom consists rather in the suspense of judgment. Then, at every subsequent stage on the "way of despair," this natural consciousness makes itself at home somehow, refusing to be moved from its natural certainty of what is true and what is false; or if it moves, then the move is a "conversion" experience. The light of a new truth dawns, and the old truth is seen to be nothing

but an error—Luther at the Diet of Worms is a paradigm for this. It is this “natural consciousness” shattered into many shapes, that both makes history, and keeps society stable. But philosophic insight depends on recognizing the *determinate* character of the negation involved in the progressive emergence of the different shapes of “natural certainty.”

This seems to be the best moment to discuss the vexed question of the “We.”³⁰ I have treated the “natural consciousness pressing forward to cognition” objectively, thus far—i.e. it is the communal consciousness of the *Weltgeist* in religion and philosophy. But “we” are its subjective self-consciousness. “We” are the ordinary consciousness of the present world that wants to comprehend the world of experience philosophically. This “we” is not everybody. It is not even everybody who has been educated. It is the educated consciousness of the present that *wants to be comprehensive*. We must want to overcome the sceptical situation that Kant has newly left us in. We must look positively on what Fichte is trying to do, even though it turns our ordinary way of seeing things upside down. We are not satisfied with his *Vorsatz*, because we do not have the *Bildung* for it yet; but we must heartily desire to recover the sense of “living, moving and having our being in God” which we know that our forebears enjoyed before their “faith” was *rationalized*. This philosophically unhappy consciousness is the one that is entitled to the “ladder.” But, of course, the Ego-positers and Identity-knowers need the ladder too, as Hegel makes clear in the Preface. Hegel knows that the critics will carry him out for dead as soon as his book is off the press; but he hopes that in the long run the ladder will serve the whole philosophical community (par. 71). The “necessity” of the Concept is that of the natural “desire to know”; it will not operate for those whose desire is at rest, because they know something *absolutely* already (including those who know absolutely that “absolute knowing is impossible”).

To be a possible member of the “We” one must know the history of our religious and philosophical culture. “We” shall traverse it chronologically several times.³¹ But always it is the comprehension of “the Now” that is our object. Thus, at the beginning, the key to our escape from the “dogmatism” of Sense-Certainty is our grasping the *difference* between the “modern” scepticism (which accepts and defends Sense Certainty) and the ancient scepticism which overthrew it. But chronology is not very important at the stage of “Consciousness.” We can find the same *serious* scepticism at other times in our history (for instance, in the birth of medieval nominalism). In “Consciousness” we are still learning what the bare concept of philosophical comprehension is.³² Only in Self-Consciousness, where we have the Concept formally, and we have to “stand in” for the real Concept with our formal knowledge, do we really begin to follow the experience of the *Weltgeist* in the sense of a conceptual reenactment.³³

- 8./80. The goal is as fixed as the other “stations.” It is reached when knowledge finds itself, its concept corresponds to its object, and vice versa. The progress cannot stop until then. Consciousness is its own concept, and hence it is beyond itself as a natural life bounded by death. Just as spatial intuition goes beyond what it defines, so practical

feeling goes beyond what it enjoys, and thought disturbs us when we try to turn a blind eye. If we try to rest in the idea that everything is good in its own way, our human vocation refuses to be specialized like that. This leads to the vanity of sceptical knowing better, and to ironic self-enjoyment. There is no cure for the fear of truth in this form.

Like the other “stations” the goal is already fixed. But there is a deliberate ambiguity about its fixity. The simple statement of the requirement that concept must answer to object, and object to concept, conceals the necessity of abandoning the dogmatic standpoint. At the beginning of the introduction “the Thing itself” in philosophy was said to be “the actual cognition of what in truth is.” This definition seems to accept the “standpoint of consciousness” according to which “what is” must be independent of the actual cognition of it. But the only object to which “the Concept” can answer, or which can answer to it, is the Concept itself. The object of the love of wisdom is to become wise. In order to be *absolute knowing*, we must know *what knowing itself is*; and so “what in truth is,” the *Sache selbst*, is not Being Itself, but Truth Itself.

The goal fixed for the rational soul is to know itself as knowing activity. Aristotle inferred that God must do this “by nature.” But as long as we think that we are “by nature” intended to know ourselves as knowers of this *other knowing*, we can never achieve satisfaction. We can never know that we are indeed doing that. What we can know about that task is precisely that we cannot perform it (that is why the “Unhappy Consciousness” is the crucial turning point upon our path). Instead, we must know our own knowing as that which transcends the limits of “nature” generally, and *in primis* the limit of our own natural death. Even the simplest sensory consciousness involves the certainty that there is a world out there. It was there before I came into it; and it will be there when I am gone from it. Descartes could have denied “that these hands and this body are mine” without any reference to the delusions of the insane—since one of the sanest and most necessary of human reflections is that one day these hands and this body will lie in the earth, and will not be “mine” at all.

“Consciousness, however, is for its own self its *concept*, hence immediately it is what goes out beyond what is bounded, and since this boundary belongs to it, it goes beyond itself.” The “first experience” of the consciousness that is a self-concept will be to “go out beyond” the boundary of its own life. Learning its lesson, it will set up a social relation for the maintenance of life while it goes in thought beyond the boundary that naturally belongs to it. From the first this freedom of thought is disturbing; and from the first, one of the *free* responses to this disturbance is to retreat into the “thoughtlessness” that refuses to do any further thinking.³⁴

Stoicism was already teaching us to achieve “peace of mind” by recognizing that everything is “good in its kind.” But the reference in this paragraph is to the permanence of this retreat, this defence against despair, in the modern “enlightened” world. Hegel will eventually offer us Robinet as the paradigm of this “wisdom of nature” (par. 533). The “violence of Reason” against this complacent sensibility (*Empfindsamkeit*) is the work of Rameau’s Nephew. But, of course, the greatest

voice of this self-satisfied rationalism was Leibniz. Voltaire poked fun at the *Theodicy* brilliantly, but *Candide*'s recipe for life still assumes that the happiest of all possible worlds is the one that *ought* to exist; and in *Faith and Knowledge* Hegel has already traced the influence of the ideal of enlightened "Eudaemonism" upon the ethics of Kant and Fichte. That critique will find its place in the present book too.³⁵

The bourgeois ideal of everyone being socially useful in his or her own way, and having their own good conscience about it (like the feudal ideal of everyone doing their duty in the station God put them in) is inadequate because it degrades humanity into a *means*. Reason has to come to a stable equality of subjectivity with its substance; and subjective Reason is *individual* Reason. This paragraph (and the discussion to which it refers) is a sufficient answer by itself to all "totalitarian" interpretations of Hegel. His interpretation of the Incarnation is rigorously Kantian. Every human person is an object of absolute respect, because God himself is incarnate in her.

But the ironic insight that is content to see through the ideal of social utility—whether it be the cynical insight of *Rameau's Nephew* or the moral insight of the "beautiful soul"—can also turn into a self-satisfied "vanity" (*Eitelkeit*) which knows how to undermine (*vereiteln*) every truth. Scepticism—natural, enlightened and moral—is a permanent *Gestalt* of experience. It must be left to its own "vanity" of self-congratulation if it is content with that. When we reach those forms of consciousness we shall be near the end of our journey—but it is evident that in Hegel's view they are more lost and "unhappy" than the soul that is self-consciously so.³⁶

(d) *The Method of Speculative Observation*

- 9./81. It seems that we cannot begin without a *standard* of what is true, if we are bent on this relating of *Science* to the *appearing of knowledge*, and on the investigating and testing of the reality of cognition. For this standard of what Science is "in itself" is the *essence*. But how can the Science that has only just appeared establish its claim to be the essential standard?

The theme of self-satisfied insight (which occurs in Scepticism, then in "the law of the heart," again in the discussion of *Rameau's Nephew*, and finally in "the Beautiful Soul") closes Hegel's anticipatory review of the "way of despair." We should note that the "beautiful soul" is the last appearance of the "soul" on our stage. "True spirit" has there descended to the limit of spiritual falsity. In terms of the method that Hegel is now about to describe, the implication is that the ensuing phenomenology of Religion proper (which follows in Chapter VII) is the return of Spirit to the self-conscious possession of its truth. What possesses that religious truth is not a "soul," but a community of souls who know themselves in the Stoic-Christian world to be free and equal "children of God." But Hegel does not pursue the argument to that level in this introductory survey, because the "appearing" of Spirit is in principle complete when God comes to his community at the end of Chapter VI.

The story of *substantial* self-consciousness (in chapter VII) will be finally *subjectified* once more in Chapter VIII. If we can arrive at the evil and forgiveness of the Beautiful Soul, then the rest should be easy. The problem that arises for us here and now is that of how to start.³⁷ We are back with the problem of "Science" and "the natural consciousness" as equal claimants to the title of "knowledge." How can we begin to relate "Science" to "knowledge as it appears" without making unjustified assumptions? Where is our standard of "what real cognition is" to come from? We have claimed already that the sceptical outcome of modern philosophy should be set aside because of an unwarranted assumption. But how can any *other* starting point be better warranted?

- 10./82. The structure of consciousness in *all* forms solves this problem (but progressively, not in one moment). Consciousness distinguishes itself from the object which it *knows*: the object has its own being apart from its being known (which is its being-for-us). This being-in-itself is its "truth."

The solution of our problem is in principle a simple one (though Hegel does not yet give it completely). All forms of the consciousness of "appearance" have the same abstract structure. What appears to consciousness is an object for it; and as an object, it must, by definition, have a being of its own, independent of the way it appears. This "being-in-itself" is its true being, or the standard by which its "appearances" should be measured. In the older "critical" tradition, it is exactly this standard that makes the world of "things-in-themselves" unknowable. Locke's "Substance I know not what" is already Kant's *Ding an sich*. Kant recognizes that the very "being" of the *Ding an sich* is "problematic."³⁸ It is only as a moment in the structure of consciousness that we can speak of it at all. Consciousness can define its own structure (or, as Hegel puts it in paragraph 80, it is "for itself its own *Concept*"); but in accordance with its own defining decree it cannot say anything determinate about what enters into that definition as "the outside."

- 11./83. So if we ask what the "truth" of "knowing" is, then we are asking what it is *in itself*. But the *in-itself* here is precisely what *we* take "knowledge" to be. So the essence of knowing falls within our consciousness; and what is measured by it need not recognize it.

If we want to know anything external to the knowing consciousness, the standard of what it is "in itself" is beyond our reach by definition. This holds, for instance, even about the motives of our actions (which *may* be "unconscious"). But if we turn our critical attention to what *knowing* is—if we compare the way it appears with the way it is defined in itself—the situation is different. For now our object is the self-defining, self-conceptualizing power and activity of consciousness. The object "in itself" is the self-conceptualizing *power*; the object "for us" is the *activity*. Both of these we can define without transcending consciousness. We do not normally focus our attention on the power of cognition as such; it is only the activity in which it is expressed for us that is fully conscious. In this respect, the

cognitive power is like “substance, I know not what” or the *Ding an sich*: an effort is required to bring this object to our minds. The difference is that when we are spurred into making the effort, the object does in this case come into consciousness. It is a moment of consciousness that is not “outside.” We define it as a “power,” and in that respect—or as an object that is “in itself”—it is beyond our present experience. But when we define it, the being of this definition is the being of consciousness itself; the reality that must now correspond to the concept in order for the concept to be a “true” one, is the real experience of cognition as an activity. The activity is all that is contained in the concept. So in this case it is possible to compare the concept with its object. We only have to compare our concept of cognition as a power with our experience of it as an activity.

But now the problem has changed its shape. For why should *our* definition of truth have any objective authority or validity?³⁹ Unlike the postulation of an object “out there,” the positing of a definition has no unchangeable status. The assumed standard of truth, which was unchallengeable (but also unemployable) in the naïvely reflective consciousness, now becomes more dubious than what it is supposed to measure, in this limiting case where we compare our concept of knowing with what knowing is as an “experience.” “Objectivity” has become an essentially controversial concept; and if the experience does *not* agree with the standard in some way, there is no reason to maintain the definition. *This* is what makes the progressive movement of consciousness possible, and turns it into the historical “phenomenology of the Spirit.”

This paragraph is easy enough to understand. But we must pause a moment to underline the revolutionary significance of the last sentence: “The essence or the standard would fall within us, and that which was supposed to be compared with it, and about which a decision was to be reached through this comparison, would not necessarily have to recognize it.” When we admit that our concept of knowledge is subjectively determined, it becomes possible for us to test the concept in experience. “Objectivity” now belongs to the “experience.” The unsatisfactory concept of “truth” can be changed; and the experience which was supposed to be tested for its “truth” does not have to recognize the validity of our subjective standard of “truth” at all. That is how we “learn by experience.” We learn that the situation was not what we supposed it to be, but something else instead. Our “science of experience” will show us how this “learning process” has applied to the *concept* of truth itself.⁴⁰

- 12./84. The nature of knowing (as object) overcomes this separation of being-for-us from being-in-itself. Consciousness defines truth for itself consciously, and hence it can proceed to measure its experience. Whether we call knowledge the Concept, and the what truly subsists the Object, or the in-itself of the Object the Concept, and the Concept-for-another the Object, the comparison is possible; and what matters is that both moments fall within the knowing that we are investigating. We do not need to import assumptions.

When the “object” of our investigation is cognition itself, the nature of what is to be known overcomes the opposition between what it is “in itself” and what it is

“for us.” When the “presupposition” is clearly recognized to be a definition (or “concept”) which is adopted by the knowing subject, the opposition between the Concept and the experience of cognition becomes a mere “show” (*Schein*). The fact that both terms, both the “in itself” and the “phenomenon,” are equally moments of consciousness means that either of them can be taken as what has to be measured by the standard of the other one. We can ask whether the objective content of our experience matches our concept of what truly is, or whether our concept of the true matches what we find in experience to be actual. Either of the moments compared can be designated as the Concept and the other as the object.

Either of these procedures for the comparison becomes a mistake when it is adopted exclusively. It is the so-called “empiricist” tradition that takes the simple commonsense view that we have to see whether our “concept” corresponds to the “object.” In this view (for which “perception” is normative), what truly *is* is the perceived object in being, the thing itself out there waiting to be known through the methodical testing and collation of our perceptions.

The procedure of the “rationalists” is more complex. For them it is “conception” that is normative. Ordinary sense-perception gives “imaginative” knowledge only—knowledge of a merely apparent and subjective world. The real world “in-itself” is completely conceptual, so what is objective is the divine *concept*, the God’s eye view of the world. For the rationalists it is this Concept that is the real “object” of our knowing. The objective world of our experience, on the other hand, is this Concept as it subsists (*ist*) for another (i.e. for our imaginative faculty). On this view of reality, the task of the scientific investigator is to see how our experience can be made to correspond with its true (divine) Concept.

The two procedures look very different, but they are really the same. Our modern scientific world-view was created by adherents of the two schools working together in harmony.⁴¹ But philosophically, both views are inadequate. Neither of the terms is the real “standard” of what is. The fact that either can be taken as the standard, makes plain the truth that the real standard is their *coincidence* in the comparing. The “rationalists” are closer to the mark, because they have comprehended the necessarily *conceptual* character of whatever can truly be said to “be.” As Hegel puts it, “what is essential is to keep this fixed for the whole investigation, that both of these two moments, *Concept* and *Object*, being *for another* and being *in itself*, themselves fall within the knowledge that we are investigating.”

When Hegel says “Man sieht wohl, dass beydes dasselbe ist” (“it is obvious enough that both are the same”) he is asserting “the identity of the actual with the rational.” Thus the problematic character of this identity in the mature system springs from the phenomenological ambivalence of “objectivity,” or from the fact that it is always incumbent upon us to decide what we will accept as the effective truth of the experience. The “identity of the actual with the rational” is methodologically *axiomatic* because no other principle will allow us to test our *assumed* standards rationally. If we do not grant it, then our standard of rationality, or our definition of truth, becomes an “absolute presupposition.” In that case, pointing out to us that our standard is (after all) only a “knowledge” in our own heads—that

it is not the Concept as “Truth” (or as what is *für ein anderes*, “for someone else”)—is the only way of getting us to be philosophers (or critical minds that are prepared to change their “station”).

We do not have to move (we cannot be *ready* to move) unless we have consciously granted the axiom. The recognition that the rational is actual, and the actual rational, is one of the ways in which the Absolute must already be *bei uns* (as the philosophical observers) at the very beginning; for without that recognition no change of station can ever be perceived as *logically* necessary. But it is not necessary that the experiencing consciousness should recognize this axiom; we may experience actual despair about our situation, and pass to a new one through a conversion that effectively remedies our forlorn status, without any consciousness of the *logic* of what has happened. It is precisely because this is the normal case, in fact, that Hegel can set out to provide a “science of experience” which we have not already discovered *by experience* for ourselves.

- 13./85. We do not even need to do the testing, for actual consciousness is the comparing of itself as consciousness of the object with itself as consciousness of its knowledge. All that we have to do is to watch. Actual consciousness seems to have an impossible task, since “the true” for it is *the object in itself*. But it has the two sides of cognition just as we do; and when it recognizes that they do not correspond it must change its concept of cognition. But changing our “knowledge” of what “truth” is changes the truth itself as an object. For only the object that consciousness took as its standard *can* be changed; experience contains the unreachable object, so when experience fails to match its concept, it is the concept that is altered. When we cannot achieve true knowledge by a certain criterion, we change the criterion; but that changes our concept of the object that is to be known.

Since the structure of conscious cognition necessarily involves the comparison of an assumed concept of truth with the actual experience of things, it is this comparing that is the actual process of consciousness *as* cognition. So we only need to *observe* how the cognitive consciousness itself evolves. But if this evolution can actually be observed, why does the natural consciousness itself remain unaware of it, except as an experience of absolute contradiction and consequent existential “despair”?

The answer is quite simple. The natural consciousness operates with a concept of “what truly is” as the *absolute object that is external to our cognition*. This conceptual object is for it “the Unchangeable.” So although it is conscious that its subjective concept of truth changes, it does not recognize that by changing the definition of what true cognition *is*, it is changing the actuality that satisfies that definition. To change our concept of “what truly is” is to change the way the (supposed unchangeable) object is “for us.” For the natural consciousness this change appears to be simply the progressive *development* of our consciousness of the absolute object. Hence there is nothing consciously “despairing” about the march of consciousness from sense-immediacy to scientific understanding. The evolution of philosophical cognition goes on “behind the back of consciousness” (as Hegel will

shortly put it in par. 87) because consciousness attends to what is unchangeably "objective," and not to its changing concept of the object.⁴²

When "consciousness" has reached its fullest natural development—meaning its fullest development as a cognitive relation with "Nature" as the *absolute* object—Hegel will demonstrate the necessary identity of the rational (the concept of scientific truth) with the actual (the order of nature). But the Understanding itself does not recognize this identity; it keeps its attention fixed upon the opposition between the infinite order of nature and our finite consciousness of it. Kant's "critical philosophy" made us aware that the Understanding *constitutes* its own object. That process was "behind the back" of "common sense." But the Understanding does not comprehend that the *truly* absolute object of cognition is the cognitive process in which the "object" is constituted. What "truly is" is the "objectivity" of truth, or its *intersubjective validity*.

This is the really *absolute* (or unchangeable) object that *is* indeed present all the time. Thus we find Aristotle already saying that "What seems so to everyone, that we say *is*." It appears that the object must be "out there" as the necessary and absolute standard of truth; and in the movement of philosophical reflection from Zeno of Citium to Carneades, and again in the movement from Locke to Kant, this object is decisively shown to be inaccessible and hence unusable. These two movements towards self-conscious scepticism produce the great moments of "despair" in our culture. The proclamation of the Christian Gospel is made possible and necessary by the first, and the writing of the *Phenomenology* by the second.

In between these two events (forming the main content of Hegel's "Science of Experience") there is the slow maturation of the concept of *truth as human experience*, masked from the consciousness in which it happens by the assumption that cognition is a dialectic between experience and the "in-itself" that is "out there" (as the *being* of what is, in the order of Nature), rather than a dialectic between experience and the "in-itself" that is "in here" (our concept of "truth" as the *thought* of "what is," or the "in-itself" of consciousness itself). The natural consciousness takes "experience" to belong to subjective rationality, and the "object" to be what is independently actual. The truth of absolute cognition is rather that "experience" is *actual* and objective, while the unchangeable absolute object is the *concept* of subjective rationality; and since it is absolute and unchangeable this truth of absolute cognition enforces itself in the obstinately inverted concept that natural consciousness has of its cognition, by continually driving it to despair, and so to the experience of self-inversion. Only when the identity of the actual and the rational is fully grasped—only when we finally see that "experience" is objective and the "object" is our subjective concept—only then will the concept of truth as experience, and experience as truth, finally comprehend itself.

Thus the seemingly insoluble difficulty created by the fact that consciousness cannot "get behind the object as it is for consciousness" and test its knowledge of the object by the standard of "how the object is in itself" is a pseudo-problem created by our looking at things the wrong way round. We ought rather to reflect that whenever we "know an object," the object is "the in-itself for us," and our knowl-

edge of the object is “for us” another moment.⁴³ Experience itself has two sides: an outside, or what we are aware of as occurring in the world; and an inside, or what we are aware of as occurring in our minds. It is these two moments that are compared in our experience of “what knowing is.” We have to have a concept of knowing in which they coincide perfectly. Wherever they do not coincide, we must change our concept. But equally, whenever we change our concept both of the moments change their character with it—for *both* of the moments are “for us,” and our concept of experience equates them. It will be best to study the next paragraph before we give a concrete illustration of how this comparing works, how the standard of comparison changes, and how the object experienced changes with the standard.

- 14./86. The movement in which concept and object are transformed is *experience*. What happens is that the object of cognition becomes in cognitive experience a new object which is the objectified consciousness of the original object; and the experience in which the first object is replaced by the cognition of that object contains the nullification of the first object.

The argument of this paragraph, which may appear abstruse because of the duplication of the “objects” that have an “in-itself” status, is really quite simple. We only need to regard the description of “experience” as an account of the *learning* process.⁴⁴ When we say that we know something, it is the objective fact about the world, that we claim to know. That is the “first in-itself.” For example—turning Hegel’s initial example the other way round, and borrowing a favorite certainty of Epictetus—we say “It is daytime now.” But whenever I can truthfully say that “It is daytime now,” then I can equally well say “I *know* that it is daytime now.” And since the assertion will be pointless unless there is someone to whom it is addressed, I can properly say that “*We* know that it is daytime now.” My knowing (or our knowing) that it is daytime is the “second in-itself.” It is easy enough to see that this is a different object. My knowing that it is daytime is quite different from the fact that it is daytime. It could *be* daytime without my knowing it (if I were blind or incarcerated, for instance). But I could not know (and “we” could never rationally agree) that it is daytime, if it were not in fact daytime.

My knowledge of the fact, *changes* the object of “knowledge,” since it is necessarily the case that the *whole* of what I know is not simply the fact that it is daytime, but the fact that I know it is daytime. The original fact—the fact that it is daytime whether I know it or not—is done away with by the genuinely true fact that I have actual experience of its being daytime. This object “contains the nullity [*Nichtigkeit*] of the first,” because my *experience* abolishes the possibility of its being daytime now *without* my knowing it. Of course my knowledge does not do away with the fact of daytime. That is “in-itself”; and under that aspect, it is not my knowing, but only the passing of time, that can do away with it. But the fact of daytime is not the “in itself for me”; and my experience of it—which is the “in-itself for me”—makes it impossible for daytime to be the *simple* “in-itself” and not the “in-itself for me.” The naïve assumption that “what is” is “what is in itself simply” is *untrue* (cf. par. 87).

That is what “experience” means. Experience *changes* the fact known from a *simple* fact into a *known* fact. The truth is no longer that *p* is *so*, but that *p* is *known to be so*. I have deliberately socialized experience, by insisting that a known fact is one that is agreed to, for two reasons. On the one hand, it removes the artificial difficulties created by *illusory* experiences; we do not have to worry about the cases in ordinary experience where a retreat from “I know *p* is so” to “I *thought* (believed etc.) that *p* was so” is necessary. And on the other hand, it makes clear that what can be tested is the fact of *actual* knowing, not the possibility of some object being known. For, at once, when I say what I know to someone else, I am testing whether what I know is true or not. It is whether something that I know is true that can be tested, not whether something is *so* in its unexperienced absoluteness.

What we have to do now, is to see how this simple logical fact applies to our experience of the “standard” of truth. This takes us from the “experienced fact” to the *process* of experience. The standard of truthfulness for our assertion that “It is now daytime” is simply that that is how it appears to us. Our world is in daylight. But the world changes and our knowledge changes with it. Daylight becomes dusk and finally night. All that is simple fact. But the “being for consciousness” of this experience is no longer what simply appears, but the changing *order* of appearances that we know to be occurring. The “object for us” is not simply “now” but “the present moment of *time*”; and what we know is that “time is passing.” What truly *is* (for us)—or the real object of our knowledge—is “day passing into night.” That is what is “in itself,” not just “daytime” (or “dusk” or “night”). It is not what is immediately out there “in itself” that is “true,” but what we *experience*, or what is there “for us.” What truly *is*, is not “now” but “time.” That is what experience makes out of “now,” just as it makes the whole cycle of day and night out of “daytime.”⁴⁵

(e) *What Happens in “Experience”*

- 15./97. We are not aware of our transition from the standard supplied by the object-in-itself to that supplied by our experience. The old standard appears to be rejected, because a new one *happens* to arise in our minds. That there is an inversion of the point of view is what scientific observers can see. Natural consciousness takes the evolution of the known object to be a simple apprehension of what is there in and for itself. But it involves a series of determinate negations. When we observe it as a conscious accumulation by negation in favor of a more comprehensive experience each *Gestalt* of truth will give birth to its successor in a necessary sequence. The consciousness that we are observing is aware of its own better knowledge of the world. But it sees only what is “in-itself” not what is “in itself for us.” *We* can see the whole process of what is happening.

We have all long forgotten how we came to have the concept of “time” as the real concept in which the “now” is; and this same forgetfulness marks every transition in our concept of “what is.” We know that we learn things, and that as we put them together, our standpoint changes. But we are not aware that we are constructing a

“concept” of the world, into which our experience fits. We are not even aware that when we realize that we are experiencing a changing world, our standard (that what is “true” is what *appears* to us all) has changed. We still assume that what *is* is what appears; but we “come to know” that what “appears” is (for instance) a cycle of times that fills twenty-four hours. We make the transition from “what simply is” to “what is in itself for us,” without realizing that it is “for us” at all. For us as natural consciousness it is always just “what is in itself” that is appearing. It is simply a fact that we have now found out that what is out there is the cycle of day and night. Night was another “object” that came along to teach us that daytime is not all there is. Robert Louis Stevenson’s quizzical English child is a budding philosopher, because he is conscious of how experience has overturned his “first concept”: “In winter I get up at night,/ And dress by yellow candle light;/ In summer quite the other way/ I have to go to bed by day.”⁴⁶ The natural consciousness that we shall be observing is not equally mindful either of the “first concept” (that one should sleep at night) or of how comprehensively it is “inverted.” What is explained to Stevenson’s child is how drastically the English seasons change, while his need for sleep is a relatively constant function of a healthy growing body; and it is this same concentration on the way the *world* works, that conceals from us how our concept of what we know “absolutely” has moved on. The very fact that the earlier concept is preserved in its inversion makes it hard for us to know what has happened—just as the child’s perplexity comes from the conflict between looking at life one *day* at a time, and looking at it one *year* at a time. Concept and object have changed together; but the earlier concept and object are still visible.

We are going to observe the motion of the concept that the natural consciousness employs.⁴⁷ It moves peaceably along in an expanding world of experience which either grows painlessly (like the world of the child who accepts bedtime without a second thought) or changes dramatically because of some apparently external disturbance. When it does suffer a dramatic “overturning”—as for example in a religious conversion experience like that of St. Augustine—there is bound to be vivid awareness that the absolute framework for the interpretation of life has changed. But then the older framework is regarded as simply dead and gone. The complex ways in which the older frameworks survive and operate validly—although transformed—within the new scheme of things are not a matter of conscious thought or reflective awareness. It is *our* task to see (and to show) how the evolutionary movement is actually “logical.”⁴⁸ The old framework breaks down for a reason. A problem emerges *in* it (and *from* it) for which it has no answer; and the new framework imposes itself as “necessary” because it provides the answer—the best answer that is logically available and generally acceptable at that stage of cultural development.

Nothing *necessary* in this development can be *lost* (just as we do not lose the daily, weekly and seasonal patterns of life, when we begin planning in years and think historically in centuries). It could not be generally taken for the “simple truth” (e.g. that there are “things with properties” or that the free self faces death without swerving) if it were not permanently valid. But it is dialectically trans-

formed (e.g. in *our* absolute consciousness the fearful self is no longer enslaved); and all of it is *forgotten* most of the time.

Our concern is only with the logical Concept into which it all fits. It is precisely this *form* that is largely forgotten or ignored by the consciousness that generates it. In one sentence, the natural consciousness thinks of its truth always as “what is in itself”; *we* have to remember and bring out the fact that what is known is necessarily “what is in itself *for consciousness*.”⁴⁹

- 16./88. Because of this necessary sequence the progress towards the self-conscious Concept of Science is itself a science (*of the experience of consciousness*).
- 17./89. The experience of consciousness, thus systematically ordered, must embrace the whole realm of the truth of Spirit. But it does so in such a way that the moments of this truth are not abstract moments, but concrete shapes. Consciousness strives onward till it can lay aside the semblance of being burdened with something alien that is only for it, and as an *other*. At that point it coincides with the authentic Science of Spirit; and when it grasps its essence as Absolute Spirit it will draw the outline of absolute knowing itself.

Nothing could demonstrate the necessity of the *Preface* more dramatically than these two concluding paragraphs of the *Introduction*. Already in paragraph 87 Hegel has descended from argument to flat dogmatic assertion. Philosophic observation *will* discover, in the motion of experience, how the new standards of truth are actually being generated by the motion—even though the new standards appear to the consciousness involved in the motion to come from outside it (or from the unmoving centre). Now he tells us where and when this philosophically observed motion will come to an end. This ought not to be a surprise to *us*, but many critics have thought that it is logically inconsistent with the analysis of “experience” and with the promise in which it culminated.⁵⁰ If Hegel shows that the movement of experience *generates* the new concepts of truth that seem to come into it from elsewhere, we can see how this might be thought of as the raising of experience into a *science*. But a science of experience which does that seems to involve the recognition that the process of truth-defining and truth-judging must go on forever. The new science, we have just been told, will demonstrate that the appearance of a new standard is not the accident that it appears to be, but on the contrary, is the necessary product of the previous phase of experience. So how can this science ever culminate in the finding of an *absolute* standard of truth, without destroying the significance both of experience, and of itself as the *science* of experience?

That there is, and has to be, such an *absolute* standard, was flatly asserted at the beginning (par. 75, first sentence); and in the commentary on paragraphs 85 and 86 we have already seen how it is possible and why it is necessary. We, as observers, are asking for the definition of *knowledge* as the *internal* object of conscious inquiry. So when consciousness comes to recognize that the motion of its “experience” is actually a cycling motion round a centre that is inside it then, *as far as the question of “what actual cognition is?”* is concerned, the further motion of “experience” becomes irrelevant. We cannot learn any more from the motion of experience in the

mode of external consciousness, or about consciousness itself as the quest for knowledge. We now have “wisdom” about this quest. When we can show consciousness *what it is*, by showing its own cycle of “experience” to it as self-generating and self-completing, then the “science of the experience of consciousness” has validated itself and is itself complete.

This tells us how to recognize the goal when we arrive at it. Because we are *observing*, i.e., consciously experiencing the movement of experience itself as our object, our own standard of truth is the standard of *actuality*. It is what actually happens to consciousness in its quest for knowledge that is “what truly is” for us. Hence we must have consciousness before us as a sequence of actual shapes. When the consciousness that we are observing finally assumes the shape of our own observing consciousness, i.e. when it recognizes that what it is seeking is just *the structure of its own questing process*, the “experience of consciousness” will be complete.

Before it reaches that consummation, consciousness will go through many “shapes.”⁵¹ A “shape of consciousness” is a concretely individuated attitude first toward experience generally as an expanse for theoretical cognition (“Consciousness”); then towards the world as a place for singular self-assertion, self-expression and “soul-making” (Self-Consciousness). After that we come to the “shapes of Reason.” These are individuals who live in a world *defined* by their human reason. First they construct the “order of nature,” and “natural history”; then the order of the human intellect. These are communal enterprises, and the observing Reason is so impersonal that we seem to be observing the sciences themselves pursuing their goals, rather than the typical *scientist*. But with the sciences of “soul and body” (Physiognomy and Phrenology) we come back to recognizable singular “shapes.” Practical reason forming itself is self-assertive, so the individual shapes are easily *recognizable* (though not so easily identifiable in the historical record). Fully formed Reason has to construct its own world; here, therefore, we begin to be faced with “shapes of a world” (rather than *individual* shapes). But it is only as “Spirit” that the social world itself takes on *its own* shapes. First we observe the “shapes of law”; then those of “faith”; then (in the Enlightenment) Insight takes shape as Reason’s “natural law.” Finally we have the shapes of “moral law”—which return to conscious “individuality” in “Conscience.” The properly conscientious “individual” contains and incarnates its own “world.” Finally, in Religion we observe the “shapes of God.” These are the forms in which whole communities represent to themselves the *absolute truth* that gives their shared existence its ultimate context and meaning. *They* believe, of course, that they are knowing something “in itself”; but we shall observe their “Gods” as “what is in itself *for them*,” or as their own real being as unified communities.

The “Manifest Religion” goes through three “shapes” in which God is finally recognized by his “community” as *their own being*. In the Spirit that “rises” in every individual, God is finally manifest as the universal self-consciousness of human Reason in every mode of its life. That *self-consciousness* is what Hegel calls “spirit.” So the science of consciousness coincides in its final moment with the science of spirit. It will have travelled over the whole range of the science of spirit in

the form of "shapes of consciousness." Again this is only a bald assertion, but we can perhaps see why it is "necessary." For if there is some realm of "the truth of Spirit" that does not undergo the discipline of the court of experience, then the consciousness that finds its way to that realm can maintain itself against the "science of experience," and the "judgment of experience" will not be a properly absolute verdict. As we shall see, the "shapes of consciousness" have their own ways of maintaining themselves against observers' judgments in any case; but the "science of experience" allows them to do that on the basis of a justification which its critical discipline also provides. Otherwise it would not be Science.

The sense in which "the experience of consciousness" must comprehend "the whole realm of the truth of Spirit" has sometimes been misunderstood. The key to the right understanding of this "comprehensiveness" is the perfect parallel that Hegel believed to exist between *Phenomenology* and *Logic* (par. 805). The difference between the *Phenomenology* and the *Logic* is that the logical categories of the *Phenomenology* are *conceptual motions embodied in shapes that can be observed in experience*. No one, except us, sees these shapes moving. They are like "guardian angels" that become fully visible only to us, because the consciousness that they guard is aware of them only partially and in contradictory ways. But they are objectively there to be watched. In *Logic* the separation between "us" and "them," the opposition of consciousness and self-consciousness, is transcended. But in the *Phenomenology* their observable character, as objects for us, arises from the unity of Logic and Real Philosophy in them. Specifically they are *shapes of Spirit*. The moments of the philosophy of Nature appear only as moments *within* the spiritual shapes.

Thus every part of the *Phenomenology* is directly logical; and every moment of the *Logic* (as Hegel envisaged it in 1805/6) is illustrated in the *Phenomenology*. This spiritual embodiment of logic as a whole makes it "the whole realm of the *truth of Spirit*." Any attempt to correlate the Logic with some part or parts of the *Phenomenology* is mistaken.⁵² The "science of Logic" and the "science of experience" are *parallel*—at least in the sense that they are both universally comprehensive.

Similarly, every moment of the *Phenomenology*, from the beginning of chapter IV onwards, coincides in some way with "the authentic Science of Spirit." Otto Pöggeler was the first to recognize that the "point where consciousness lays by its semblance of being burdened with something alien" is with the transition from "Consciousness" to "Self-Consciousness" at the beginning of Chapter IV.⁵³ That is why our entry into "the native land of truth" is proclaimed at that point (par. 167), and why the Concept of Spirit dawns for us there (par. 177). But the nature of the "coincidence" between the "Phenomenology of Spirit" and the "authentic science of Spirit" remains uncertain; and this is not the point at which to discuss it. All that is clear from the beginning, is that the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Spirit* arrive at the same terminus: the absolutely self-knowing Spirit.

Finally the relation of the *Phenomenology* to the *Philosophy of Nature* is indirect (being always mediated by the concept of Spirit); and its total "comprehensiveness" is a very vague matter. In the chapters on Consciousness, and in the section on the "Observation of Nature," the evolution of our self-awareness as Spirit

makes important steps *towards* the Philosophy of Nature. But since the *System of Science* presupposes the achievement of “absolute knowing” it is clear that we cannot expect a proper *coincidence* between the “science of experience” and the “science of nature” anywhere except in the formulation of the “concept of nature” at the end of our experiential science. Our science must range over our whole cognitive *experience* of nature. But it will do so in its own way (and sometimes in a sequence that is quite different from that of “systematic science”).⁵⁴

Finally we must consider briefly the point where Logic and the two sciences of “Spirit” all coincide. For the two sciences of Spirit *end* just where Logic itself *begins*: “In that consciousness itself grasps this its own essence it will signify (*bezeichnen*) the nature of absolute knowing.” One could not ask for a clearer statement of what absolute knowing is. Absolute knowing is the self-recognition of consciousness as the knowing process that misunderstands itself in the ordinary process of experience.

The students to whom this text was first presented and lectured upon, were in a course on “Logic or Speculative philosophy.” so they knew that “Logic” was at least part of what was meant by “the authentic science of Spirit” which the “science of experience” passes over into; and they knew, by implication, that in the “science of spirit” there would no longer be “shapes” that can be observed as objects of consciousness. But the “truth of spirit” and the “science of spirit” was hurled at them here, without warning or clarification, like the promise that the “way to science” would complete itself and become the “science of experience.” All that they had to go by (unless they had taken other courses, or read other books) was a word familiar to them from sermons and religious discourse as the aspect under which God is present in the world, and from the history of philosophy (and science) as a rational controlling power and a life-force respectively.

Since this was logically the introductory course for his philosophical system, Hegel had no right to assume anything except these traditionally established meanings; and there cannot be any disputing that he expected his students to think of the Holy Spirit of the New Testament first. (*We* know this because we have read the Preface.) Thus he meant his concluding promise about the “signifying of absolute knowing” to be interpreted in terms of the “Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son”; and he surely expected the students who were adequately prepared, to think of Aristotle’s definition of the divine life (in *Metaphysics* L 5) when he spoke of “absolute knowing.”

In *some* sense, therefore, Hegel was promising that the end of the journey would be the coincidence of human conscious experience with the self-knowledge of God. Just what this promised “union with God” *betokens* (the closest English equivalent I can think of for *bezeichnen*) cannot be foreseen at the present moment (because these last three paragraphs are assertoric rather than logically analytical). The general tenor of the preceding argument supports the view that all transcendence is to be done away with. Cognition as a *power* (the *an sich*) is to be resolved into cognition as an *activity* (the *für sich*). The last shadow of the “thing in itself” is to be banished. But in the Preface the “aether” of Spirit is defined as “pure self-cognition in

absolute otherness" (par. 26); and because the "otherness" is absolute, it seems to me that a religious interpretation of the "other" as a consciousness that is effectively transcendent cannot be conclusively ruled out (or at least no conclusion can be drawn at *this* moment, even by those who have the Preface to guide them). What is clear is, first, that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as projected at the moment when this paragraph was written had to include chapters VI and VII;⁵⁵ and secondly that the book is the first part of the "system" (in which the "philosophy of spirit" forms the climax). It is not just the introduction to the *Logic*. It is that, certainly, but students enrolled in a "Logic" course would hardly need to be told that; so it was not until he drafted the "Preface" that Hegel saw any need to discuss that point. In the Introduction he concentrates on the *difference* between the two parts of "Speculative Philosophy," and on the comprehensive *integrity* of the "First Part."

(f) *The Table of Contents*

The Phenomenology is divided into eight chapters which follow one another with independent headings; and chapters IV to VII are each subdivided by headings that are internally connected (i.e., not logically independent of one another). But in his own Table of Contents Hegel provided an articulation of the whole which unites the first three chapters into one logical movement ("Consciousness") and the last four into another movement (to which he gave no overarching title, for the fairly obvious reason that all of the suitable titles were already in use for one or other of the subordinate divisions).

It seems to me probable that Hegel began with the triad Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason in his mind. But in the phenomenology of the Weltgeist all of these phases become substantial. So "Reason," in particular, is ambiguous, because this is where the transition to a "substantial" self-consciousness becomes necessary. The climax of the evolution of singular consciousness is "Reason" (as in the "Phenomenology" of Subjective Spirit in the Encyclopedia). But that climax is only the prelude to the "real" evolution of Reason in the world. It was natural to call this "Spirit." So when Hegel wanted to articulate his eight chapters, he had already used "Reason" for chapter V and "Spirit" for chapter VI. He could show us that chapters V–VIII were all phases of the self-conscious rationality of the World-Spirit. But he could no longer tell us that. His third "movement had to remain untitled."⁵⁶

This division "C" (which I will call "Cosmic Reason") embraces: (AA) Subjective or conscious Reason, (BB) Objective or Substantial Reason (here called "Spirit"), (CC) Absolute or Substantially Subjective Reason (here called "Religion"). The titles of the chapters were determined by the self-conscious shapes in which "Spirit" appears. The heading "(DD) Absolute Knowing" is necessary because this structural identity in difference of "Reason," "Spirit" and "Religion" as phenomenal modes of rational self-consciousness is not apparent to the ordinary consciousness in any of the three phases. The scientific consciousness is the final shape in which the logically necessary relation of these preceding shapes is grasped. It is the "shape" that is peculiar to the self-conscious community of philosophers.

Hegel could not use "Spirit" as the title of his division C, because "Subjective Spirit"

makes its appearance first as "Self-Consciousness," not as "Reason." He might have used the triad: *Consciousness, Spirit, Science*.⁵⁷ But then "Subjective Spirit" would have embraced both chapter IV and chapter V. This would not have been more awkward than the triad of *Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Cosmic Reason*. But it was effectively ruled out when Hegel decided to call the whole work "the *Phenomenology of Spirit*." In any case, "Self-Consciousness" needed to be distinguished clearly from "Reason" because of the focal importance of the concept of "Cognition" (which is underlined in the Preface). "Self-Consciousness" is self-assertive. In spite of the Stoics and Sceptics it is not in the relevant sense self-cognitive. The absolute Self appears to it as God, the cosmic Reason. Only with "Reason" do we have the "self" that is aware of itself as "all reality."

Hegel's title page (and the final state of the part-title) challenge us to find the key to the structure of the book in the relation between chapters IV and VI. (Chapter V is the hinge-point of a different articulation—to which we are directed explicitly by the Table of Contents). If we take up the challenge of the title page itself, it is obvious at once that chapters VI–VIII form a Hegelian "syllogism."⁵⁸ Chapter VI is the account of how the mundane or finite spirit comes to recognize its identity with the infinite spirit; chapter VII tells the whole story from the other side; and chapter VIII mediates the apparent opposition. Moving backwards from this "syllogism" we can see that chapter V has the structure of a "judgment"—this is underlined in Hegel's own "Announcement" of the book. There is indeed a "syllogism" in the formal movement of the chapter as a whole, but it is a syllogism of negation. The Concept (of Observing Reason) comes upon our natural mortality as its result; and the "Thing Itself," the *Respublica* or cooperative society of specialized animal types, which Reason establishes, is a fraud (*Betrug*). In the end practical Reason in its abstract "law testing" function has to bring in the same verdict of death upon itself which Observing Reason was faced with in the absolutely concrete shape of Yorick's skull.

This negative verdict and the promise of salvation beyond it were united in the simple concept of "Self-Consciousness" as presented in chapter IV. This is for us the "Concept of Spirit" (which only comes to be real for itself without contradiction in the syllogistic movement of chapters VI–VIII). The abstract evolution of this concept (both its historical preparation, and our preparation for it—i.e. both the classical philosophical background, and the modern scientific revolution that has made our interpretation of experience possible) is supplied in chapters I–III.

I assume that this is the way that Hegel himself saw it when he changed the part-title of the book while he was writing the Preface. But we should hardly have been able to discover this structure, without the Announcement, because chapter V is to all appearances a syllogistic triad of triads (rather than a "judgment"). It is all negative, but the judgmental dichotomy between theoretical and practical Reason is not emphasized. It is the continuum not the division that seems important.

When we see that the recollective survey of chapter VIII begins from *Phrenology* we are bound to realize that there is an important turning point at the beginning of *Self-Actualizing Reason*. But it is only when Hegel analyses the text in the announcement: "the main divisions of this science . . . *Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Observing and Acting Reason, Spirit itself as ethical, cultured and moral, and finally as religious Spirit*

in its distinct forms" that we know how to interpret the division. In spite of all appearances "Acting Reason" is the beginning of a positive movement. It is, in fact, the beginning of the self-positing of Spirit.⁵⁹

The Announcement begins by underlining the passage in the Introduction where the "Stations of the Cross" were first invoked: "It grasps the distinct shapes of the Spirit as stations of the way into itself, through which it becomes pure knowing or absolute Spirit." So this description of the "science of experience" as a spiritual pilgrimage towards absolute cognition was the seed from which Hegel's final conception of his introduction to "Speculative Philosophy" as the "phenomenology of Spirit" developed. The Introduction shows that the idea was there from the first.

The best guide to Hegel's original conception of the book as "Speculative philosophy or logic, Part I," however, is the suppressed part-title "Science of the Experience of Consciousness." Here the logical concept is identified as "experience"; and in this perspective the first three chapters—which contain the logical evolution of the experiencing consciousness to its absolute (or "infinite") shape—are not just preparatory. I have already suggested that phenomenologically Hegel began with the triad Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, and Reason, in mind; but logically I think he began with Understanding, Reason, Spirit. In this logical perspective Understanding is the "concept" that divides into Self-Consciousness and Reason as its judgment; while Spirit, Religion, and Absolute Knowing are the Syllogism in which the dialectic of Self-Consciousness and Reason is finally resolved.

This is, in my view, the right way to view the Phenomenology as a logical science. But whether we think of it as logic or as "authentic science of Spirit" the book falls into two halves (with the second half of chapter V as the transitional phase). There is a negative progress to the middle of chapter V, and a positive return from the grave to true self-possession in chapters VI–VIII.

I have divided my commentary into two volumes in accordance with this structure. First comes "the pilgrimage of Reason" in this world. This arrives finally at the "place of a skull" from which the resurrection of Spirit as the "self-positing" (freely self-creative and self-defining) world of truly human existence begins.

In this first pilgrimage the horizon of "nature" (and of natural need) is always present. Self-positing Reason makes its final abortive attempt to exist within this horizon in the second half of chapter V (i.e. VB and C). But this tailpiece to the first pilgrimage is essential to the following odyssey because the Spirit which freely posits its communal "realms" (of Law, Religion and Science) is precisely the "practical Reason" of Kant's Categorical Imperative.⁶⁰ This developed moral Understanding is just as essential to our comprehending observation of Spirit, as a developed theoretical Understanding was essential for the comprehending observation of "Self-Consciousness" (which first posits itself as an intuition of "freedom" that is completely lacking in Understanding).

Notes

1. Copies exist in which the earlier part-title is still present, and there are others in which the page has been cut out and the new title stuck in its place. There is at least one copy in which both part-title pages have been bound in. Unbound copies were distributed with a

sheet (16 pages) of corrected pages (including the list of printing errors and a page of instructions for the eventual book-binder). The new part-title was the last two pages of this sheet. See the “editorial report” in the Critical Edition (*G.W.* IX, 469–471). The original authority is F. Nicolin (1967); and there is a good summary of the state of our knowledge in H.-F. Fulda and D. Henrich (1973, 11).

2. When the subtitle includes “*Wissenschaft*” I prefer to translate “die Phänomenologie des Geistes” as “the phenomenology of *the* Spirit.” The addition of the definite article shifts the emphasis to the *object for us*, the scientific observers. We are supposed to know that it is the spirit of God (or God as Spirit) that is appearing at every stage. The substance is moving steadily towards its communal self-consciousness. As the name of the *process*, “the phenomenology of Spirit” places the emphasis rather on the activity of the experiencing subject (who begins as the simple “consciousness” of the world, which is both sensible and intelligible but not yet spiritual). Calling the process “phenomenology of *Spirit*” actually leaps over this first stage; but as long as we think of “consciousness” concretely, it is always necessarily aware of itself as a free agent in a divine environment—that is, it is “*finite* spirit.”

3. See the Editorial report, *G.W.* IX, 408; the relevant documents are printed in *Hegel-Studien*, IV, 55–56 (also in *Briefe* IV, i and G. Nicolin, *Berichten*).

4. See Rosenkranz, 264; and Gabler’s reminiscences, Nicolin, report 92, 66 (or *Hegel-Studien* IV, 71).

5. In the Hegelian logic, a proper Concept contains its own antithesis. Hence it develops into a Judgment with two sides that are explicitly opposed. In a Syllogism, the motion of the Concept into the self-opposition of Judgment is completed by a mediation in which the division into opposite sides is overcome by the positing of a new Concept at a higher level of comprehensive generality.

6. There is a full-scale commentary on Hegel’s Introduction by A. Graeser (1988). But it is only one of many less lengthy—and sometimes less formal—discussions. Only a few of these discussions are referred to in my own text and notes. Among *other* important studies are G. van Riet (1964); R. Bubner (1969), K. Schrader-Klebert (1969); E. Fink (1971, 1977); L. B. Puntel (1973); L. Lugarini (1973); J. Heinrichs (1974); H. Röttges (1976); H. Boeder (1977); W. Bonsiepen (1977, 135–141).

7. Werner Marx (1975, 36–49) argues quite correctly that “reflection” is the common ground shared by “natural consciousness” and “science.” He also gives a good account of how Hegel envisaged the transformation of ordinary reflection into the “absolute reflection” that is the *organon* of philosophy. The crucial difference is that commonsensical reflection is directed upon its “objective,” whereas “absolute reflection” is directed upon its own ordinary activity. In the *Phenomenology* we shall be reflecting absolutely upon ourselves as ordinary reflective agents. But the content of our ordinary reflection (which is indifferent for the “absolute reflection” of someone like Fichte) is no longer accidental. In the “science of experience” we reflect absolutely upon ourselves as reflectively aware of our own past. We shall observe scientifically the reflective process by which we have come to have both the reflective consciousness, and the reflective capacities that we actually do have.

Our reflective capacity is active and thoughtful (i.e., it is *interpretive*). In its self-transforming capacity (as directed upon itself interpreting the world) it is the “Absolute with us from the start” (though still unrecognized). So there could be few mistakes more egregious than Kojève’s claim that Hegel’s method is “purely ‘empirical’ or ‘positivist’” and that the philosophic attitude is “one of purely passive contemplation . . . and simple description” (1969, 171, 176). He is blandly ignoring the difference between *instinctive* and *self-conscious*

Reason (the use of the word "passive" betrays Kojève's own fall into the "instinctive" attitude infallibly). D. Berthold-Bond (1986, 212) pointed out his mistake.

8. *Essay*, Book I, chapter I, section 7 (ed. Yolton, London, Everyman, 8–9). Hegel quotes this passage from his German translation at the beginning of the "Kant" section of *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 326; Cerf and Harris, 68–69).

9. Compare *K.R. V*, A IX–X with B XIV–XXIV. R. B. Pippin (1989, 92) says that Hegel's idealism is "an extension of Kant's project"; and I have enthusiastically endorsed this thesis (H. S. Harris, 1989b). But the "extension" involves a radical transformation (cf. H. S. Harris, 1989b and K. Westphal, 1993). In the end, the argument about whether Hegel is a "realist" or an "idealist" is a logomachy (cf. J. C. Flay, 1991, 264). In his own sense Hegel is both; and in the familiar traditional senses, he is neither. The "objective idealist" perspective is well stated by R. B. Pippin (1993); but the grounds of Hegel's "realism" emerge as soon as Pippin turns his attention from K. Westphal's criticisms to S. Sedgwick's. (See further K. Westphal, 1993, 237–239.) A more *radical* reading of Hegel as a "critical" idealist can be found in T. Pinkard (1990). The relation between his view and Pippin's can be seen there—see R. B. Pippin (1990). For an admirably brief and clear statement of Hegel's "Realism" see K. Westphal (1992). See further chapter 2, note 48 above; and J. E. Smith (1973).

10. Werner Marx treats both the "instrument" and the "medium" view as Kant's (1975, 8–10). H.-J. Krahle (1979, 12ff.) also thinks that both metaphors are essentially Kantian; so does R. C. Solomon (1983, 285ff.). I think this is an accurate interpretation of Hegel's conscious concern. He begins with Kant, because he has the writing of an adequate "critique of pure Reason" in mind. But Kant would not have had this ambivalent *Vorstellung* of "cognition" if the alternatives were not themselves older. For the "instrumental" view see *K.R. V* B XXV–XXVII and Hegel's ironic comment in the history of philosophy lectures (*T.W.-A.* XX, 334; Haldane and Simson III, 428) about "going out after truth with spears and staves." This comment implicitly identifies Kant with Judas—compare Matthew 26:47, Mark 14:43 and Luke 22:52. Compare further *Encyclopedia*, section 10.

The "medium" is not a passive or transparent one, but one that distorts. This is what is offered by Kant's theory of the "forms of intuition." (See especially the interpretation of Habermas [1972, 321, note 10] which is based upon *T.W.-A.* XX, 341; Haldane and Simson III, 434–435; see also (more generally) the detailed analysis given by Heidegger, 1970, 28–31, 35–37.)

11. Needless to say he is not an "empiricist" in the manner of Locke, Berkeley and Hume.

12. But the metaphor has its obvious classical origin in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes. (On the relation of Reason and experience in Hegel see J. W. Burbidge, 1992, chapter VII.)

13. *Difference* (*G.W.* IV, 82–86; Harris and Cerf, 180–186). (The following quotation is from Reinhold's *Beyträge* I, 91; cf. Harris and Cerf, 186.)

14. *Werke* III, 29, Hegel's footnote (*Difference*, *G.W.* IV 84–85; Harris and Cerf, 183) shows how we can pass directly from the critique of Reinhold in *Difference* to that of Jacobi in *Faith and Knowledge*. Jacobi's mysticism rests on the absurdity of the "medium" concept of finite truth. Fichte's idealism purports to provide a practical access to the Absolute for which the scientific games of finite intellect supply only an exercise ground.

15. This is one of the great cruxes of the *Phenomenology*. But even if we take Hegel's assertion as literally as Heidegger did (and as R. G. McRae [1985] seems to do) we can only understand the explanations they offer by accepting the book as a *ladder* to Absolute Knowing for our plain common sense. We must begin with the *problem* of "what do these 'speculative'

thinkers *mean?*” even if we find (when we come back to the beginning after making the circle) that the Absolute *was bei uns* from the first.

16. Habermas is wrong, for example, to complain that Hegel’s critique is not “immanent” here (1972, 11–12). But in his next paragraph (12–13) he takes up Hegel’s point in the right way.

17. In Hegel’s earlier critical writings, it is principally Reinhold whose fear of error is stigmatized as fear of truth (see especially *Difference*, *G.W.* IV, 81–83; Harris and Cerf, 178–182). But the next paragraph shows that it is the empiricist determination to do without “absolute knowledge” that is Hegel’s real intellectual quarry. We can see here that R. B. Pippin (1989, chap. 5) is right in arguing that Hegel wants to provide a Kantian “deduction” of knowledge, and to resolve the problem of “transcendental scepticism.” His responses to the objections of E. Tugendhat (1979) are perfectly correct as far as his thesis goes—which is to the end of this first volume of this commentary. In chapter V B the characterization of the *Phenomenology* as a critical “introduction” becomes insufficient; we shall have to recognize it as a positive science on its own account, and as a *part* of the “System of Science.”

18. For a good account of Hegel’s mature theory of truth, see J. McCumber (1993, chapters 1–2). Many forms of subphilosophical consciousness maintain themselves by *hin- und herreden*. This is typical of “Perception” and all its analogues. But in philosophical self-consciousness it becomes too blatantly obvious to be effective (see the section on *Verstellung*, pars. 616–631). Several stages of the gradual recognition that a new integration of our conscious world is needed are illustrated in the *Phenomenology*. The “moral world view” of Kant is the last.

19. See *Difference*, *G.W.* IV, 10–11 and 81–86 (Harris and Cerf, 86–87 and 178–186) for Reinhold’s toiling and its relation to the tradition. Schulze is even more obviously guilty of deriving the “incapacity of Science” from the presupposition that truth is “outside” (see *Scepticism*, *G.W.* IV, 201–4; Di Giovanni and Harris, 317–321).

20. See the “Introduction” to the *Critical Journal* (*G.W.* IV, 117–128; Di Giovanni and Harris, 275–286).

21. Miller’s translation assumes that Hegel is talking about the same set of epistemologists all through paragraph 76. But Hegel distinguishes between those who do *formal* philosophical “science” and those who use the arguments of formal idealism *against* science. These *two* groups are (at least roughly) identical with the “party of the Understanding” and the “party of immediate rationality and divinity” in the Preface (par. 14). Jacobi and Schleiermacher belong to his second party. (For Hegel’s first reaction to Schleiermacher’s *Addresses*, see *Difference*, *G.W.* IV, 8; Harris and Cerf, 83.)

22. K. R. Westphal (1989, 91) asks rhetorically: “Why not just do science and forget epistemology?” But he has already noted that “Hegel has challenged the presumption that transcendental knowledge (second order knowledge about what empirical knowledge is) is any less problematic or available than empirical knowledge” (*loc. cit.*). His way of putting the problem is the correct one—and without the *Phenomenology* there is no answer. Many self-styled “Hegelians” have taken this route of simply ignoring the problem. (As Westphal says, Hegel raised this very same objection against Jacobi in *Encyclopedia*, sec. 75—see K. R. Westphal 1989, 252–253, n. 4 and 1989b).

There has been a debate among the German commentators that can be summarized as follows:

H.-F. Fulda (1965, 298–289): Every other appearance of truth says that “Science” is an “appearance” beside other truths. But they are mistaken and that must be shown. L. B. Pun-

tel (1973, 311): But when Science appears it *is* only an appearance; and it only becomes Science by giving all the other “appearances” their place as its “moments.” D. Henrich (1974, 10) adds the point that Science liberates itself from “appearance” by establishing its intersubjective character as *conceptual* communication. I agree with the whole sequence. But Fulda concentrates too narrowly on the “introductory” sublation of the “apparent” character of Science.

23. K. Westphal (1989, 134) comments that this passage (and the related ones in pars. 78 and 79—cited 262, n. 24) have created an “erroneous supposition that there is one single cumulative development plotted in the *Phenomenology*.” He thinks that there are developmental sequences only within “each major section.” It is true that the comprehension of time is complex; and since we have to start from our experience *now*, it cannot be *simply* linear in time. But there *is* a “single cumulative development” of *our* “experience”; and when we come to the point where we can comprehend the development of the World-Spirit (chapter VII) we do see how our cumulative comprehension has already been experienced as a linear progression in time by the universal consciousness of the culture that is ours—see further the next note. Westphal is only repeating what many careful students since Haym have concluded. I have taken him to task here, not because he particularly deserves criticism, but rather for the opposite reason—his analysis has made it possible to get the question into the right perspective. He is well aware that there is a single complex argument in the book (see his chapter 11); and we shall ourselves see in due course that the *sequential* connection of chapter V can only be comprehended when it is complete as a “major section.”

24. This agrees with M. A. Gillespie (1984, 69). But as we shall see at once, the most fundamental and continuous meaning of “natural consciousness” is the ordinary “realistic” consciousness of educated common sense (compare Hyppolite, 1974, 16—see also M. Bienstock, 1992, 227–228). It can even be identified with the “standpoint of consciousness” as we find it in the empirical tradition from Locke to Kant; but that tradition is too much infected by the sceptical difficulties that are the “despair” of “natural consciousness” to count as “natural consciousness” proper. (There is a good review of the problem of “natural consciousness” in A. Graeser, 1988, 77–79. In his discussion of the “way of the soul” he sticks mainly to Platonic and neo-Platonic models, but admits also Medieval ones—1988, 79–81.)

25. There are places where it is clearly correct to take *erscheinende Wissen* as “phenomenal knowledge” (Miller does it too often, but where it is opposed to *Wissenschaft*, as here at the beginning of par. 77, this locution is the best). Equally, there are places where it means “apparent knowledge” (as opposed to true knowledge) as Loewenberg argues (1965, 10). A good instance is in paragraph 76: “they constitute only an empty appearance of knowing, which vanishes immediately in the face of science making its entrance.” But the predominant sense (as when we read that “the *Darstellung des erscheinenden Wissens* will here be undertaken”) is “knowing in its process of appearing.” What we are concerned with is the sound common sense that is *on its way* to self-recognition in “Science”—compare W. Marx (1975, 28–29) and Loewenberg (1965, 16). It is a mistake to think that the “falsity” of ordinary consciousness is more important than its “truth.” The way of the Cross is also the way of salvation; and our Hegelian salvation is not in “another world” of pure “Science.” So the “appearing” of knowing is the progressive discovery of the absolute perspective in which all shapes of experience can reveal their truth. See especially Hegel’s letter to Duboc of 30 July 1822: “I hold that this content [the True] is present in *every sound [echt] consciousness*, in all religions and philosophies, but that our standpoint of today is to be cognizant of it [fully]

developed, and this cannot happen in any but the scientific way, which is thus at the same time, the unique pattern [*Art*] in which it can be proved" (letter 422, *Briefe* II, 239—italics mine; cf. Butler and Seiler, 492). Thus, the view of Habermas (1972, 20) that the epistemological ladder can be thrown away once it has been climbed, is quite mistaken.

26. What Hegel says at the end of paragraph 802: "Therefore, the content of Religion proclaims earlier in time than does Science what *Spirit* is, but only Science is its true knowledge of itself" means that the whole *linear* progression of the World-Spirit is complete, before the *Bildung* of singular consciousness as "Reason" properly begins. (It is interesting that C.-A. Scheier [1980, 687] cites this passage and comments accurately: "What Spirit *is*, not what it knows itself as"; but he attaches no significance to Hegel's statement in its *ordinary* historical sense. For him, the history of philosophy as well as that of religion must lie there to be recollected (as indeed it must). But he assumes that the order of it (as *res gestae*) is not significant. The *Phenomenology* is a logic of consciousness that starts from contemporary philosophical views and uses what it needs from the totality of experience. So the right way to deal with all of Hegel's historical references—even when they are explicit, and not concealed—is to ignore them. Thus, Scheier recognizes a religious metaphor in this present paragraph, but not a deliberately historical reference (1980, 10–11). An approach further removed from the spirit and intent of my own commentary would be difficult to imagine. What is attempted here is a lot more than an "analytical" commentary.

27. This was one of Jean Wahl's valid insights (1951, 142–143). H. Küng (1987, 204) is one of many commentators—Wahl being probably the first—who maintains that consciousness is unhappy from the beginning, but unaware of the fact. This is an unnatural way of speaking, but it appears to be justified when we reach the Beautiful Soul. Hegel's own later description of the book as a "voyage of discovery" (Rosenkranz, 204) is better. Like the adventures of Odysseus the transitions vary in character. W. Desmond (1992a, 118) directs our attention to the presence of *Zwei* in *Zweifel*. Consciousness *moves* when it is in two minds—C. S. Peirce took a similar view in "The Fixation of Belief." (On Cartesian and Hegelian doubt, see F. G. Weiss, ed., 1974. See also A. Graeser, 1988, 83, and R. C. Solomon, 1983, 431–433).

28. Natural consciousness is primitively "common sense" (C. Taylor, 1976, 157). It is dogmatically realistic, and it resists the movement of critical reflection (J. Sallis, 1977, 149). *All* of the forms of consciousness that logically belong to its experience are "natural" (cf. K. R. Dove, 1970, 624)—except Absolute Knowing. "Natural consciousness *is* the problem of induction" (P. A. Simpson, forthcoming, 1993 thesis, 99). There is a resemblance between Hegel's method and Kant's "sceptical method" (*Critique of Pure Reason* A 420–425; B 448–453). According to Kant we must watch to see how the controversy reveals the illusory character of the point of disagreements.

29. There is a lot of discussion about the project of a "self-perfecting Scepticism." I have not examined the theoretical debates here, because the "perfecting of Scepticism" is not the work of philosophy, but of historical experience. We shall see how it happens in the book. It will suffice here to say that Kierkegaard's 1846 complaint (1941, 292) that Kantian critical thought cannot be vanquished by "thinking it through" rests on a mistake. We have to find out where it came from (to "live it through" in a quite existential way). I myself think that the description of "self-perfecting Scepticism" as a "way of despair" is rhetorically excessive, but there seems to be no denying that Hegel intended precisely this identification.

The relation of the *Phenomenology* to Hegel's essay on Scepticism has been ably expounded by M. N. Forster (1989). But critics continue to find that Hegel's systematic res-

olution of the problems of Scepticism is not satisfactory—cf. for instance Karl Ameriks (1992, 15/16). (H. Röttges [1987, chapter 2] thinks that the development of the “science of experience” as a “thoroughgoing Scepticism” is hard to reconcile with the appearance of classical Scepticism as a singular moment. This is a mistake. See further M. N. Forster, 1989, 135–137, 140–141; H. Buchner, 1990; and R. R. Williams, 1992.)

30. The problem of the “We” is a pseudoproblem, which exists only for those who think that Heidegger’s unnatural way of talking is the proper expression of a philosophical consciousness. Hegel obviously means “us” to include anyone who *wants* to share the knowing that will be shown to be “absolute” in the book; and he assumes that such-a-one must already have the sort of knowledge that he himself was endowed with during his own *Bildung*. But for those who enjoy looking at everything upside down from the beginning the best study of the pseudoproblem is Dove (1970, reprinted in Steinkraus, 1971, 34–56). The “We” is important, because it is gradually refined into the community of “pure thinking.” But at the beginning it is only the community of those who have read Kant and Fichte, and who understand, at least, what they claim—cf. R. B. Pippin (1993, 61). For a related comment (on Flay’s view) see chapter 4, note 30, below.

31. G. Lukács (1975) was probably the first to grasp this point correctly. J. Dobbins and P. Fuss (1982, 391) have argued that there are *three* cycles of *seven* stages. There certainly are three cycles. But, unlike Dante, Hegel was not interested in numerical parallelism. The triad of “Consciousness” (Sense, Perception, Understanding) recurs often; and it is wise to watch for the “repetition” of “Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason” at the “social” and the “absolute” levels. But the “seven-stage” progress is an artificial construct.

32. Thus we can use any philosophical culture and knowledge we have (Wittgenstein, Austin, Heidegger etc.). They may get in the way by causing us to ask the wrong questions; whereas a knowledge of the reception of Kant in Hegel’s world will generally help us to ask the right ones. But Gadamer (1976, 35) claims too much when he says that “R. Wiehl has shown . . . that the beginning of the *Phenomenology* cannot be comprehended at all without direct reference to Kant’s philosophy.” Wiehl himself (1966) seems not to have any such categorical claim in mind.

33. But even in the chapters on Consciousness, Labarrière’s “postulate” (1968, 29) asks for more than the very nature of language as “experience” will properly allow:

the underlying postulate is that an understanding of the work does not require any antecedent knowledge and that it itself provides, in the necessity which animates it, the key to its own deciphering. In order to penetrate into it, consciousness need only be that naïve consciousness which Hegel first places before us, in its certitude at once the richest and the poorest.

If Frau Bauer’s Ursel (*Wastebook*, aphorism 10; Rosenkranz, 539; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 1) goes to school, and wants to be a philosopher, we shall have to teach her what Kant meant by calling space and time “forms of intuition” while we are expounding “Sense-Certainty” (in that sense what Gadamer says Reiner Wiehl has “shown” is trivially true). But when we get to “Self-Consciousness” we shall soon find ourselves teaching her the history of her father’s social “estate” as well.

34. This is the truth behind J. McCumber’s claim that “real communication” is resisted as a “loss of self” (1983, 6). He is mistaken when he turns this into “The *Phenomenology* is an attempt . . . to communicate the absolute standpoint to an individual who is resistant to the

message.” The “Science of experience” is addressed to those who are sincerely desirous of “another [absolutely cognitive] self.” The spontaneous shape of this desire is the philosophical urge, not just to know, but to “know that I know” (which involves the ability to communicate my knowledge).

T. Munson (1966, 15), on the other hand, has mistaken the necessity for *choice* as the intuitive foundation of Hegel’s philosophical position. Our own decision is only one moment in the moving process of experience; and it need not (in any positive sense) be the first one. We can begin as sceptics, and remain sceptical. From Munson’s own (intuitive Hegelian) position, that is what all ordinary empiricists do. But Hegel himself is so far from accepting Munson’s intuitive position, that he prefers to call his philosophy of experience “self-perfecting scepticism.”

35. Fuss and Dobbins (1981, 143) tried to connect paragraph 80 with Hegel’s account of the movement of “experience.” The result seems to be only confusion. Scepticism may arise from the recognition that there are different truth standards. But movement does not occur because of a conscious conflict of standards. If it did, it would not be “behind the back of consciousness.”

36. Hegel’s claim that the Beautiful Soul is “unhappy” (par. 658) legitimates the universalization of “unhappy consciousness.” But this ontological “unhappiness” is quite different from the unhappiness that Findlay ascribes to his “mechanist.” Hegel’s Beautiful Soul (and his Sceptic here, if I am right) are not *consciously* “tormented”—to use Findlay’s own word (Miller, 527).

37. I agree with M. A. Gillespie (1984, 64–65) that the Introduction falls neatly into two halves of eight paragraphs, with a final conclusion in the seventeenth paragraph. The first half is concerned with the “natural consciousness,” the second with our own philosophical self-consciousness. On the division of the Introduction see also E. Fink (1977, 41) and U. Claesges (1981, 68).

38. There is no doubt that Hegel means from the beginning to show us how the problem of the *Ding an sich* should be resolved; and he calls Kant’s theory a “phenomenology of spirit” (*Encyclopedia*, sec. 415) because it operates within the conceptual frame of “conscious experience.” But there is no need to suppose that he has any specifically Kantian problems in mind in this introduction to his own “phenomenology of Spirit.” Konrad Cramer (1978) only makes Hegel’s commonsense account of “conscious experience” unnecessarily complicated.

39. When the standard is objective there is no problem about its *right* to be recognized, but it is of no positive use. When we turn to compare the “in itself” of knowing with its phenomenal appearance, it is the “in itself” that “falls within us.” “What is to be compared with it” has its own indisputable objective reality even if it is found wanting by comparison with the standard. In fact it is the standard that has to be given up and modified at each “station” on the way, in order that consciousness may progress. Each station still deserves to be called a “station” because the standard employed there *can* be maintained. Ordinary men still live and die by the standard of “Sense-Certainty”; and great spiritual leaders (many of the true saints) have judged themselves and their world by the standard of the “Unhappy Consciousness” to the last—in spite of the fact that the “ordinary” (enlightened) reaction is to reject it out of hand.

40. H. Küng (1987, 240) says: the *Phenomenology* represents a peerless discharge of the hermeneutical task as a question about *truth*.” A. Collins (1982) has given a straightforward account that cuts through all the dialectical subtleties: “the self-critical structure of knowl-

edge is certainly a form of objectivity" (and sense-certainty is the purest form) (5). But those who take Hegel's inquiry as a search for "epistemological criteria" (see, for example, A. Ward, 1992) will find that it is virtually complete at the end of chapter III. I do not know quite what Ward means by the question "whether the purpose such a criterion allows people to realize is compatible with the historical context in which such purposes are framed—e.g. the master-slave relation" (198). But I take it that he is trying to revise the *concept* of "epistemology." (Any such attempt is only useful when carried out in detail.)

41. On Hegel's "empiricism" see G. Schrader (1964). There may be a deep truth in the "ontological" reading for which the Concept was the standard of Greek speculation, and the Object is the standard of modern philosophy (cf. Fink, 1977, 53). But it is not what Hegel is concerned about here, and it only obscures the understanding of what he says. Idealism accepts the Cartesian view that consciousness is thinking, and the Lockean view that consciousness is what is directly known to be "concrete." Thus one can plausibly argue (as C. L. Reinhold was the first to claim) that "The System undercuts all problems of mediation by the simple device of removing within the magic circle of idealistic thought all the material we normally look for in the real world" (G. di Giovanni, 1984, 180). But this plausible argument is accurate only as a description of Fichte's idealism. Hegel's "speculation" does not "undercut" mediation; it *transfers* those problems to the "experience of consciousness." First it shows that logical thinking is "objective" (chapter VI); then that it is "absolute" (chapter VII). And, because the movement of consciousness is *free* (as well as logical—i.e., "necessary"), the alternative position of common sense (which takes "the real world" to be "objective" and consciousness to be "subjective") continues always to be valid. It is not "contradicted" in any practically important sense, by the arguments of absolute idealism.

42. The difficulty raised by Hegel at *G.W.* IX, 59, lines 35–38 (Miller, par. 85, lines 12–17): "The object, it is true, . . . by that standard" is discussed at length by A. Graeser (1986). (His discussion of "Concept" and "Object" [1988, 131–132] should also be studied.)

43. Some ink has been spilled over Hegel's use of the dative (*ihm*, "to it") and the accusative (*für es*, "for it"). See, for instance, M. Theunissen (1978, 326–330); K. Dove (1982, 30). See also A. Graeser (1988, 121) and K. R. Westphal (1989, 105–107); an earlier and shorter statement of Westphal view—largely absorbed into K. R. Westphal (1989, chapter 7) without change—can be found in K.R. Westphal (1988). But it is not the grammatical structure that matters in the end. The important point to grasp is the relation between "the first and the second in-itself" (alias "the in-itself" and "the in-itself for consciousness"). Hegel has already said that the two moments that are distinct "to it" (*ihm*, dative) are both "for it" (*für dasselbe*), and that "it (consciousness) is itself their comparing." So I was at first inclined to think that Hegel's use of the accusative and dative cases was a distinction without a difference. But I am now disposed to say that Hegel may perhaps be deliberately representing the tension between what is present explicitly "*for* consciousness" and what is present implicitly "*to* consciousness."

44. Heidegger explicates what Hegel means by "experience" very well (1980, 29–33; 1988, 21–23). But it is not clear to me how the Absolute is present from the beginning in this process. "Spirit" as the self-recognition of knowing is clearly the *result*.

P. A. Simpson's description of the movement of "experience" as "transcendental induction" is helpful (forthcoming, chapter 1 at note 50 and ff.). Even R. Pippin recognizes that it is only a "*relative* deduction" (1989, 108).

45. In commenting on paragraph 85, M. Theunissen (1978) says that it is surprising that Hegel attempts to solve the problem of consciousness by simply repeating it. But I hope that

by now we can see that Hegel's view is that if we analyse the problem clearly, it turns out to be a pseudoproblem. It seems to me that U. Claesges (1981, 83–90) also falls into the error of thinking that there is a problem to be *solved*—whereas Hegel shows that if we look at the actual process of experience as a whole the problem solves itself (or “dissolves”). But I confess that I find his discussion very hard to follow (and I may be misunderstanding it).

The analysis given by K. Westphal (1989, 103–111) is unnecessarily complicated; but I agree with his “realistic” thesis generally. “Reality” is transformed into the “community of rational recollection” by the time we reach absolute knowledge. So I also agree (more perfectly I think) with Walter Ludwig (1992). Because of the preservational aspect of the dialectic of “experience” his view that “absolute knowing” is a “shape of consciousness”—in which subject-object “difference” remains just as important as “identity”—is correct. “Pure thinking” is *also* liberated (by the cancelling aspect of the process of experience). So “absolute knowing” can go through its own progress from the abstraction of pure Logic to the concrete experience of Absolute Spirit once more.

46. *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Kierkegaard was one of the first to insist that Hegel's ideal reader was a fiction, and that the transitions do not happen properly “for us.” This “distanced” approach is found in many interpretations (a fact remarked on by J. P. Butler [1987, 22–23] who cites *Repetition*, 1983, 200). I hope this example shows that these critics are mistaken. The method of the *Phenomenology* is not “practical”; but it has a practical side. Compare especially L. Siep (1979, chapters III and IV). (T. Seebohm [1976, 173–176] provides a good brief account of the formal character of the dialectical movement in the *Phenomenology*.)

The “double” character of experience—the logical structure of which the experiencing subject is unaware—caused K. Dove (1980) to become confused when he argued (against Habermas) that the categories of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* are generated in the *Science of Logic* and not in history. The categories certainly are generated in the *Logic* (though it is by no means easy to say how this is so). But their logical derivation is quite independent of their generation in history (which is much easier to recognize in the *Phenomenology*). Just by itself, this is a powerful argument against Dove's view (1974, 1982) that the *Phenomenology* is only a “negative” introduction to the System. Hegel's own claim that it is a “science of experience,” and (as such) the “first *part*” of Science, should not be set aside without a serious attempt to understand what he meant—even if one concludes that he was mistaken, and that no such “science” is possible.

Wittgenstein remarks that “the aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity . . . that which, once seen, is the most striking and most powerful, does not strike us” (*Philosophical Investigations*, 129). What Wittgenstein thought about the *dialectical* character of the important thought-structures of our life I am not sure. This dialectic is what is distinctive in Hegel's method of uncovering them and making them visible. (The Wittgenstein passage was first cited in this connection by D. Berthold-Bond [1989, 98].)

47. Hegel first pointed out the difference between what consciousness is “for itself,” and what it is “for us” (as observers) in his “First Philosophy of Spirit” (see *G.W.* VI, 273–274; Harris and Knox, 212–214). But in the systematic philosophy we are always exclusively concerned with what it is “for us.” D. Berthold-Bond (1986, 212–213) has made a useful survey of these passages in which Hegel discusses “philosophical observation.”

Ordinary observation is a *recollective* activity which preserves different moments in a whole that is *thoughtfully* present (not the simple contemplation that it takes itself to be). Philosophical observation concentrates attention on the logical unity of a sequence of observed moments. Thus Hegel's inquiry is “transcendental” in the sense that it is a con-

tinuing reflection upon the logical structure of what is actually taken as “the *given* truth”—i.e. the interpretation that has become spontaneous. But it is not an inquiry into what is “possible”—i.e. what can meet that logical standard—because the reflective criticism causes the standard to evolve. Thus interpreters like C. Taylor (1975, 157–160) are both right and wrong. But they are more nearly right than wrong, because Hegel’s method is a development of Kant’s. If one takes the standard as fixed, one can only decide what is “possible.” Hegel considers what is actual, and so makes the standard move.

48. “What distinguishes us, then, is our retrospective recognition of the inductive origins of each shape of conscious life” (P. A. Simpson, forthcoming, 1993 thesis, 55). The “advance of *empirical* science” is not “logical” in this way—see P. Thagard (1982) for a clear account of the main differences. For Hegel’s own distinction between perpetual advance and logically circular closure see the *Philosophy of World-History* (Hoffmeister, 1955, 180–181; Nisbet, 149).

H. Röttges (1981, 113–114) connects the reversal of our observational standpoint with the “turning of the eye of the mind” in Plato’s Cave. This is a valid comparison. But it is not “our contribution” as observers that “inverts consciousness”—as M. Heidegger (1970, 126), followed by K. Dove (1971, 45 and 1974, 619), seems to suggest. We simply watch what happens (recollectively). Compare the remarks of A. Graeser (1988).

49. E. M. Hundert (1989) has accepted Hegel’s general conception of the evolution of our categorical concept of “knowing the truth”; and he has shown how it is exemplified in the contemporary theory of the mind and the brain. But although he employs the concept of *maturity* (conceptual or physical) both for the healthy mind and for brain-development, he has not grasped Hegel’s concept of the social maturity of the concept of Science itself. In part, this is because of the overwhelming influence of R. C. Solomon’s reading of the *Phenomenology* upon him; in part, it is because of the “bad infinite” character of the empirical inquiries with which he is concerned. The comprehension of any time before Descartes is not directly relevant to his problems. Nevertheless, I think it would be of advantage to him. It would certainly send him to Hegel’s *Logic* with deepened interest.

It is only conceptual self-criticism in experience that necessarily involves “determinate” negation. This is the solution of M. Rosen’s problem about “immanent criticism” (1982, chapter 2)—see S. G. Houlgate (1985). The natural assumption that *what truly is* is “what is in itself” is what generates the problem of the Absolute as a “thing in itself” that cannot be known. Once *knowing* itself is accepted as a necessary moment of “what truly is” then “the actual knowing of what truly is” becomes logically the only possible totality that “truly is.” The Absolute is then not “what is *in* itself” but what is “*in and for* itself”; and the “absolute knowing” of speculative philosophy supplies the essential moment of its “being for itself.” A supposed “thing in itself” which is “for itself” independently of our knowing cannot be what “absolutely is” for us. Kant’s problematic *ens realissimum* has the supposed perfection of self-knowledge. But that does not make its being-for-us one whit less problematic. Only the “in itself” that is completed by our “absolute knowing” can be “what is in and for itself *for us*.” For a valuable discussion of Hegel’s logical method see M. N. Forster (1993).

50. See, for instance, J. Loewenberg (1965, 370–371); and D. Berthold-Bond (1989, 5, and subsequently—see “Absolute Knowledge” in his Index). The complaint is also a commonplace in the Marxist camp—see for instance H. Lefebvre (1964, 41) and R. Dunayevskaya (1973, 6).

51. The formal structure of a “shape of consciousness” is well analysed by K. Westphal (1989, 92–93)—but *he* calls them “forms.” R. R. Williams (1992, 126) suggests that Hegel

took over the term *Gestalt* from Goethe. But that was in the context of the natural philosophy of the organism. The “shape” of consciousness is determined by what it is *a priori* certain about (both in its mind and in the world). Since even Absolute knowing is a “shape,” J. C. Flay’s dangerous characterization of the *Phenomenology* as *Hegel’s Quest for Certainty* (1984) has a formal justification. But it is misleading because on the one side (in its own Science) “absolute knowing” is our final reconciliation with the demonstrated inadequacy (or “uncertainty”) of all the previous “shapes”; and on the other side (as the opening for speculative *logic* proper) “absolute knowing” is the transcending of “shape” altogether. “Hegel’s quest for certainty” properly ends in the dissolution of the illusion that there can be such a thing as “absolute certainty.” Only the completely empty “forms” of mathematics and formal logic can give us that.

K. Westphal rightly says that all empirical certainty is “corrigible.” That is the dialectical transformation which Hegel’s critique produces. Also, I think Westphal is right that Hegel’s usage originates in Spinoza (1989, 253, n. 5). But I don’t see why he is puzzled by Spinoza’s *rational* formulation of the familiar dictum of the ordinary imaginative consciousness: “Seeing is believing.” Every “shape of consciousness” is a way of “seeing things” that takes itself (rightly) to be “natural” and “necessary”; and (wrongly) to be, on that account, “final” or “absolute.”

52. The interesting effort of R. G. McRae (1982, and 1985, 6, 41) to establish a parallel between the *Phenomenology* and the “System” is more plausible. The *Phenomenology* is a “presentation” of “the Whole” (compare chapter 1, note 88).

53. See O. Pöggeler (1973, 212–214, 261–262). This stated “coincidence” underlines the fact that the “phenomenology of *Spirit*” does not properly include the more primitive “experience of consciousness *as such*” in chapters I–III.

54. Thus we begin with “time” and “space” in that order; and we have mechanical, physical and organic categories in their systematic order in chapter III; but in chapter V we come back to “specific gravity” after a further treatment of organism in a more developed form.

55. Whatever may be argued or shown to be true about the book as a performance, I do not see how there can be serious dispute that paragraph 89 (together with par. 80) shows that the project was a unity in which every part was necessary according to Hegel’s *initial* conception of it. It did not *grow* in his mind, after he finished the *Einleitung*. (This contention is further supported with some sound arguments by S. Dellavalle [1992, 22–24].)

It can hardly be denied that the *execution* in chapter V is out of all proportion with chapters I–IV. But this is all that can be conceded to the followers of Haering—or even to the more moderate and sensible Pöggeler. I am more in sympathy with H.-F. Fulda (1966, 75–101)—but, of course, I am not concerned exclusively with the “introductory” function of the *Phenomenology*. It is *more* important for us to see what Hegel can have meant by calling the book the “first *part*” of Science. But the most convincing logical analysis of the *Phenomenology* that I have seen is Fulda’s (1969, 97–99).

56. The full title of chapter V, “The Certainty and Truth of Reason” makes the fact that *subjective* Reason is meant quite explicit, since “certainty” and “truth” are the poles of self-consciousness as singular. (J. Stewart [forthcoming, ch. 2, II B and ch. 7, Intro.] discusses the Table of Contents very insightfully. He makes some illuminating connections between the different uses of A, B, C and that of AA, BB, CC.)

57. This is the triad to which he directs our attention at the end of the Introduction (par. 89). We have an earlier draft for the last chapter of the book, headed “C. Die Wissenschaft” which has occasioned an interesting but inconclusive debate about the articulation of the

presentation into which it fits. I do not think that the question can be decided. See especially H.-F. Fulda (1965, 115–169); O. Pöggeler (1973, 231–298); J. H. Trede (1975).

58. We may note here that J. Beaufort (1983) has tried to show that all three of the syllogisms at the conclusion of the *Encyclopedia* relate to the *Phenomenology* at different levels: the first to chapters I–IV; the second to V, VI and VII; and the third to VIII. This is a problem which I have not studied. For an earlier view in which only the second syllogism is considered relevant see J. van der Meulen (1958). His view was supported by M. Theunissen (1970b, 312ff.) who assigns the first syllogism to the *Encyclopedia*, the second to the *Phenomenology*, and the third to the *Philosophy of Religion*. T. F. Geraets (1975) reads them all as applying to the *Encyclopedia*. For a discussion of the “middle term” in the *Encyclopedia* syllogisms and in the *Phenomenology* see C. Boey (1974).

Hegel applies the logical terms Concept, Judgment and (especially) Syllogism to all levels of real life, and to quite complex units of scientific discourse. In order to understand his (speculative) usage, as distinct from ordinary parlance, it will be helpful to keep the following points in mind: a *Concept* is the active conceiving of some whole—such as “Sense Certainty” or “Self-Consciousness”—which implicitly contains its own “antithesis.” When this antithesis develops explicitly, the Concept becomes a *Judgment*—as in the disjunction between Observation and Active Reason. The opposed sides of a Judgment require the mediating reconciliation through which the Judgment develops into a *Syllogism*. Thus classical *Sittlichkeit* becomes ethically based *Moralität* through the mediation of *Bildung* (articulated in the Judgment-structure of Faith and Insight).

59. I have been guided by the analysis offered in the *Selbstanzeige* in the planning and physical presentation of this commentary. My two volumes cover the penitential *pilgrimage* of Reason to the acceptance of the “infinite grief”; and the joyful *returning home* of the Spirit (not to Eden, but to the familiar world of house and tree and to a nation that still needs its “constitution”—in short the homecoming to everyday life as it has been and will be). Unlike R. C. Solomon (1983, 636) I do not find even the chalice on Hegel’s last page to be “edifying.” Hegel’s “communion of saints” would never be pictured on a stained glass window. We know something of how and why they suffered and sweated. So far as scholars can be said to do so at all, we have suffered and sweated to join them ourselves. But the “chalice” image is meant to evoke the happiness of homecoming after a long hard journey. (What should count as “edifying” is not easy to specify. Schleiermacher’s addresses to the enlightened—and well off—enemies of traditional piety, were perhaps only “edifying” for all parties at the time—but I have found that they both demand and repay hard study. On the other hand, the stained glass windows themselves were more than simply edifying for the medieval craftsmen who made them, and the illiterate peasants who first gazed at them. And finally even quotations from Nietzsche are only a modern mode of *enlightened* “edification” for readers who enjoy being cultural “hitchhikers” but do not want to work their passage.)

60. If it seems paradoxical to speak of “Reason” “positing *itself*” as freedom thus, I invite the reader to ponder what Hegel himself wrote in his *Wastebook* (46): “The barbarian . . . is frightened of understanding and stays with intuition. Reason without understanding is nothing, while understanding is still something even without Reason. One cannot make a gift of it” (Rosenkranz, 546; *I.J.P.*, III, 1979, 3, no. 5).

Chapter 4

The World of Everyday Life

I: The Certainty of the Senses; or the *This* and *My* Meaning

What we are to observe has been composed for us out of the rough and tumble of actual experience, through the necessary evolution of the modern scientific "spirit." We begin our observation of the concept of "experience" with the purely immediate shape of the concept as it is envisaged in the actual world of modern science. The immediacy of experience is the limit-concept of a flux in which everything is "given," only to be cancelled again at once. Cognitive consciousness begins as the intuition of pure change, pure becoming.

Out of this abyss, the creation of our cognitive world begins with the universal power of naming singular states of the world, and real Things (Sachen) in it. We distinguish these Things through their nameable "properties." The original flux is first domesticated into a spatio-temporal order of nameable phenomena which are the properties of different perceptible particular types of "thing" (Dingen). But then our inability to define the unifying concept that stands under the properties of the supposed "substance" drives us to "understand" our world as a universal order of nature.

The Understanding intuits the unity of the flux as a whole. This unity is a purely conceptual order of laws. The world of appearances in which we were, to begin with, helplessly carried about, is reduced to the subordinate status of "being for consciousness." It is the intelligible world of lawfully defined forces that is objectively there. But this world is generated by the naming self, which has now got control of the flux of experience in an understanding way; and that self (as we recognized even when it first began to name the real 'Things') is the universal self that is shared and jointly maintained by many singular selves. The conceptual world of natural law is the order of appearance within which the many selves are conscious of themselves as the necessarily unified cognition of that order. This communal self-comprehension is the Infinite of Understanding. The universal self is the living movement of this Infinite.

When we reach this result, the first movement of the great symphony of experience is over. The evolution of subjective Reason deserves to be called a "symphony" first because of the basic pattern of theme, development, and recapitulation; but also because concrete expressions like inversion are far more adequate terms for the expression of the movement, than the names of the abstract operations of understanding (such as "negation"); and most of all because the self-concept of "experience" is a form generated by motion in time. It is a form that must be "recollected" and retained in the memory in order to exist at all.

(a) *Jacobi and "Frau Bauer"*

1./90. The knowing that is our first standard must be immediate, the knowing of what simply *is*. We must be purely receptive, and not conceptualize it.

The one thing that Hegel's Introduction did not talk about is where we start; and the reason is obvious. We must start where we are, before we have any conscious theories. As the Introduction indicated, we must not talk about starting, we must simply begin with what is familiar, with what is so well known that it is taken for granted. We do not start, like infants, knowing nothing, but with the first knowledge that we expect our children to acquire. We start with the truth-standard that is the elementary criterion of human *sanity*. We are in the world that Adam bequeathed to us, the world of *things with names*. To know subsisting objects by their right names is the elementary mode of *Wissen*; and the ordinary opinion (*Meinung*) is that this is how our language gets its significance—by referring to objects whose "being" we can confirm by a simple use of the senses. We *apprehend* these sensible objects, though we do not yet (or not necessarily) have any comprehension of them.¹

Even this uncomprehending apprehension is different in 1805 than it was (for instance) in the time of Augustus. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that it is a dark, overcast, stormy night. Suddenly there is a bright flash, which frightens our four-year-old. "What was that?" "Only a flash of lightning" we say. The comforting quality of our certainty comes from all the experience that we have. This includes our implicit popular-scientific understanding of thunderstorms—if we still believed in Jupiter Tonans, our certainty would be just as absolute but much less comforting. The point is that our certainty, whether it comforts the child's alarm, or increases it, is equally absolute and categorical. We know "what this is" (or, more accurately for our example, what "that was"). (The reader who thinks that I have already moved on to the level of perception, must be patient for a little while. So far, I have at least avoided such "things" as houses and trees—which Hegel cheerfully mentions; and by the time that I refer to them, I hope the difference between Longfellow's "Smithy Chestnut" and "a chestnut tree" will have become obvious.)

- 2./91. Sensible certainty appears as the richest cognition because nothing is left out. Its richness is infinite in outward extension (temporal and spatial) and inward detail. But the truth that we get from this perfect concreteness is absolutely abstract. All that consciousness can say about the object thus certified is: It *is*; and all we can say is "This self knows this." The self is not a thoughtful memory, and the Thing not a manifold of distinguished characteristics. The Thing is because it is. The self is just a singular certainty of "this."

This paragraph both states the philosophical concept and anticipates the philosophical experience of our sensory knowledge. The "concept" is paradoxical, because it is of the essence of immediate consciousness not to have a concept. So the implicit assumption of ordinary opinion about experience is contrasted with

the result that emerges from the philosophical attempt to isolate just what is *immediately* certain. According to the view of healthy common sense, our immediate sense-experience is a direct contact with “what is” just as it is; we experience *das Seiende* immediately. Its “absoluteness” is revealed to us as an inexhaustible, truly incomprehensible, infinity; it is infinite in its greatness, and equally infinite in its smallness.²

The “healthy common sense” of Hegel’s German contemporaries who agreed with Thomas Reid was a “naïve realism” that had both Zeno and Leibniz behind it. But as a pre-philosophical mode of consciousness Hegel will eventually offer us the religion of the *Zend Avesta* as the model of it. This reminds us forcibly that it is quite possible to have the consciousness of the “bad infinity” of the sensible world as an object of cognition without having any philosophical theories about it. The world of our immediate experience is such that the nets and webs of our language can never capture even one moment of it in all its fullness. Our finite knowledge remains a mere abstraction from it. However far we press our inquiry, and however much we succeed in saying about the most minute element of this world, there is always the same infinity that remains unexplored (or unsaid).

But to say *that* is to say at once that in the philosophical sense our cognition of this infinitely rich object is the poorest cognition possible. All that we can say about every element is just that “It is.” Beyond that we are reduced to edifying negations: “It is infinitely rich,” “It is inexhaustible”—in one word, “It is transcendent.” It is important to formulate Sense-Certainty as a *religious* standpoint first, because this clarifies its “shape” for us as a moment of “absolute knowing.” Sense-Certainty is precisely the *pre*-philosophical attitude that is *anti*-philosophical, because it *apprehends* immediately that “what is” (as immediately given to sense awareness) is incomprehensible. The absolute “Being” cannot be conceptualized except as something about which nothing can be said.

This is not, for instance, the “It is” of Parmenides—for on the one hand that does not give itself to sense awareness at all, and on the other hand, Parmenides does manage to tell us what his proposition “It is” means.³ Sense-Certainty cannot do that; for as soon as we say more than “It is,” the *Begriff* will get a grip on us. Then we must either admit our mistakes, and retreat to the edifying negations and the reverent contemplation of our sense-certain divinity; or else we must let the dialectic of language take us at least as far as the noumenal “It is” of the Parmenidean Understanding.⁴ I have given Jacobi’s name to this first moment because he assimilated the “religious sense” to the familiar immediacy of Sense-Certainty.

Hegel is not explicitly concerned with Sense-Certainty as an “absolute standpoint” here, because in that religious shape it is not just *pre*-philosophical but antiphilosophical. We cannot drag it out of its religious fastness and make it go with us. But then we cannot force ordinary common sense to go with us either. Even as finite awareness Sense-Certainty can, if it is consistently and rigorously *sensible*, maintain its calm acceptance of the world of sense experience as we apprehend it. This paragraph is mainly concerned with the definition of how that is possible.

Sense-Certainty, being absolutely immediate, can only be defined by contrast-

ing it with the next stage, where mediation has begun. The sense-certain consciousness exists in the immediate presence of “what is” (der *Sache*). What it knows, generally and particularly, is that “*this* is so.” The *Sachen* in its world are not the “things” of perception, which have “properties” in a properly defined sense. Sense-Certainty does not have any *theories* about what the Thing *is* (whether the *Sache* referred to is the whole objective world, or some one of its identifiable parts); and the self that has this certainty is certain of itself as a singular knowing (*Wissen*). There is nothing discursive in this *Wissen*; it is not *Erkennen*, which can explain itself, make hypotheses, draw conclusions, and make appropriate adjustments. Sense-Certainty just knows “how it is,” or “how things are.”

This *Wissen* knows that it is sometimes *mistaken*. The way things go often surprises it. But its criterion of truth is *immediate apprehension*. It can, for example, apprehend its own uncertainty. Doubt and bewilderment are not unfamiliar to it. But it does not allow itself to be troubled by these experiences in any conceptual way. As a stable *Gestalt* it knows immediately both what it knows, and what it does not know; and it accepts its ignorance as placidly and securely as it accepts its knowledge.

Where are we to find such a consciousness? As a philosophical stance we can find it easily in the schools of common sense that have, in direct experience, an unshakeable criterion of certainty. “This is a hand,” says G.E. Moore. Descartes points to the possibility of hallucination even about that; and the sceptics *he* was dealing with had already raised the question of how we know that we are not dreaming. But a sense-certain philosopher will not allow the immediate awareness that she is awake, and is now actively arguing with the sceptics, to be overturned by any such artificial doubts as these.⁵

A “*mitigated sceptic*,” like Hume’s Philo, is one who preserves this *natural* knowledge inviolate, while pursuing philosophical inquiries *critically*. Such a one has *only* the standard of sense-certainty as her standard of what is absolutely true. Thus she may maintain that we do not *rationally* know that the law of gravity holds absolutely; but the natural security of “good sense” will always ensure that she leaves the room by the door and not the window.⁶

Upon this view, the only *absolute* truth is the truth of actual experience in the sensible world. Sceptical empiricism (Hume’s “mitigated scepticism”) is the great philosophical bulwark of this “natural,” quite unphilosophical, certainty. Critical philosophy has generally been oriented by it; the only critical philosophy that can be turned against it is one that has some nonsensical certainty which appears equally imperative (for instance, Kant’s certainty of the moral law). For this reason it can be said that hardly any of the critics who have discussed Hegel’s theory of “Consciousness” in English (and there has been more Anglophone discussion of his first two chapters than of any other part of the book) have been in a position to embark upon Hegel’s quest for absolute knowledge at all. They already have the only “absolute knowledge” that they can conceive of.

For these followers of Hume, “science” (and philosophy) are about something else altogether. Newton’s mechanics and the law of gravitation may or may not be

“absolutely” true; but the certainty that if I step out of an upstairs window I shall fall has an *existential* absoluteness of a different kind. To suppose that philosophical criticism can *comprehend* this experiential *Wissen*, and turn it into some kind of “truth” which is not finite (in the way that the embodied certainty intuitively knows itself to be finite) will seem plainly absurd to the “critical” thinkers for whom the horizon of “Common Sense” is really “absolute.” Those who do not dismiss the project of comprehension categorically as a misunderstanding of the proper relation between thought and “experience,” will have to concede that it posits a different relationship between philosophy and life than they are accustomed to take for granted in the lecture room. It is not an academic, but an existential examination of life that Hegel proposes. His quest for “absolute knowing” is the Socratic examination that cares for our souls. So it naturally starts with the knowledge “from experience” that we all live by. We shall sometimes find ourselves in the lecture room (for instance in the “Perception” chapter). But we must never lose hold of the concrete certainty of our sense experience. For it is just *that* certainty that is to be raised to its “truth.”

Of course, the critical empiricist is not simply at the level of “sense-certainty.” She has a massive amount of theoretical knowledge of the kind called “Understanding”; and she does not need to be sceptical about it. The “mitigated sceptic” is the philosopher who has consciously *separated* the sensible truth of experience (Russell’s “knowledge by acquaintance”), from the debateable truth of all theories. So she can properly be said to have reflectively established “sense-certainty” as the criterion of “absolute knowledge.” But no philosopher is really a “singular self who knows this singular thing.” I believe that we can move the most commonsensical mind that is disposed to be philosophical at all, to go with us on our journey. Such a one will only smile at Descartes’ hypothesis of the “*génie malin*”; but she will readily admit that hallucination, or the sensible feeling that a hand is still there when it has been amputated, does show that the truth-criterion for even the most personal experience is a social consensus of observation, not a singular certainty that “it is so.”

The real paradigm of sense certainty is the consciousness of Hegel’s “*Bauersfrau*” who is comfortably at home in her world of singular things, each with its proper name:

The peasant-wife lives within the circle of her Lisa, who is her best cow; then the black one, the spotted one, and so on; also of Martin, her lad, and Ursula, her lass, etc. To the philosopher, infinity, knowledge, movement, empirical laws, etc. are things just as familiar. And as her dead brother and uncle [are present] to the peasant-wife, so Plato, Spinoza, etc. [are present] to the philosopher. The one has as much actuality as the other, but the latter are immortal.⁷

The reason why Hegel compares the *Wissen* of the peasant woman with that of the philosopher here is obvious. It is not that the sense of being at home with “familiar” things has to be overcome (though that is true as well, and the long journey of “estrangement” and “despair” lies between the two of them). But they are

both at home in a world of immediate *Wissen*; and the philosopher's home is not *this* cottage and its farmyard, but the whole world of human spiritual existence. The Hegelian philosopher is like the peasant woman in that everything she does is part of actual living, part of the integral awareness of her own life. That is the fruit of the sublated presence of the standard of Sense-Certainty in *absolute Wissen*. We do not ever leave Sense-Certainty behind—though, of course, we do leave some philosophical views that are founded upon it behind (at least for the time being).⁸ The Consciousness that we are observing *thinks* that it can do that. But we know better.

- 3./92. But there is a lot of by-play upon the *pure being* that is the stated “truth” of this certainty. An actual case of sense-certainty is an example (*Beispiel*, by-play) of pure immediacy, and there are always *two* “thises,” the self and the object. Neither is immediately sensed, each is mediated by contrast (as being, or as certain: “I am certain that this is”).

Taken absolutely (as Jacobi took it) the certainty of sense-experience is the certainty of being engulfed in an incomprehensible infinite. As the opaque experience from which all wouldbe “scientific” discourse is an abstraction, the certainty that “It is,” becomes “the night in which all cows are black.” But the certainty of the senses is not, of itself, philosophical at all. Hence there is more to be observed in it than “the naïveté of the void with respect to cognition” (par. 16). “In the *pure being* . . . which constitutes the essence of this certainty and which it expresses as its truth, there is still much else which, if we watch, has its part to play on the side.”

To state the “absolute” philosophical truth of sense certainty immediately (as Jacobi does) is to lose what is philosophically of the greatest value in the experience of it and of its world. Sense-Certainty is not *pure* immediacy (which is actually impossible), but a by-play on sensory immediacy, an *example* of it. We do not normally have the awful certainty of “*the Object*” as “*this*”—though we *can* have it, for example in the lightning flash, which is why I chose that as my example in commenting on paragraph 90. For the most part we live comfortably in our non-philosophical *finite* certainty about what “*this*” is. It is when God is not in the Garden that Adam is truly the lord of all that he surveys. (I am using the myth deliberately as a non-philosophical mode of talking about what is true “absolutely.” Hegel’s “peasant-wife” is Eve living in the garden that Adam cultivates.) The endless multiplicity of the differences that we can take over and make “ours” by naming them is the “bad infinity” of consciousness. Here the certainty of the senses is not an absolute truth, but an indefinitely repeatable process.⁹

The process of the by-play has the same *structure* as the absolute truth of Sense-Certainty. It is the basic structure of consciousness as such: that I, who am certain of myself as *this* knower, am also certain of the object as *this Sache*. And in this very structure we can find the key both to Locke’s bewilderment about “substance,” and to Hume’s bewilderment about the self. For when we reflect on this distinction, the primitive distinction upon which all the variety of consciousness depends, we can recognize that our immediate certainty of both terms is also *mediated*. Our certainty of self depends on the *otherness* of the object, and the otherness of the object

depends on the identity of the self. This is already something more in the way of philosophical insight than we could achieve in the absolute “naïveté of the void with respect to cognition.”

- 4./93. We must take this distinction and mediation up in the way that it occurs for consciousness. The object simply is even before I am aware of it; and *my* certainty depends upon it.

Hegel’s reason for beginning with Jacobi’s immediate certainty is apparent in this paragraph. Our project is *not* to impose any interpretation but to let the observed consciousness interpret itself, while we simply make the connections that it does not notice, and point out the structures that it generates without being aware of them. So we have to find a way of showing which term of the basic distinction is primitively immediate for consciousness. Jacobi’s use of Hume’s “mitigated scepticism” as a foundation for religious faith shows how the distinction of self and object is primitively present in the naïve consciousness that we are observing. His faith-theory—or for that matter its more familiar empiricist source-models in Locke and Hume—shows that “being” is first intuited in the *object*—the Thing (*Sache*) is the “first in-itself.”

The cognitive self experiences itself first in a dependent way. In our theoretical activity we are first conscious of ourselves as *unessential*.¹⁰ The being of the known object is in no way affected by whether we know it or not. Our knowing of it, on the other hand, is strictly dependent on its being as it is. That is why our phenomenological progress begins with the philosophical proposition “It is.”¹¹

- 5./94. The question then is: whether this concept of the certified object, as *essence*, corresponds to the way it is present in sense-certainty?

The crucial word in this paragraph is *Wesen*. Hegel uses it twice, once colloquially, for the peasant-wife, and once technically for the philosopher. “Is the object in sense-certainty the sort of thing [*solches Wesen*] it is given out to be by sense-certainty?” And, “Does its concept, to be essence [*Wesen zu sein*], correspond to the way it is there present in sense-certainty?” The answer, in terms of *absolute* knowing, is going to be “no” to both questions. Frau Bauer will not be much disturbed; but the philosopher ought to be.¹²

- 6./95. Let us ask Sense-Certainty: What *is* the This? There is *this now* and *this here*; so, for example, *Now is Night*. But this truth, recorded, is stale at midday.

Clearly Hegel intends us to see that we are copying Socrates, when we ask Sense-Certainty: “What is the This?”¹³ Sense-Certainty has *two* modes of immediate apprehension: It knows “what is *now*” and “what is *here*.” So we let it take the question first as “What is *now*?” The “dialectic” of the question is very simple. As Hegel says, it is “as understandable as the *this* itself is.” His remark is ironic, because what the dialectic reveals is contradiction. On the one hand, the truth is so

obvious, that when someone wants us to take “the dialectic” of it seriously we regard him as a sophist who is misusing language, and must be dealt with in Aristotle’s way as a purveyor of fallacies; on the other hand the “this” of sense-immediacy is not “understandable” at all, and the elementary example illustrates that. But in so doing, it directs us to the way in which “what is” is understandably present.

In Sense-Certainty, “what is” is universally manifest as the *forms* of intuition, time and space.¹⁴ In accordance with his observational project, Hegel must simply accept these two forms of sensible intuition as immediately given. But why does he take time first? Kant taught a whole generation of thinkers to regard time as the form of *inward* intuition, i.e. as the mode of subjectivity. Hegel insists, on the contrary, that for the natural consciousness time is objective. (This is the sense-certainty of Locke and his “incomparable Mr. Newton.”) Time is the *Dasein* of the Concept, the universal way in which the world as a whole *is there*; and it is precisely when all the different sense-certainties of ordinary experience are equally buried in the universal darkness of night-time that we can come closest to “pure being” as an intuition of sense.¹⁵ But then the inexorable cycle of night and day teaches us the meaning of objectivity as *necessity*.

Time is an infinite, negatively universal *motion*; it carries everything away. That is why “time” must be taken first. What we are sensibly certain of is always in this “now”; and *this* “now” is always on the move—it is always a new and different now. Our “now” abides with us by not abiding with itself. Thus the sense-certainty of time as “what is” is that “changing, it rests” (as Heraclitus said). Already we are anticipating the argument of paragraph 96; and when we point out that in spatial experience we enjoy *freedom*, since our (*particular* and finitely positive) spatial environment abides or changes according to *our* chosen motion, we are anticipating paragraph 98. But this point, too, is necessary to the comprehension of why the “now” is taken first.

There is another small but significant point about the choice of the example. In the Hellenistic world where natural consciousness had only just lost its finite “natural” embodiment (as the City), and was for the first time consciously both cosmopolitan and singular, Epictetus (who, no doubt, philosophized largely out of doors) liked to use “Now is Day” as his paradigm of an unassailable certainty.¹⁶ By beginning with the example of “Now is Night” and letting the motion of the heavens transform it into “this midday,” Hegel is relating his own contribution to our emergence from the long night of “unhappy consciousness” into “the spiritual daylight of the present” (par. 177) both to the classical optimism of the Stoics and to the sceptical pessimism of his own post-Kantian world. The “daylight of the present” is not yet universal. The “sunburst” of the *Phenomenology* is meant to make it so.

Finally, we should notice that by beginning with this example, Hegel shows how totally uninterested he is here in the long tradition of “Scepticism with regard to the senses.” One can only doubt whether it is “night” or “day” by wondering whether one is *awake*, i.e. whether one is properly “conscious” at all. Sceptical doubts *can* be raised about the house or the tree that are said to be “here.” But it is clear from this initial example that we are not meant to raise them. The world of

sense-certainty is the world in which we are at home. We are not in the study, but eating our dinner and playing backgammon. The “house” is where we live and the “tree” is in our garden. We are meant to agree with Thomas Reid, and not play games with the artificial doubts of Descartes or of Hume.¹⁷

- 7./96. So the *Now* is a non-being. But the *Now* *does* preserve itself, negatively, for all examples. It preserves itself, mediately, as a not-This, a *universal*. The universal is what truly *is* in sense-certainty.

Thus “what is” is implicit in sense-experience precisely as “what is not.” What abides uniquely as “this time” is a perpetual transience, a non-being. “Now” is a *conceptual* reality. We are made aware of its conceptual status, precisely because its singular content is continually changing. The *permanence* of time is the passing away of everything temporal as its own time passes; and primitively for sense-certainty everywhere, the permanence of time is the cycling transience through which evening and morning make up each successive day of life. The cycle of sensible Night and Day is the simplest paradigm of the Hegelian “true infinite.” The *real universal* in this sense of a necessary cycle of complementary opposites is the Being that is revealed in and for sense-certainty. Of this cycle we can truly say “It is.” This then is “the true” of sense-experience.

Hegel’s peasant-wife, living in her world of singular beings with their proper names, knows that she is getting older all the time, just as they are. But this means that her whole world exists within a concept of whose objective reality she is just as certain, as she is certain that she is now milking Lisa. “Now” is for her a familiar *time of the year*. The “year” is not a sensible object. But “now” can easily be compared with “this time last year”; and even Lisa, the best cow, has a dry season. The peasant-wife’s whole world moves steadily—sometimes well, and sometimes badly—in the objective frame of this real Universal. We shall see, as we go on, how the primitive recognition of the equilibrium of light and darkness (which Hegel invokes in his first example) gradually evolves into the Understanding’s concept of the “order of Nature” as a stable system of lawlike phenomena.

- 8./97. It is as a universal that we express the sensible. We say “This,” which indicates *universally* something that simply is, i.e., *Being in general*. We do not represent this Being-in-general to ourselves, but we *say* it—i.e. we say nothing that we *mean* in this sense-certainty. But language is the more truthful. It utters the universal, the true [essence] of sense-certainty. The sensible being that we mean cannot be said.

The expression of this paragraph is clumsy but the thought is clear. Having dealt with the way that “what is” appears in the sense-experience of time—as the *real negative* that engulfs all immediate contents equally—Hegel turns next to the way in which we *refer* to this transient content in our knowledge of it. His point is that our most primitive way of indicating something *uniquely* is essentially applicable to everything indifferently. The word “this” (or the contrasting word “that”) applies indifferently to whatever has “being”; and we can only specify some deter-

minate “this” (or “that”) because its being is precisely its “thisness.” Every identifiable singular is identifiable in virtue of its “thisness.” But what the “thisness” of any singular thing is, is precisely what cannot be said. Only the universal concept of “being in general” can be expressed. From the form of intuition as an “objective” universal, a way of being that is indifferently *both* day and night, and *neither* day nor night, we have moved to the linguistic (i.e., subjective) concept that is *both* this and that, and *neither* this nor that.

I am using the language of Duns Scotus because I think it helps. It does not seem likely that Hegel knew anything much about the Scotist theory of individuation, though he certainly knew (and was influenced by) the neo-Platonic thought that Duns Scotus was reformulating. At this point he is not arguing a Scotist position. His mode of expression is controlled by the wish to show what is valid in Aristotle’s claim that singular things are (*qua* singular) ineffable.¹⁸ In his *formal* idealism this comes out as the identity of the abstract opposites “pure singularity” and “pure universality.”

We have to learn to talk this way in order to *understand* what Hegel is saying; but we can then express what he means in any way we prefer. This is because (unlike “now” and “here”) the words “this” and “that” do not necessarily refer to *concrete* moments of experience. Hegel’s argument about “now,” “here” and “I” is essential to his doctrine of how we can say what is true about what truly is. His argument about “this” is not so one-sidedly necessary. For the referring function is absolutely essential to language. Hence the “contradiction” between the universal *function* and the particular *employment* of a referring word is specious or sophistical. To point out that “the singular cannot be said” is only to say that the theory of what “concepts” *mean* should not be confused with (and cannot be successfully founded upon) the technique by which “names” are made to refer to things. We need not agree to use any peculiar locutions about “the *universal* This” as long as we admit that extralinguistic *reference* is distinct from the theory of linguistic meaning and truth.¹⁹

We also need to recognize, of course, that it is only the *meaning* things have that gives the certainty of their “being” any importance. Lisa is our peasant wife’s *best* cow, Ursula is *her* lass, Martin *her* lad, and so on. So the theory of meaning is vitally *connected* with the activity of reference. That is implicit both in the fact that Hegel’s argument begins here, and in his continuing method of comparing “concepts.” It is an implicit assumption of Hegel’s project that the ordinary *Meinung* retains its autonomy and its foundational status. But the conceptual *meaning* of language is a far richer (and hence “truer”) thing than this *Meinung* of simple existential reference.

- 9./98. The same is the case with the Here: the tree that is “here” disappears when I turn round; but I am still here. So the “here” is a *mediated* simplicity (or *universality*).

“Now” designates where consciousness is, as determined by the movement of “what is.” “Here” designates the choice that consciousness has made or can make to determine its own motion in relation to that whole. It designates a particular

finite range (just as “now” does also, in any ordinary use such as “Now is the Night”); and we should note that the finitude of our knowledge of “here” is *controlled* by the inexorable cycle of “now”—for in the night we cannot say “Here is a tree” with the certainty of sense-knowledge. But all that Hegel is interested in is the fact that just as the world process perpetually changes the reference of “now,” so we can, for our part, change the reference of “here.”²⁰

It is not difficult to restate what Hegel means in whatever way your own preferred philosophy of language dictates that it should be said. Thus he does not speak of “now,” but (like Aristotle) of “the Now.” “The Now” is a real moment of experienced time; “the Here” is a real place. Both of them are where the consciousness of “the I” is. In order to use language at all “the I” has to know that “the Now” passes into a real community of “Thens,” and that “the Here” is part of a real community of “places.” Similarly I have to realize that I can only be “*this* I” because I belong to a real community of consciousnesses. It is for this community of “I-sayers” that *truth* exists. However absolutely my personal certainty of what I sensibly “know” may seem to outrank anything that others can *say* to me, it is language that is “truer.”²¹

- 10./99. Since the *universal* is the truth of its object, pure Being abides as the essence of sense-certainty. But not as immediate, rather as an abstraction achieved by negation. It is not what we *mean*; but *meaning* the sensed *Sache* is all that is left apart from this empty Now and Here.

What we absolutely *know* about “What is” in our sense-certainty therefore is just that “It is”; and we have this certainty because of the abiding universal modes in which our transient sense-knowledge comes to us. But what we have *also* recognized now (and, of course, we always “know” it too) is that this universal is abidingly mediated by negation. What is, is by not-being. It is not what is “now” and “here”; it is “the Now and the Here.” The truth of sense-certainty is that “changing, it rests.” The abstract universal form (which simply *rests*) is empty; and the content of which we want to say “it is” falsifies what we want to say. What we *mean* we cannot *say*, and only our meaning (our *intending* of the object) remains in being when the object is no longer there. Thus “The rose is red” does not cease to be true in the winter, when what is sensibly true is “There is no rose”; but in this instance “the rose is red” is a truth of perception—a truth about the *rosebush*. “*That* rose *was* red” cannot be confirmed by the test of sense-certainty at all, but it belongs to the world of sensible reference.

(b) Protagoras as Bishop of Cloyne

- 11./100. Thus the realization of “knowing” and “object” has reversed itself. The sensible object is now the unessential. the universal that has taken its place is not an object of sense, but is present in knowing. The truth of sense has been driven from the object into *my* object, the one I *mean*. What does experience teach us about this [subjective] reality?

At this point Hegel draws attention to the fact that our first standard (the *Sache* in itself) has turned over into the being of that standard for us. This is the beginning of the conceptual movement that is supposed to go on steadily in an unbroken rolling motion until we reach Absolute Knowing. What we are faced with is what I shall call the “first inversion.” This is a simple alternation like the relation of negation in formal logic. In the beginning it was the immediate object known that was the essence. Now, we have recognized that the essence is the knowing consciousness in which the truth is “preserved.” But we shall find that this very first transition in the science of experience is unique in that it is not a proper advance.²² The singular self is no more capable of being the criterion of “what is” than the sensible *Sache* was.²³

The *abiding* truth of sense-certainty depends upon our memory and intention. This was already implicit in the first example (and it provides yet another reason why the Now was taken first). That “the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:5)—and will be every other day likewise—is a truth of sense-certainty. But its certainty depends on my knowing capacity; it is not certified immediately by the senses. It is, after all, the “knowing” that is *essential* to the certainty. The “being” of which we are certain is transient. But my certainty of what I sense is the criterion of what is true. The *immediacy* of sense-certainty has therefore become Protagorean.²⁴ There is no possibility of objectively confirming what I *know*. But I know it because I know it. What is my “logos”—that is to say it is “what is *for me*.”

- 12./101. Truth now is what immediately appears *to me*. This singularity of self now causes the same dialectic. *My* truth is contradicted by another’s. *Nothing* is simply “true” at this level.

The difficulty with this subjective retreat of sense certainty is that the *objectivity* of “truth” vanishes. Unless what is true for me is true for others also, the concept of “what truly is” is violated (or the concept of “*actual* knowing”). I can say what I like, but I cannot make “my” truth *effective*. *Nothing* truly is, when we are all insisting on “What is for us” (or when Big Brother insists for all of us).

The simple-minded way in which my certainty is set against someone else’s (as if there were a necessary contradiction implicit in our disagreement) shows that Hegel is harking right back to Protagoras. The “subjective idealism” of Berkeley should not be treated in this way, precisely because it is a form of speculative idealism. Berkeley wanted to shift all certainty into a self that is already “Spirit”—the universal self in which we all live, move, and have our being. But the “subjective idealism” attacked by Kant (and many imitators) was the Bishop of Cloyne’s *esse est percipi* interpreted in a Protagorean way. Hegel is concerned here only to show that as a language user, the singular self of Sense-Certainty is a self of the good Bishop’s speculative sort. The I that uses language to refer to itself and its “logos” must know that it speaks to and for a We. As “sensibly-certain” I am *not* “the measure of all things.” If I *were* I should not need to talk at all.²⁵

- 13./102. What does not disappear in this flux of singular truths is the universal *self* and the common sensing for which all these truths are by-play (examples). When I say “I,” I mean my “self,” but I cannot *say* it. What I say is the universal of all “selves,” here, now, and single. All who use the word are like me in these universal respects. So [Krug’s] demand [“Deduce my pen”] *cannot* be met, because it cannot be *truly* uttered.

When we are all saying contradictory things about “what is” on the basis of our different subjective certainties, we still understand one another. This is precisely because we are all “I” together, and each of us *knows* that all are equally entitled to say “I am certain of *this*.” (By violating this practical knowledge of all language users, Big Brother violates logic.) Thus we all escape from solipsism, and give our subjective “truths” their rightful place in the world of sensible certainty. For what is sensibly certain is, in one aspect, necessarily private. No one else can have my sight and hearing, my toothache, my cancer, or my conscience. Others can see the house and the tree; but they cannot see it in the way that I see it (even if their brains are somehow connected to “my” retina). The intended referents of “my” meaning are not merely objectively extra-linguistic but subjectively private.

Thus when Krug challenged the Identity philosophers to “deduce his pen” he was asking for an impossibility in two senses. Neither the physical nonlinguistic object, nor the privacy of its connection with Krug, can be touched by any logical *necessity*. But both how the pen came to be, and how it came to be Krug’s, can be the subject of empirical inquiry; and in this inquiry the conceptual structures that define our concept of *truth* will have to be employed. These are what philosophy must justify logically. We should notice that Hegel is very indefinite (and seemingly indifferent) about the terminology that should be used to describe what systematic philosophical justification is. This is a “phenomenological” indifference. Hegel is not indifferent about the terminology of “logic.” But how the subphilosophical consciousness is to talk cannot be predetermined (and we are only observers of it).

Krug mentioned his own pen as the climax of a list of other possible candidates for a philosophical “deduction.” Among them were the historic figures Moses, Alexander, Cyrus, and Jesus.²⁶ Thus Hegel’s categorical denial that the “thisness” of a human self can be *said*, with the consequence that no singular consciousness can be “deduced, constructed or found *a priori*,” has the important implication that no matter of singular historical fact is essential to his science *as a historical fact*. Someone who holds to an opinion that is strictly idiosyncratic about what happened in the past can still understand Hegel’s comprehensive science as long as she is familiar with the sensible world that she actually lives in, and with the interpretations of that world that are generally shared. We must certainly know the *story* of Jesus, for example; but we are not obliged to believe that it is historically well founded. We shall see (in chapter VII) that Hegel himself refers to the story, but not to Jesus specifically; and his general policy of avoiding specific historical references is surely not unconnected with the thesis that “Science” is concerned with what can be *truly said* (i.e. with what can be shown to be a conceptual truth) rather than with

what must be validated to the best of our limited ability by the ultimately ineffable standard of sense-certainty (which disappears into a purely subjective conviction).

(c) *Frau Bauer's Actual World*

- 14./103. Thus object and self are *both* universal media in which singular examples do not abide. Only the whole connection of the moments holds firm to its essence as immediacy, and excludes all opposition.

Neither the object of sense-certainty nor the subject can be fixed in its isolation as the absolute criterion of what is certain. Can we discover what certainty *is* by fixing both together? We should notice that what we are looking for is something that can be *fixed* by the Understanding. Our final attempt at a fixed criterion of sensible certainty is the view that the standard of real truth is “my sense-consciousness here and now.” It is objective and subjective both at once. We have now gone beyond Protagoras and reached the position of Cratylus (and of Jacobi’s empirical mysticism). Cratylus (so Aristotle says) did not speak but simply moved his finger—i.e. he pointed.²⁷ Truth is now located in the *act* of extralinguistic reference. This is the pure structure of consciousness, which will remain with us all through the first three chapters. But can it make itself complete in itself and sufficient unto itself? Or must scientific consciousness pass beyond it?

- 15./104. The whole connection of my-knowing-this-here-now is essential. I am pure intuiting. I hold fast and refuse to look beyond in any way: the *now* is Day.

If sense-certainty were “absolute knowing” then a solipsist absorption in the moment of awareness would be the truly philosophic attitude. Presumably this is what Cratylus’ reported gesture with his finger meant. The Platonic inspiration of Hegel’s view of sense-experience is clear both from the way his account of it reaches its climax here, and from the way that he goes on to attack it. This is strictly a daylight, or *this-worldly*, attitude. One cannot be properly absorbed in sensory consciousness in the night. So the choice of the first example was logically determined. But just as Epictetus surely used the present example with a conscious symbolic reference to the “light of Reason,” so Hegel surely means us to be mindful of “the daylight of the present” (par. 177; cf. par. 11). He will soon make a reference forward, which confirms that this final phase of his discussion of sense-certainty has symbolic significances. But that reference is in terms of the behaviour of the other animals. The implication there is that we must not be absorbed in the here-and-now as a *sensory* presence. That sort of absorption is typical of the Enlightenment with its ideals of utility and general happiness. The impossibility of a solipsist consciousness signifies already the inadequacy of those ideals. The enlightened consciousness says “Now is Day”; but it is in the deepest moral and spiritual darkness.²⁸ This is the extreme of self-containment which Hegel designates as *evil* (see for instance par. 776).

- 16./105. How can we observe this private certainty? We have to get to this same point where it *is*, so *we* must identify it, let it be pointed at. How is “what gets pointed at” constituted?

Ordinary sense-certainty is not caught up in any philosophical errors or sins. Our sensibly-certain consciousness is still in a state of primitive innocence. It does not have the self-awareness that would make it “evil.” This *theoretical* self-absorption is still innocent, and our task as observers is not to disturb this innocence, but to see how it breaks down by itself. We must therefore go up to it, listen to what it asserts, and “let ourselves be pointed at” the objective reality that it asserts. Linguistic communication is obviously necessary for this; and our ordinary language is quite adequate to enable us to discover what the observed consciousness is conscious of, even though we cannot literally *be* in the same place.²⁹ We all identify things by pointing at them. So we ourselves can follow the lead of the pointing consciousness and “be pointed at” what is sensibly certain for us. Since we are only interested in the logical structure of the experience we simply close our own minds and concentrate on the present moment, and the present place of the consciousness that we are observing.

Let us imagine ourselves visiting Hegel’s Frau Bauer. She will not involve herself in any identification of “the Now.” But if she takes us to her cowyard she will certainly say “That is Lisa, my best cow”; and we, who do not yet know all the cows as she does, may ask “You mean that one?”; and she points and says “Yes.” This is Sense-Certainty in its perfect completion. The *Gestalt* is now closed. We know nothing of Lisa and her virtues as compared with the other cows. But the whole world of Frau Bauer is founded upon this criterion of certainty. She has a mass of experiential knowledge of these “beings,” which she can articulate only partially, and which she can communicate to us only very abstractly (since we are not peasants with the same kind of experience). But her whole world, and her memories of the long years that she has lived in it, stand firmly upon this foundation. We want now to pass on out of this world, because the knowledge that we have of it by immediate acquaintance is so impoverished; but Frau Bauer prefers the deepening of her sense-certainty by practical sense-experience to the kind of book-learning that we shall now begin to acquire.

In rendering natural consciousness transparent (as Werner Marx puts it)³⁰ one of the things that our science must necessarily do is to *justify* the natural transparency (the *certainty*) that it has for itself at every stage. So it is worth while to anticipate here Hegel’s philosophical comprehension of Frau Bauer’s sense of being at home in the world. In the common sense consciousness that closes upon itself and refuses to attend to the reports of others (or to its own experience at other times and places) we have arrived at the *shaped* category of *Dasein*. What *is there* for this consciousness, can *be there* for us (or for anyone who wants to observe it). We can point to it. But when we point, we shall find that what is pointed at in time is a pure disappearing. It is the non-being that is, or the being of the negative. We *can* point to a moment of time, but we cannot point to it when it *is*. “What is now” is not *Dasein* but *Becoming*. We can only indicate temporal *Dasein* when it is no longer

there. In space we can point to “what is” reliably, but only as what is “over there” where we are not. This is the doubled shape of the category of Becoming.

Thus for Sense-Certainty at least we can see the parallel that Hegel relied upon between *Phenomenology* and *Logic*. The sensibly certain *object* is the Pure Being of “the Now” and “the Here.” These turn directly into the Nothing of the universal forms of intuition: Time and Space. But this Nothing of the subject turns directly back into the Being of the “I” as the medium of universal intuition and communication. This I within which we are ourselves able to communicate with the observed singular consciousness is the concrete reality of Becoming. We cannot successfully point at this universal self in the nonlinguistic world. Frau Bauer lives within it too—that is why Hegel mentions her dead brother and uncle. But, on the basis of what we *can* point to in the world of here and now, we do discover how to constitute the *Ding* within the linguistic context of ostensive communication. Thus we shall be able to pass from “pointing” to the stage of Perception, which is the “present” shape of the category of *Dasein*.

- 17./107. The present act of pointing points at a *Now* that is no longer *Now* [cf. 96]. It is what has been (and is *essentially*). This is its truth: that it *was*. But what is *been and gone* is in fact no *essence*. We were concerned with its *being*.

We have already noted that Frau Bauer will not join us in trying to point out “the Now.” She points to real beings (*Sachen*). But the way out of her closed world is through the comprehending of this pointing act that closes it. Our pointing at the cow Lisa is an act that occurs at a certain moment in time; and the word “now” can be used to point directly at this present moment of time. That is what Frau Bauer thinks anyway; and when she tells Ursel and Martin to drive the cows to pasture *now*, they know well enough what she means. But *we* can see that she means more than she is aware of.

The logical precision of the elenchus of sense-certainty now becomes absolute. We now attack Cratylus with the weapons of Zeno of Elea (or Jacobi with those of postKantian idealism). But whereas Zeno was interested in proving the impossibility of motion, we insist rather on the impossibility of *rest*. One cannot point to a moment of time except from a later moment. Thus for the first time the *past* enters explicitly into Hegel’s discourse. (I have anticipated him in my commentary.) The truth of sense-certainty is what *is not* but *has been*. (We should take note already that the one certainty that is absolute for us as sensible consciousness is that we shall eventually *not be*, we shall die.) The structure of time (as absolute perishing) is the structure of sensible being as such. What is over and done with is (from the point of view of sense-certainty at least) nothing, it has *no* essence that can be sensed. The truth of sense-certainty is that it was once and is no more. But we are in search of *what is*.

Purpus rightly directs our attention at this point to Aristotle’s doctrine that time is the measure of motion.³¹ He overstates Aristotle’s view by claiming that “time is the measure of things.” But this points out how the fixing of time by the

Understanding as the sequence of what has been enables us to pass to the concept of the finite “thing” of Perception. The first motion that time measures is its own; and being *understood* in that way it becomes one of the “dimensions” of the finitude of “things.”

- 18./107. Thus in the pointing a second truth puts by the first: it *is* true that that Now *was*. But it *was* because it *is not*, and it is still true that *Now is* (or *it is Now*). Both the Now and the pointing are motions with distinguishable moments. The first moment is superseded in the second, and that is then superseded in a reflective return to the first. This introreflected “Now” that we return to is the universal that is *many* Nows—a “Day” with hours, minutes, etc. Pointing is the experiencing of this universality, the motion that expresses this *resulting* character.

Through the double negation of the “it is” of sensory experience, Hegel arrives at the concept of time as the *comprehension* of transience. This is the “second inversion” through which the world of finite things (*Dinge*) in time and space comes into being as the linguistically interpreted structure within which we are all able (like Frau Bauer) to point out the facts (*Sachen*) of our experience. “Now” and “Then” form a *concept*. We cannot point out the present moment as “Now” but we can point it out as “Then.” My pointing takes place in a subsequent “Now” which has the reference to that “Then” as its content: “I *said* ‘Now!’ right *then*.” My sensory awareness of time is the system of *thens* of which I am *now* aware. So I can refer unambiguously to “*this* hour” and “*this* minute”; but “*this* second” is already “*that* second” by the time I finish the sentence. We were using this implicit concept of “Now” at the very beginning when we said “Now is the Night”; and the peasant consciousness absorbed in its daytime always uses it. The “Now” of sense-certainty is a system of Thens (both remembered and anticipated). We *choose* how comprehensive to make it. The expression “this time” can refer to years, weeks, an hour, the split second in the near future when someone must hit a ball, etc. The “Now” reference in ordinary language is a concrete universal in this sense. Either it is already “Then” when pointed at, or it can be divided into many subordinate members which “participate” in it.

Note that the universal context of our experience has this intellectual structure. “Time” is not like “tree.”³² Hegel uses Zeno’s critique of experience from the standpoint of Understanding as the key to how the primitive world of the Understanding is constituted. Only in a world in which time is comprehended as “Night and Day” can “trees” and “houses” exist. In his argument Hegel both justifies and criticizes Zeno’s philosophical position. For if it is “true” absolutely that these things “*are not*,” what follows is that “Being is” only negatively (as and through the non-being of sensible things). The ultimate result, therefore, is Plato’s concept of “Becoming” (upon which the Understanding’s world of determinate beings is founded).

- 19./108. Similarly the Here is a There in many ways (all the directions from which it can be pointed at) and all Here viewpoints are Theres likewise. What is pointed at is “That”

(a negative *This*). “Here” is a stable complex of *Heres*, not the point that is identified within it, by a motion from other points, a motion of visual comprehension that takes us to the universal complex.

The application of the doctrine to space similarly involves directing our attention at the logical structure of the example already given, and doing so more *precisely* than before.³³ The conscious self is *located* in space. But as a representing activity it shrinks down into the vanishing “point” of Euclid. Effectively this ego-point is a point *of view* for a finite spatial field. When I am seeing the tree, the house is behind me and there are other things to right and left etc. To *determine* any point (the one where I *am*, or the one that I am looking *at*) I need several fixed points as coordinates. Thus any actual place referred to as “here” is a complex of many “heres” which are also “theres”; and the theoretical self viewing an “external” world is necessarily *in* that world, and is quite inseparable from its world (conceived as a universal complex of the potential viewpoints among which the observing self can choose).³⁴

- 20./109. The dialectic of sense-certainty is the history of the experience of it. Natural consciousness learns and forgets the lesson all the time. So to offer sense-certainty as the absolute truth of consciousness (even for the sceptic) is foolish. The universal experience is rather the supersession of this truth and its restoration in a universal context. (We can anticipate the practical aspect of this experience here. The Greek Mysteries taught men to *despair* of sensible things, taught their nullity, and even—by consumption—produced it. The animals share in this wisdom, and devour sensible things too. All Nature celebrates these “mysteries” of consumption.)

As a *result* of our experience of “sensible certainty” we can say that it involves reaching after an absolute Being that “truly is,” and finding that we cannot grasp it because “what *truly* is” cannot *be* in that way at all. The motion of reaching after, and seeking to have immediate knowledge of, what immediately “is not,” is what sets up the world of sensible being. This motion sways between the immediate certainty that “it is” and the discovery that “it is not, but *was*” because immediacy itself is what is not, and cannot be. The world of *actual* sense-certainty, the “now” of Night passing into Day, of “tree” here or there and “house” there or here (depending on which way I am looking), is established by the necessary swaying between “It is” and “I am” (or “It is so because it is there for me”). Neither pole is a possible resting point. The ancient Sceptics were wiser than those moderns (like Hume or G. E. Schulze) who think that a scientific scepticism should accept sense-certainty (in its positive stance) as our only truth. The experience of the sensible world teaches us that truth is properly to be found in the *concepts* to which names refer, and that the reference of names to things is only possible in the context of a time and space that are already concepts. Similarly we can only refer to the *privacy* of experience in the context of a self-knowledge that is essentially common (or “universal” in the sense of being shareable). In its *absolutely* singular aspect, sense-experience is a flux of things that are *for me* exclusively. No one else can experience

them, no one can sensibly challenge them; they are mine *personally*. But I can refer to them, talk about them, describe and express them, in concepts that are not peculiar to me, because my selfhood, my power of conceptual comprehension, is not peculiar to me, but universally common to all. Unless I could do this there would not be any "I" that has "private" experiences at all. My capacity to *refer* to things that are publicly observable is therefore fundamental. Pointing is an intelligently comprehending act.³⁵

The real context of sense-experience is not theoretical but practical. The world of sense-certainty is not what we seek to know, but what we need in order to stay alive. As we shall see later, self-consciousness emerges from the natural (animal) consciousness of *desire*. Hegel *anticipates* this here in a reference that extends by implication far beyond his brief analysis of the animal nature of the organism *homo sapiens* later on. The Eleusinian Mysteries are the basic moment of his concept of Greek religion as the "living work of art" (see par. 724). But "the secret of the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine" is not learned by the worshippers at Eleusis (see par. 724 again). That secret is made plain only in the religion of God as the "absolute Spirit" that is manifest in every human being. To be absolutely accurate this "secret" is not made explicit even there. For Hegel's account of that religion ends with the *division* in the religious consciousness between its "heart" and the "world" (par. 787). Thus "the secret meaning of the eating of the bread and wine" which is supposedly revealed in paragraph 724, only to turn into the yet higher "mystery of the flesh and blood," is fully revealed (if it is revealed anywhere in the book) only in the very last paragraph, when "the immediate presence of God" finally emerges as "the shape of spirit" (compare par. 787 with par. 808).

Hegel could have made the point that he needs to make here, without this reference to a "secret" that seems never to be quite explicitly revealed in the book. He only needed to refer as he does to the "wisdom of the animals."³⁶ His point is that the reference of our concepts to sensibly identifiable singular *things* is for the sake of our animal existence. Our world of sense-certainty is not oriented towards knowledge as such, but towards survival. It is not in order to know *what is* that we can rely on our senses, but in order to know what is desirable, and what is to be avoided. The world of sense-certainty restores itself in spite of every breakdown because of this basic necessity of animal life.

The reason for referring to the Eleusinian Mysteries at this point must therefore lie deeper.³⁷ The point is precisely that we are supposed to return to this *first* reference to close the circle of the book. It is in the world of sense-certainty that the ultimate mystery of "absolute knowledge" is made manifest. It is "for us here and now" that the chalice of spirits pours forth God's infinitude. In the world of sense the self is a posited vanishing point. But that is not because it is *in itself* a higher *being*, a *noumenal* activity possessed of substantial permanence for which this sensible world is only an instrument (or a moral training ground for a higher existence afterwards). On the contrary, this world of sense is the *self's* real world, its "substance." The self exists in this world first as a mass of compelling *needs*. The one *absolute* certainty that sense-experience produces is that its existence is finite, and

that the flow of time will bring it to its death. The “mystery of the flesh and blood” revealed at Golgotha is the key to how it triumphs over this natural destiny and exists *here and now* as absolute spirit. The Greeks solved this problem in principle. The Eleusinian Mysteries express the ultimate significance of our animal existence. But their solution had to be philosophically comprehended, and made into the concrete truth for every one of us. Stoicism stated the concept; Christianity proclaimed it as the truth of God’s will; but only in 1789 did it become the declared political programme of a community capable of achieving it.

- 21./110. Those who assert the absolute truth of sense-certainty philosophically, say the opposite of what they mean. They cannot say “this” paper; to describe it in language would be an endless task. The paper is infinitely divisible, and *this* bit is not *that* bit. The descriptions are all in abstractly universal terms. We help out language by “pointing.” But even the use of the pointer involves a universal community of places. So we must turn our attention to the universal essence (e.g. of a “bit of paper”).

The assertion (*Behauptung*) that the external being of things as uniquely singular or as sensible, has absolute truth for consciousness is obviously not maintained by those who use, consume, destroy or transform outward things at every breath. The “external objects” are asserted to be “actual,” whereas in fact the flow of time is what *actually* consumes them all; they are said to be absolutely *singular* (whereas, in fact, the names by which they are identified are universal concepts); completely *personal* (whereas, in fact, they are common to all and their private aspects can only be referred to at all because of that); and *individual* (whereas, in fact, they are always divisible wholes). The “thisness” of what is used, and what eventually wastes away into dust (like the paper Hegel wrote this chapter on, which has not in fact survived) is extralinguistic. But the truths that we express in language do not waste away. Instead of trying to *help out* language by nonlinguistic techniques of referring to the singular bits of our experience, we should let language lead us to the discovery that these techniques themselves depend on the fact that every “bit” is both a community of smaller bits and an element in a larger community. All that can be philosophically established as the absolute truth about the world of sense-certainty is a set of statements of the most obvious and banal kind. Hegel’s reference to the other animals shows us where these simple truths are relevant; they are not significant for our inquiry about the truth of our lives as *rational* animals.

So far, this paragraph is a simple repetition of the conclusions that have already been demonstrated.³⁸ But now the stable *Gestalt* is in motion toward a new one, so the *dialectic* is emphasized. The earlier remark about the *truth* of language leads now to the suggestion that instead of trying to *help out* language, we should accept the leading that it gives.³⁹ Language is made up of concepts which refer to yet other concepts. When we try to take the reference to *things* as our object of concern, we find first that the concepts we are forced to use are linguistically the emptiest, and secondly that we cannot reach the goal (of comprehending *meaning*) anyway. We are led round in a circle to a *concretely universal* understanding of what “this,” “here,” “now,” and “I” signify. The result of our experience with sense-certainty is

therefore the recognition that we must inquire into the *conceptual* significance of the expression “this thing.” We must “*take the name truly*” or as a universal.

If we actually try to *describe* “this piece of paper” exhaustively and uniquely, Hegel claims that we shall find ourselves involved in an endless task. We shall have to leave others to complete it; and in the end the paper itself will crumble away, and those who have succeeded to our task will have to admit that they are talking about something that no longer exists. It is this inevitable fate of the paper that is crucial. For if we suppose that the paper has Hegel’s thumbprint on it in a certain position not matched by any other piece, then “this piece” is uniquely describable *for as long as it holds together well enough to show that print*. But the eventual crumbling of the paper itself teaches us that it is not this sort of “sensible certainty” that is the knowledge which it is our human vocation to seek.

The first experience of consciousness with truth exemplifies the projected pattern in the Introduction perfectly. The truth of immediate certainty is discovered to be a mediated concept of the “thing.” But this discovery is not consciously present to the *perceiving* (or *truth-taking*) consciousness that we shall now proceed to examine. The *thing* of which this consciousness formulates a concept is still (for it) the same thing of which it is immediately aware in its sensible certainty. There is no *transition* in ordinary consciousness from sense-certainty to perception. Only in the schoolroom is this transition discovered (as it was, for instance, by Abelard in his criticism of Roscelin—when he pointed out that we can truthfully say “the rose is red” in wintertime). Hegel pushed the discovery to the point where even the linguistic indicators of the immediately sensible object such as “*this now* blooming red rose *here*” are seen to have a mediated (or conceptual) structure. We can show that the evolution of modern scepticism (and particularly Hume’s theory of belief) contributed to this achievement. But the principal influence comes from Zeno (whom Hegel regarded as the fountainhead of *ancient* scepticism). It was Zeno’s attack on the intelligibility of sense-certainty that showed Hegel (and enabled him to show us) how sense-certainty itself is a construct of the Understanding.

Notes

1. There are quite a lot of studies of this chapter. Among those that I have not myself referred to here are: C. Taylor (1972, 1985), A. Graeser (1987), R. Verneaux (1968), H. Boeder (1977), G. Krüger (1970), C. Dudeck (1977). Perhaps the best and most detailed study is that of M. Kettner (1990) which came to my attention too late for me to use it.

2. Feuerbach complained that Hegel did not “forget” the Absolute Idea as he ought to (1846, II, 208). The proper response is that no position of consciousness forgets the Absolute; and all make the same assumption that cognition of the Absolute is possible (though “Scepticism” is peculiar in that it makes the assumption *negatively*). Thus—if the chain of positions is successful—Hegel’s “absolute knowing” does generate itself out of its opposite (finite common sense); and it satisfies Feuerbach’s definition of “presuppositionless”—which is the right one. (See further, note 9).

The claim of G. W. Cunningham (1910, 4) that “the standpoint of absolute knowing . . . is coterminous with experience itself” is more misleading than helpful. Even W. Wieland’s

philosophically accurate assertion (1966, 941; in Fulda and Henrich, 1973, 80) that Hegel holds “that in all our thinking, even in the most trivial consciousness, we have always already presupposed an Absolute, since even the most trivial consciousness makes the claim to be in possession of truth” is misleading. Hegel admits that there is finite knowledge; and “trivial consciousness” is not philosophical. The “presuppositions” involved in “this penknife lies beside this snuffbox” do not involve the Absolute (see par. 244). But it is a model case of Sense-Certainty; and anyone who will follow the “leading of language” from G. E. Moore’s certainties of this kind, can discover “absolute knowing.” She will *then* say that it was “implicit” (present *an sich*) in the sense certainty from which she began; but “presupposing” is something that “we” do, rather than the “natural consciousness.” Of course, the natural consciousness *can* be aware of the “implicit” Absolute. That is the difference between Jacobi and G. E. Moore.

3. Parmenides was a “rationalist.” From him comes the dictum “the same is for being and for thinking” (*D.-K.* 28 B 3). The natural consciousness begins in the “empiricist” posture: “within its own [range] it declares that which is, or the *object*, to be the *in-itself* or the true” (par. 84).

4. The return of Sense-Certainty as the noumenal certainty of Parmenides is the “monochromatic” formalism of those religious minds who used the new philosophy of nature as a ladder to mysticism. All of the absolutely cognitive uses of language become in their mouths mere “edification.” But this recourse is open to consciousness before it enters upon philosophy at all. That is the secret of how Sense Certainty is a permanently viable “station” of Consciousness.

5. E. Craig (1987, 206) thinks the question “by whom is the claim of Sense-Certainty made?” is not resolvable because “Hegel imposes two inconsistent requirements.” I admit there is ambiguity both about who has Sense-Certainty (a philosopher like Reid, or a non-philosopher like the peasant-wife) and about who *must* realize that Sense-Certainty has failed its test. But it is quite clear that we are supposed to start from “plain common sense” (in one of its *obvious* senses); and there is a sort of “dialogue” between philosophical and non-philosophical consciousness, as H. Fink-Eitel (1978) claims—compare also S. Benhabib (1988, 46–47). In this perspective the “Socratic” interpretation is justified—but see chapter 1, note 149.

6. Hegel despises the “modern scepticism” precisely because it accepts and subverts “sense-certainty” in this way. For the resulting community between “Scepticism” and “Common sense philosophy” see Haldane and Simson, II, 331–332. (It is safe to assume that this passage dates from 1805—see K. Düsing [1973, 124–125 and his note 14]). Anyone who studies G. W. Cunningham (1910, chapter 1) will see that he had to combat this commonsense prejudice in some supposed Hegelians (especially McTaggart). The claim that I called “misleading” in note 2 above, was quite justified in its own context.

7. *Wastebook*, aphorism 10 (Rosenkranz, 539; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 1). Solomon (1983, 327) is quite wrong in thinking that Meursault (in Camus’ novella *L’étranger*) is a paradigm of sense-certainty. Sense-Certainty knows *Sachen*; but it is of the very essence of Meursault’s estranged state that for him nothing is a *Sache*. He cannot say of anything that it is *his*—as the peasant wife speaks of *her* best cow Lisa, *her* Martin, *her* Ursel. Meursault lives in a world of *Dingen*; and he exhibits a distinctively modern form of Unhappy Consciousness. (But his is not a “natural” consciousness, even at that extreme, since the peasant world of labour and enjoyment does not break in upon it properly.)

8. H. Marcuse (1954, 93–94) asserts an interesting half truth when he says:

The world in reality is not as it appears, but as it is comprehended by philosophy. Hegel begins with the experience of the ordinary consciousness in everyday life. He shows that this mode of experience, like any other, contains elements that undermine its confidence in its ability to perceive “the real,” and force the search to proceed to ever higher modes of understanding. The advance to these higher modes is thus an internal process of experience and is not produced from without. If man pays strict attention to the results of his experience, he will abandon one type of knowledge and proceed to another; he will go from sense-certainty to perception, from perception to understanding, from understanding to self-certainty, until he reaches the truth of reason.

This is exactly half of the Hegelian truth, because the progress *away* from the peasant-wife’s certainty does proceed to the point of identity with the Fichtean Ego’s “Certainty and Truth of Reason.” But then the return to the peasant condition of being “at home in the world” begins; and in “absolute knowing” the philosopher is as much at home as the peasant woman is with Lisa, Ursula and Martin. The home of the philosopher is the greatly expanded dwelling of the Spirit; but it centres round a house and garden that need not be any bigger than hers.

9. Heidegger read Hegel’s Introduction as a preparation for the necessary *parousia* of the Absolute from the first moment. As we have seen, one *can* take the moment of “immediate knowing” in this absolute way. But there is no need to do so; and as Hegel points out here, it is not natural to do so. Compare what Heidegger himself says (1980, 86; 1988, 61). For further discussion see R. R. Williams (1989, 139–147) and E. von der Luft (1989). (The accusation of J. Habermas [1972] that Hegel is “half-hearted” involves the same mistake.)

10. When we come to examine self-consciousness we shall see that it is primitively practical. Religion is a form of *self*-consciousness; so the lightning flash is identified as divine, because it expresses for us the awful *power* of “What is.”

11. The “It is” of Parmenides is clearly a rational proposition of the Understanding, not a “Sense-Certainty.” But the theology of Xenophanes was probably founded directly in sense-experience. Aristotle tells us that: “Having looked away [from the sublunar human world] at the whole heaven he says the One is, the God” (*Metaphysics*, A 5, 986 b). There is (probably) no antithesis here between sense-experience and Reason—Xenophanes just “looks away” from our visible disorder to God’s visible order. But in that case, if we believe the report, which Aristotle gives, that Parmenides “heard” Xenophanes, we must concede that the Pythagorean education which Parmenides had already received was vital to the interpretation that he subsequently gave to “the One that is, the God.” (I see no persuasive reason to doubt Aristotle’s report—*loc. cit.*)

12. *Philosophical* Sense-Certainty is a “construct.” But no more so than “Perception.” The primitive sense-certainty of Frau Bauer is not a “theoretical construct” at all. Cratylus “constructs” the theory that “what truly is is what can only be *pointed* at” from it. But that comes later.

W. Bonsiepen (1977, 228, n. 4) agrees with W. Becker (1971, 24) that Sense-Certainty is a “philosophical construct”; but it is not necessary to take it so, if one agrees that the Protagorean position can occur to common sense as natural. Philosophical construction begins with the “leading of language.” C. Boey (1972, 288) is right in saying that language plays a continuing role in the *Phenomenology*. But as T. Bodhammer (1969, 83) argued, it is not just dialectical motion but the dialogue between “consciousness” and “us” that begins here. M.

Westphal (1979, 93) and everyone else who thinks Sense-Certainty is “an unreal abstraction” while the “everyday” world is that of Perception, has failed to grasp that the ordinary user of language has a different *concern* from that of the philosopher.

As I see it, the chapter moves from Frau Bauer and Thomas Reid with no problems, to Cratylus with impossible problems. It is a mistake to suppose, as K. Cramer (1976, 91ff.) and R. B. Pippin (1989, 283–284, n. 2) do, that the beginning is with a refined philosophical problem. It is plain from the Preface that the ladder must begin from “common sense”—and the examples of “house” and “tree” prove that it does so. When we get to these paradigms we can see that “Night” and “Noon” were selected because they contain the problem of experiential transience in its most evident “common-sense” form. R. C. Solomon (1983, 32–37) is right about the *range* of Hegel’s critique—though he does not sort it out—and about its force and purpose at the climax.

13. This is the element of truth in W. Wieland’s view that Hegel’s argument is a kind of Platonic dialogue (1966). But it is also a Platonic conversation of “the soul with itself.” I agree with Flay’s criticism of the way that H. M. Chalybäus described the relation between the observed consciousness and us, the observers (Flay, 1984, 287, n. 13; cf. Chalybäus, 1854, 361–362). But Chalybäus did recognize that there is a dialogue between the self-conscious philosopher and the consciousness that wants to become philosophically self-conscious; and that it is *invented* by the former. One could object to Flay’s own way of describing the situation (1984, 33–34) by saying that the Hegelian Socrates, no matter how “predetermined” he may be, would have no luck with the peasant-wife. She would applaud her husband for voting with the majority at his trial. And why not? The sophistry of writing down “Now is Night” and keeping it till next day is patent. R. Wiehl is right in claiming that for the natural consciousness, the philosophical critic always appears initially to be a sophist (1966, 108–112). The philosopher can only arouse a *positive* response in the mind in which philosophical desire slumbers on the point of waking.

In response to Y. Klein, who calls Hegel “a Socrates without irony” (1971, 382), we can retort that Hegel’s Socratic irony is systematic and methodical. It is his readers who lack the capacity for irony. They do not see that he agrees with Frau Bauer about the importance of being at home in the world, because they are so much aware that he disagrees with Professors Krug and Schulze. The real irony lies in how the professors of today (like Krug and Schulze) forget that the concept of experience does not belong to them at all. They still think that it did not exist until they discovered it.

T. E. Wartenberg (1992) has claimed that chapters I–V of the *Phenomenology* should be viewed as a dialogue of the philosophical consciousness with itself. But he does not attempt to prove this thesis beyond the level of Sense-Certainty; and it is only in chapters III–V that the going gets difficult.

14. Hegel does not actually take over Kant’s doctrine of space and time as “forms of intuition.” He never examined Kant’s doctrine carefully and in detail (at least not in his writings); and he may have thought later that the *Phenomenology* was more Kantian than it actually is. For a careful study of the relation of the *Phenomenology* to Kant’s doctrine see S. Sedgwick (1993); for an insightful survey of Hegel’s conception of “time” in the *Phenomenology* see J. C. Flay (1991).

15. “Night” is also Hegel’s favorite expression for the implicit or still unconscious state of experience. The whole wealth of cognitive experience lies hid, to begin with, in the “night of the self” (*G.W.* VIII, 187, lines 1–5); the past is all “buried” in the “night of preservation” (*G.W.* VIII, 186, line 25). This is one important reason why the “Now” that we begin with is “Night.”

I. Soll says that a “proponent of sense-certainty cannot with consistency even use concepts like *night*” (M. J. Inwood, ed., 1985, 64 n.). Instead of being puzzled by Hegel’s failure to make this point, in spite of several opportunities, Soll should have asked himself whether he understood the position of “Sense-Certainty” that Hegel actually has in mind. Epictetus would not know what Soll meant, and Hegel’s peasant-wife would understand Epictetus but not Soll. (His mistake is akin to that of D. W. Hamlyn [1961, 144–145] who thinks that these first two chapters contain Hegel’s theory of “sensation”—on *this* error see W. A. De Vries, 1988, 53.)

16. Compare for instance *Discourses* I, 28. This Stoic certainty was attacked in Hegel’s way by the Sceptics. See, for instance, Sextus, *Adversus logicos* II, 103. K. Düsing has argued convincingly for the influence of Hegel’s study of ancient scepticism upon the whole argument of this chapter (1973, 119–129). In the *History of Philosophy* lectures Hegel himself comments that the tropes of Sextus are effective against sense-certainty. (A. Warminski [1981 in 1987] has focussed attention on the “written record” requirement in Hegel’s critique of Sense-Certainty.)

17. But see note 16; and K. Westphal (1996). Daniel Shannon pointed out to me that the examples of “house and tree” occur in Hume’s *First Inquiry* (XII, 118, Selby-Bigge, 152). Hegel may have borrowed them from Hume either directly, or *via* Jacobi—cf. note 28 below. But I am convinced that even if he did, he was led to do so because the house symbolizes “home” and the tree symbolizes “knowledge” as the goal of our quest. It is the life-needs of the natural consciousness that “force” language on Sense-Certainty—not Hegel, as W. Becker maintains (1971, 120). We shall reach the philosophical Sense-Certainty that seeks to avoid language at the end of the chapter; and Becker is wrong if he thinks that Hegel wants to “force” language on that. Hegel only wants to show us that “pointing” is linguistic, and so persuade *us* to follow the “leading” of language. J. P. Surber (1975, 229) is right that reflection on what we say is the beginning of the road to Science. Loewenberg’s peculiar view that “Real sensuousness . . . does not speak at all” (1935, 25) violates Hegel’s conception of a “*Gestalt* of consciousness.” Consciousness belongs to a self that can *say* what it knows. Language is its *element*. “Sense-Certainty” is a standard for the use of language. Abigail Rosenthal (1985, 71) is right to say that Hegel is not “recalling” a stage of exclusive sensory dependence—for there is no such stage. But we can make sense of our lives well enough with the “minimal assumptions” of Sense-Certainty.

18. W. Purpus (1905, 39) supplies the references: *Metaphysics* 1039b, 27–30 and 1054b, 24–32. But K. Düsing (1973, 126) is right in thinking that the sceptical *use* of this logical truth by the Sophists—especially Gorgias—and Sceptics is more important in the present context (see Sextus, *Adversus logicos* I, 65ff.). (Purpus was the first to notice the Gorgias connection too [1905, 37].)

19. Of course, Hegel does *not* mean to deny that we can successfully refer to singular things. His peasant-wife does that, and it is fundamental to “being at home.” But Merold Westphal, who avoids that error, is not right when he says that “rather than denying our capacity to refer to individuals, Hegel is asking how it is possible for us to do so” (1979, 76). Hegel simply accepts our capacity to refer as a fact of experience; but he wants to argue that it is not philosophically important in the way that the Lockean theory of ideas supposes it to be important. The most ironically amusing mistake is that of R. C. Solomon who claimed once that “sense-certainty is rejected because it does not allow us to speak of what we allegedly know for certain; specifically it does not allow us to speak of objects” (1971, 507). On the contrary, sense-certainty is “rejected” because that is all that it can do. (Solomon seems

to have recognized his error in his book [1983, 328 and note 15] but he is only able to state Hegel's critique of sense-certainty as a "weakening of the given." This is the same half-truth that we saw in H. Marcuse [1954, 93–94], cited in note 8. The comfortable "givenness" of experience is the foundation of being at home in the world; and the philosopher is as much at home as the peasant-wife.

20. Carl Vaught (1989) says that time is shown to be dialectical, while space is not (because the dialectic depends on the motion of the subject). His point is well taken. The mediated dialectic of self-conscious spirit (as a community of mutual recognition) is quite "different" from the immediate dialectic of sensible time. Vaught does not refute Hegel, but only an abstractly monistic (and mistaken) interpretation of Hegel. (Compare A. B. Collins, 1989.)

21. As K. Westphal (1989a) argues, Hegel takes the view that anything which is is a "this-such." The "thisness" can't be said, but the "suchness" can; and we can identify the single individual by reference to that individual's "suchness" (and spatiotemporal location). However, to identify a single individual in either of these ways (and typically we do both together) requires *concepts*, concepts of the "suchness" or characteristics of the individual, and concepts of space, time, and the series involved in spatial and temporal coordinates. Once concepts are admitted and found to be essential, to be ineliminable from knowledge, sense-certainty is refuted. (Westphal himself drew my attention to this point.)

In view of the rolling-accumulative character of the Hegelian concept of experience we ought not to adopt the *nominalist* theory of language which almost all interpreters do adopt (because of their primitive attachment to the standpoint of Sense-Certainty). If we do not make this mistake (canonized by Feuerbach [1966, 43]) we shall not agree with Kojève that Hegel's philosophy is "a philosophy of death" (1947, 536, 539). Hegel himself expects us to make the mistake (with "the Understanding" in Miller, par. 31); but to rise from the dead with "Spirit" in his chapter VI.

22. This statement is not quite accurate because our rolling progress is *cumulative*. R. B. Pippin is puzzled that "Hegel does not here raise similar objections" (1989, 121). There would be no point; we now know how to do that for ourselves. But the positions are so similar that Lauer (1976, 51) is on rather thin ice when he says: "the dialectical movement of Sense Certainty and the transition to Perception constitute the model . . . for the overall movement." What he says can be defended; but because of the parallel with the first triad of the *Logic* (which certainly is a peculiar case, and not a model for what follows) it is probably wise to use a different "model Gestalt" for the movement described logically in the Introduction. (On the other hand, because of the distinction between *Werden* and *Dasein*, the first triad of the *Logic* makes some aspects of the motion clear, which are harder to see in the continuous movement in later stages.)

23. P. Ricoeur (1970, 464) gives an accurate phenomenological characterization of the "I" at the level of "Consciousness": "In the *Phenomenology* Hegel uses the word "Consciousness" to denote the mere manifestation of the being of the world for a witness who is not reflectively aware of self. Prior to Self-Consciousness, Consciousness is simply the manifestation of the world." But we must remember that there is a lot of interpretive *activity* in this unreflective "manifestation." Even Sense-Certainty uses the language of Perception—and it is through *linguistic* behaviour that "we" get our sight of the activity in progress.

24. W. Purpus (who was the first to investigate the presence of ancient dialectic in these early chapters—though his approach was first suggested by K. J. Windischmann in a review of 1809 [see Bonsiepen, 1977, 19–20]) refers in his commentary on paragraph 100 to the Atomist distinction between what *really* is, and what is *by convention*. But we have not yet

reached the stage where that is appropriate. The Atomists moved from the Protagorean distinction directly to the standpoint of Understanding. Only the Protagorean doctrine that “Man is the measure” (to which Purpus rightly refers in commenting on par. 101) is relevant here. (See Purpus, 1905, 33–36.) In real-philosophical terms, Purpus is obsessed by themes that arise only at the level of Understanding—Attraction and Repulsion, the One and the Many Ones. But his references to the *Logic* are more difficult to fault; and that alone shows how difficult it would be to establish a one-one parallel between the categories of Logic and the *Gestalten* of the *Phenomenology* that is not obviously arbitrary.

25. I am at a loss to understand how T. W. Adorno can accuse Hegel of forgetting that “the term ‘I’ . . . must always signify *some* consciousness” (1963, 28). The resurrection of Protagoras would not be necessary if Hegel were not vividly aware of his peasant-wife. What is true, rather, is that sophisticated critics like Adorno *forget* the history of the “natural consciousness” as readily as it does itself. But that is exactly what “we” must not do.

On the other hand, this moment of Protagorean subjectivism is only a moment. It is not the assertion of a *solipsist* position (as D. Lamb [1979, 29] suggests). This self readily concedes that everyone has their own impression of how things are. But it is a permanently necessary moment of “experience” that we all have our own “impressions” of how things are. This itself is a “truth” that *is* (and must remain valid) as long as there is “truth” at all. It is not what I would call “solipsism,” though it does enable Tweedle-Dum to suggest to Alice that she is only part of the Red King’s dream—and the Red King is *not* talking.

One can, of course, refer to Hegel’s allegiance to Fichte’s Ego as “methodological solipsism” if one likes (Solomon, 1974, in M. J. Inwood, ed., 1985, 45ff.). But that is a very perverse way of expressing Hegel’s “absolute knowing.” The philosophical “self” is the “for itself” of the human *community*. Only the community (sustaining, hearing and responding to its philosophical mouthpiece) is “in and for itself.”

26. See Hegel’s review in *G.W.* IV, 178, line 30–179, line 34 (Di Giovanni and Harris, 298–300).

27. *Metaphysics*, 1010a.

28. See *Natural Law*, *G.W.* IV, 461, lines 24–7 (Knox and Acton, 107–108) for an explicit use of this metaphor by Hegel in reference to “Enlightened” values.

29. That I cannot literally “be in your place” is the “truth” of the Protagorean moment. Taylor and Soll have both grasped the point correctly here. But they each make their own mistakes—and it would take quite a few pages to sort them all out. Taylor’s talk about “subsuming particulars under universals” is misguided. But he is right that Hegel holds that referring terms must be used in a “universal” context; and that when what is referred to is *absolutely* singular, the reference can only be made *absolutely* precise within such a context. This applies equally to the “now” and the “here.” Precision is possible, but it involves the same *community* of “nows” and/or “heres” that is involved in the ordinary more elastic usage of the terms. Both Soll and Taylor are wrong in thinking that “here” is less obviously universal than “now”; this only shows that neither understands what Hegel’s “universal” is. Compare C. Taylor (1975, 143–145, or more fully in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 161–168); I. Soll (in M. J. Inwood, ed., 1985, 59–64). Soll probably derived his completely mistaken view that Hegel thinks our universally referring terms do *not* pick out particulars from Findlay (1958, 90–91). For a detailed refutation of this view see K. Dulckheit (1986 and 1989). Dulckheit deals also with the similar views of G. Plumer (1980). Apart from giving an essentially rightminded account of Hegel’s real argument, her side references illuminate and support her contention that “the study of Hegel still goes far beyond historical interest” (1986, 194).

30. W. Marx (1975, 5). Hegel himself speaks in the Introduction (par. 77) as if the urge for philosophical transparency is *natural* to consciousness. Hence Flay (1984, 47) speaks of the “eros” of the natural consciousness as the motive force of the work. But it is just as “natural” to consciousness to want to “be at home” as it is to “want to know.” So it is *not* “natural consciousness as such” that has the eros which the Hegelian Socrates can guide to “absolute knowing.” Only the *negative* (thinking) “shape” of consciousness, the consciousness that is naturally sceptical and “unhappy,” has it. What natural consciousness is primitively and universally (on its negative side) is *free*. This freedom requires *Bildung*—and the *yearning* for freedom is aroused because *Bildung* is imposed against our will. So it is “natural” for Frau Bauer’s husband to yearn to be *Herr* Bauer. But he does not normally want to be a philosopher; and in Hegel’s own world-perspective it is virtually *inconceivable* that Frau Bauer should have that “desire.” I am sure that was why he chose *her* as the model of “natural consciousness” in its *positive* shape. (In our world we want to “raise consciousness” at least to the point where everyone *decides* what their goal in life is going to be. But we must not ignore the fact that any decision can be final. So it is perfectly possible to decide to be Frau Bauer. That will still be different in an important way, from being Frau Bauer spontaneously. It is *that* difference that Hegel’s book is about.)

31. *Physics*, *Delta* 219a–b, 220b–221a (Purpus, 1905, 48). But the contemporary Kantian reference is more important. What we have here is the “universal intuition” of time. At present it is “empty” (cf. J. Burbidge, 1973). When we return to it as the comprehensive recollection of *history* (808) it will be “full.” (This resolves Labarrière’s puzzle [1968, 226] about the speciously “Kantian” appearance of Hegel’s “intuition” of time. The *cumulative* character of “determinate negation” transforms it.)

32. I am speaking here in accordance with our Aristotelian commonsensical concept of “tree.” But in point of fact Hegel’s own working concept of TREE (in the *Philosophy of Nature*) is Platonic. He views vegetable life as one self-differentiating universal in which even the species have not become fully sundered. Animal life is sundered into Aristotelian species; and spiritual life is the actually experienced universal, the thoughtful living consciousness in which all logical distinctions are both perfectly realized and completely dissolved again into the original continuum. The living experience of *time* is the primitive mode of this self-differentiating continuum.

33. Ivan Soll finds Hegel’s doctrine that “the Now” and “the Here” are “universals” hard to grasp: “all the arguments would show, if they work at all, is that *here* and *now* are divisible *wholes*, not that they are *universals*. It is in no way obvious that a whole having parts cannot be a particular” (I. Soll, 1976, translated in M. J. Inwood, ed., 1985, 64). There is nothing to say in response, except that (formally) a Here that is also a There or a Now that is also a Then are “universals”; and (concretely) an experienced community of parts is a *real* “universal” in Hegel’s sense. This does not prevent it from being a *particular* in some other context (especially *abstract* contexts). In fact it is what makes “particularity” possible. No simple alternative like the one Soll formulates, can express Hegel’s meaning adequately:

These arguments are not meant to show that “we encounter and reach out for particulars and discover that we can only hold them through the mediating instruments of universal concepts” [Taylor, 1975, 145], but that as we reach out for the particulars we imagine we encounter, we come to realize that they are really universals (I. Soll, 1976, in M. J. Inwood, ed., 1985, 65).

The truth is first (on Taylor's side) that we can only hold our "particulars" (Lisa and so on) through the mediation of universal concepts, but we need not discover that. Frau Bauer consciously lives in a linguistic world of proper names, but she needs universal concepts even to use the names of her *Sachen*. And secondly (on Soll's side) it is *also* true that we can and should come to realize that the particulars we encounter "are really universals." Frau Bauer has not properly realized this, but she lives the truth of it already; for she shares Lisa's world in a way that we no longer want to. For the "science of experience" generally this is an important insight of Soll's (as against Taylor). But we need Taylor's way of talking too, if we want to express adequately all that we could learn about Lisa that is quite beyond Frau Bauer's horizon.

34. The doctrine of the Ego as a point is clearly stated in Fichte's *Vocation of Man* (*Werke* II, 200–212; Chisholm, 36–47).

35. David Lamb has rightly directed our attention to the same conception of "pointing" in Wittgenstein (see also S. Houlgate, 1986, 167–174). His example of the arrow-sign in a printed text ought to make us see that the finger pointing of Cratylus was itself a linguistic sign (see Lamb, 1979, 31; Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, sec. 454). Compare also C. Dudeck (1977b).

36. If Hegel did not remember Hume's use of this appeal (*First Enquiry*, sec. XII) from his own reading of a German translation of the *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* at Frankfurt (see *Night Thoughts*, 7 n.) then his study of Jacobi for *Faith and Knowledge* would have brought it to his sight again in 1802 (both in English and in Jacobi's rendering—see Jacobi, *Werke* II, 152–153). But it is Hegel himself who points out that the animals are wiser than the modern Sceptics.

Randall Auxier (1991) has discussed this passage thoughtfully; and he understands it better than Baillie or Kojève (1975, 37–38) did. But the most interesting commentary is that of Mark Paterson (1991) (who does not concern himself with the problem of reference).

37. W. Purpus (1905, 55, note) compares the passage in the *Theaetetus* (155e) where Socrates reveals the Heracleitean secret that all apparently stable *Dasein* comes to be through the encounter of two motions. Socrates has to make sure first that none of the "uninitiated" is listening. (The uninitiated are of the opinion that only what can be held in the hands is real.) This passage may have inspired Hegel's own reference to the Mysteries. But this Heracleitean secret is not what he means here. (It is the physical paradigm of his own conception of the Understanding.)

38. Purpus leaves the whole paragraph without commentary for this reason. But it is actually *here* that his citation of the report of Diogenes about Stilpo is relevant:

And, being a consummate master of controversy, he used to demolish even the Ideas, and say that he who asserted the existence of Man meant no individual; he did not mean this man or that. For why should he mean the one more than the other? Therefore neither does he mean this individual man. Again, "vegetable" is not what is shown to me, for vegetable existed ten thousand years ago. Therefore this is not vegetable. (Diogenes Laertius II, 119; Purpus, 1905, 37–38).

This passage is relevant *here*, because (like a good Sceptic) Stilpo argues both ways—and implicitly his dialectic points the way forwards to the "truth-taking" of the perceptible *thing*. (On the difficult question of whether Hegel dealt with Stilpo in his Jena History of Philosophy course, see K. Düsing, 1973, 125, n. 14.) In the lectures as we have them Hegel certainly

interprets Stilpo as one who “followed the leading of language”—see *T.W.-A.*, 18, 534–538 (Haldane and Simson, I, 464–469).

39. Our modern Stilpo, Jacques Derrida, wants us to remember that language leads in many directions. Not even a name is “sense-certain.” “Hegel” is an “eagle” and so on (cf. 1986, 23). But common sense knows that this sort of reflection is not relevant at this point. (For a good discussion of the encounter between Derrida and Hegel see G. Baptist and H.-C. Lucas, 1989.)

The suggestive power of language is a basic experience of the freedom of absolute Spirit. But if we start from the “wisdom of the animals,” our language gives us a *definite* concept for each name. That is the relevant sense in which “language sets thought free”—as R. D. Winfield says (1987, 120). Hegel is closer to Wittgenstein’s view that “philosophy can only *describe* the use of language” (*Investigations* I, 124) than G. J. Seidel (1971, 225) obviously believes. But by describing it systematically, he lays the ground for a distinctively *philosophical* use (in the *Logic*) of the most *ordinary* language.

Chapter 5

The World of Philosophical Common Sense

II: Perception (True-Taking); or the *Thing* and Mistaking

Hegel's second chapter begins with a "philosophical" position that even Frau Bauer needs. Even she must follow the "leading" of language at least one step beyond the naming of Sachen. She identifies her cows not just by names, but by their color-patterns; and she knows her apple trees from her plum trees or her neighbor's peach, etc. Hers is a world not just of singular Sachen, but of perceptible types; but for her, the process of classification with its universal names is an instrumental shorthand for dealing with the "real things" that can be identified and pointed to. She does not want to take the leading of language seriously, but only to get back to her life, and get on with it.

Our concern, however, is no longer with Frau Bauer but with the mind that finds it interesting that many "real things" can have the same name, so that the name refers not to the Sache itself, but to the concept of "the thing" (Ding) as the senses deliver it to us. How can this be? she asks. How is our world of experience made up of these classifiable Dinge? With this question she begins to do the philosophy of healthy common sense.

(a) *The "Dogmatic Realist"*

- 1./111. Sense-Certainty looks away from its truth, but sense-perception takes hold of it. How *we* take it up is now determined by how it has arisen for us. The movement of pointing out is perceiving as an *act*, but also as a *fact* (perceived object). *Perception* is the being-grasped-together of the moments that unfold in perceiving as process. For us, the universal concept of perception is essential, not these moments. But these moments *are* each the whole concept of perception so they must share the essential/unessential opposition between them. The object, however, is initially the essence for the perceiving consciousness itself.

Again the whole story is implicit in the first paragraph; and Hegel is very careful to make clear, as this new chapter begins, that it *is* the whole story of our experience with sense-certainty that is the *object* with which perceiving starts. The perceiving we are concerned with is a process in which the universal self *takes* itself to be a rational being, and the truth of its object to be a universal truth. Our situation as philosophical observers is different in its "object" from the situation of the perceiving consciousness. Our object has been logically determined for us, whereas

the object of the perceiving consciousness simply “falls out of the world of Sense-Certainty” for it.¹ We, the philosophers, perceive both the act and the fact of perception (or take it truly as it objectively is) while the perceiving act perceives only its *object*. It knows that the object is a universal essence; but it does not know that that “universality” is an activity of the perceiving mind (which has identified the *Ding*, and placed it as an essence in an *intellectual* context).

We know that the “thing” is the result of this process, that it involves this process, and that experience is precisely the process by which it is constituted. From our standpoint, the being-there of the sensible *Sache* is only a reference point for it in the real order of space and time. This real order is, as we have seen, *constituted* by thought. Our perceiving is the process, of which the object is the result. Perception as a whole—perception as *our* object—is an interpretation of sense-certainty in which the knowing consciousness is no longer concerned about the truth of the copula “is,” but about *what* is. The formula of perception (generally) is not “this is,” but “this *thing* is.” So it is the activity of interpreting the *thing* that is *our* object. Our concern is with the conscious concept of “thing and properties”; and it is the same object whether as process or as result.

For the perceiving consciousness the objective “thing” (not its own subjective interpreting) is the *essence*. The *Ding* is what it is whether it is perceived or not. When Hegel gives examples, they are objects of consumption that are perceptible to the *taste*; and it is clear that this is deliberate. It was prepared for by the reference to the “wisdom of the animals” (par. 109). But Hegel does *not* want to go in the direction of Berkeley’s reductionist view. He simply wants to lead us naturally to the one great process of which we have an understanding consciousness. “House” and “tree” were useful for illustrating the way in which the sensible content of “here” varies; and they can still serve as good paradigms of perception as a stable *Gestalt*. But “day” and “night,” like “white” and “salt,” are appropriate stages in the progression towards “Force and Utterance.”

- 2./112. What we know is a universal “thing” truly taken through its *many properties*. Only “perception” can unite this multiplicity in one essence.

Sense-Certainty was already implicitly perception in its *examples*. There are no countable, recordable, riches at that level. Our Frau Bauer has a great wealth of experience. But she can only *tell* us “That is Lisa”; and even for her, the less important cows are “the *black* one, the *spotted* one and so on.” Sense-Certainty is rich only in positive *Sachen* to be certain of. *This* field planted with winter wheat looks just like the one next to it which will be planted only in the Spring, and there might easily be a barren cow that looks exactly like Lisa. Only perception can say *what* is, because it names universal things that are perceived *through* the changing sequence and variety of their properties.² The object of perception is the “oneness of a many”; and, from here onwards, even the perceiving consciousness is required to concern itself only with the logical character (or conceptual structure) of its object. The manifoldness of “Sense-Certainty” appeared only as a negative tran-

sience that took every “example” out of our grasp. But our concept now contains “negation,” and we can successfully hold on to the finite “examples.”

- 3./113. The sensory “this” is now identified as a universal “property.” As immediate it is *aufgehoben* (negated and yet preserved). It is not immediately present; but the *thing* preserves itself as the fixity of the many apparent qualities. As extended and enduring it is just the medium for a set of coexisting “properties.” A lump of salt is white, tart, cubical, etc.; and these properties are *really together*, but remain logically independent. The thing is the “also”—or the bond of a heap or collection of these determinacies.

The final example of sense-certainty was, appropriately enough, the sheet of paper that Hegel was writing on. He had to be certain of that in order to do what he was aiming to do. In our world that sheet of paper no longer survives. But we still have other pages that Hegel wrote on; their properties we can define (and the critical editors of a Hegel manuscript typically name some salient properties of the sheets in their editorial report). One important property of a piece of paper is directly connected with the *Aufhebung* of the paper as “this.” Paper is “combustible.” (We know for instance that at least one bundle of papers from Hegel’s *Nachlass* was burned by a housekeeper.) As *this* paper with the interesting marks on it, it ceased to exist altogether, because it is a property of paper generally to burn easily. But if it were not also the sort of thing that one can write on, the loss would not matter much. A letter from Hegel’s son to his biographer is preserved; and so we know what happened to some written things that are now lost to us.

Fire is one of the most obviously sensible forms of “the Nothing of the this.” But, of course, this sort of nothingness typifies the flux of immediate sensible certainty. “Being is a universal in virtue of having mediation or the negative in it.” Hegel’s letters to Sinclair were reduced to ashes. They are no longer “paper” at all. But there are other letters and papers that survive, which have now become yellowed at the edges. To be white is to be (in a practically important sense which this example illustrates) “not-yellow.” To become yellow is no-longer-to-be-white. There is no nameable property of anything that is not part of a *range* of alternative properties. Some variations of properties are consistent with the thing continuing to count as the “same thing”—and some are not. The surviving letters and papers—fragile though they are—are *determinate* beings because they still have the “universal property” of being “paper.” The burned papers have become part of the flux of “being in general.”

It is not the destructibility, the aging, or the partial indeterminacy of “things” like pieces of paper that we are interested in now. In choosing “salt” as his paradigm case, Hegel was choosing one of the most completely and stably *determinate* natural things with which he was familiar. It has a number of sensible properties that are immediately certain. But the singular property of “being salt” is known to us as immediate sensation only when we taste it (and that is when the salt itself is necessarily dissolved back into the flux of sense-immediacy). Thus, in the white cube that is the “thing” I perceive, the character of “being salt” (which I truly take as its essence) is a *not-this*; it is not immediately sensed, but it is stably preserved for

sensation whenever I want to sense it; and my actually sensing it will release it from its determinate status back into immediate being. It is a *potentiality for sensation*, the “nothing” of the determinate “this,” which will be momentarily sensed if it is released. As this potentiality, this “otherness” than what *is* (the cubical whiteness etc.), it is a universal. When it is immediately *realized* all of those qualities will disappear into the flux of sensible being along with it.

Being can only determine itself as a determinate universal, a *not-this*, by determining itself positively as “this” at the same time. What is “truly taken” is an essence that is the *negative* “property” which determines and holds together all the positive ones. But it is also truly taken as the positive property of filling a certain space. All of the properties cohere together in the space that the thing occupies. This “positive medium” aspect of the essence is always evident enough to the senses. But the negative aspect—the “not-this” which becomes a “this” only in the dissolution of the thing—is equally important to the concept. Extension, space-filling, and duration, time-filling, are “thinghood.” But “a thing” is the holding together of the same set of sensible properties in a certain volume of space for some appreciable (if rather indefinite) time. When a letter burns up, a sheet of glowing ash may be briefly visible. But what “is there” now—the new “thing”—is *ashes* not paper. “Thinghood” as directly given for perceiving is the *persisting* spatial togetherness of many independent qualities.

- 4./114. The positive universal (totality) of this collection is not just a heaping up of indifferent components. It is white-not-black, cubic-not-round, etc. Thus, the thing is a negative universal too: a *one* that excludes all else, as well as a totality that includes all these: it is determined by a property that cannot change without the thing itself being destroyed.

We have already anticipated the argument of this paragraph in our discussion of paragraph 113. The “thing” is not just a loose collection of properties inhering somehow in the same sensible identifiable region of space at the given time. It is a thing because of what it excludes; and its exclusiveness is what particularizes each of its properties. When Johannes Schulze’s housekeeper put those papers and letters on her fire, they rapidly ceased to *be* papers and letters—just as the grains of Hegel’s salt that we take on our tongue to identify it as salt cease to be grains of salt. The whiteness, saltiness etc. are bonded into “this one thing, here, now”; and the properties each exist in the context of a universal range that they must exclude and negate in order to be determinate. The paper cannot just turn black (as in burning) without ceasing to be paper. The whiteness of the salt could perhaps be masked (by mixing in some non-toxic color); but if there were a way of masking its taste, we could no longer perceive it as “salt.”³ If the burning of the paper were done carefully we could probably preserve a sheet of ash. The filling of space and time as a “simple medium” would then continue without a break. But we should need to fill the surrounding space with a transparent plastic of some kind, because the togetherness of the properties—the thing as a positive medium—would be fragile in the extreme; and to do that would be pointless (except as a technical demonstration),

since the original “thing” would not be preserved as a “negative unity.” Only the *opposite* of all relevant properties would be there—and unless the opposition made some previously invisible writing visible, nothing would be gained by preserving the sensible identity of the medium-filling matter.

- 5./115. Thus the “thing” is *universally* (a) a positive totality of neutral components; *particularly* (in each property) (b) a negative unity excluding all alternatives; and *singularly* (c) a multiplicity of perceptible differences.

As universals, the properties can vary indifferently; as belonging to this particular they exclude alternatives; but the “thing” is identical with a *property* only when the universal and the particular are united by it [as in the case of salt].

The object of perception is a singular “thing” in virtue of being the negative unity of a certain specific set of properties that belong to wider generic ranges. The range of real physical possibility for a set of mutually exclusive properties is conceptualized as a distinct *Materie*. Thus “color” is a perceptible “matter”; every colored object may be imagined to be *any* color.

The conceptualization of the perceived space-filling “thing” as a complex of “matters” is for the purpose of chemical theory. My case of the burned sheet of paper whose visible integrity has been preserved illustrates the transformation of “matters.” There is still a spatially identifiable “thing” which is an “also” of many properties (extreme fragility being now one of the most important of them). But it is now a different “thing,” one that is ready to fall into a heap of dust or blow away. Only our technology will enable us to hold it together as a “negative unity.” A proper “thing” can hold itself together (over some indefinite range of environmental circumstances, and for some indefinite period of time). Hegel’s “salt” is an example that must disappear when its specific property is immediately sensed. There are not many “things” in which the “negative unity” is so sensibly determinate and so close to the flux of sense-immediacy.

If we are to perceive what a thing *is*, we must be able to identify some defining characteristic, some specific difference. We have to be able to distinguish the positive unity of being which makes it a thing (the positive unity that is still there in our carefully burned sheet) from the “negation” that makes it *this* thing (which is radically sublated when the sheet is burned). Burning (like tasting the salt) *develops* the sensuous universality by *negating* the negative unity. The property of being combustible is not peculiar to paper; if the sheet is allowed to fall to ashes we shall not know “what it *was*.” For the salt, the tasting is (as a general rule) infallible. But the method of perceptual recognition need not involve the dissolution of the thing. People used to *bite* gold coins (or *ring* them on suitable surfaces). This provides a good example of how the sensuous universality can reveal itself as a “property” while continuing to “unite being and the negative” immediately.

Hegel mentioned “specific gravity” as a property of his salt in paragraph 113. Once we introduce an objective measurement of that kind we are forced to recognize that perceptual identification is *contextually dependent*. Ringing or biting the coin is a naïvely perceptual test; but “this is a *red rose* [bush]” is a better paradigm

of how Perception asserts itself effectively as a stable *Gestalt* of consciousness.

The immediate truth of Sense-Certainty is present *negatively* in this concept of the “truth” of Perception. The universality is a sensible one, and we “take” it directly from sensation. In order to “take the truth” about the salt we must taste it; and the sample that we actually taste disappears into the immediately sense-certain taste of salt. After that, like all sense certainty, it is gone forever into “what was but is not”; but we know the universal character of the remaining salt that we have not tasted. With the rose-bush, the case is similar: when it is in bloom, the truth that it is a red rose is a fact (*Sache*) of sense-certainty. In the winter this immediate “fact” has become a “truth” of perception.

The ringing or biting of coins provides, of course, only a “certainty” of the Protagorean subjective type. It is not a proper “truth” of sense-certainty which can be pointed to. This illustrates how the “truth” of Observational Reason is actually implicit in perceptual experience. In Perception, we cannot properly speak of a “defining” character, or a “specific” difference—though I have done it, because that is how we philosophers, who live familiarly with concepts, are unthinkingly habituated to speak. Perception has only the “thing”—not a gardening encyclopedia or a laboratory with aqua regia, etc. Frau Bauer knows that her animals are all different, and that slips from various plants will grow true; that this is a *red* rose-bush, and so on. She lives in a world of perception, but she never thinks of the difference between “perception” and “sensation” because all of her “universals” are sensible. She uses, perforce, some of the classificatory language of “Observing Reason”—“those are roses of different *kinds*” she may say of two bushes in winter-time—but she has no *theory* about “differences.” Differences are simply “facts” of sense (which *we* have begun to call “sensible universals,” because even Frau Bauer uses and appeals to them quite comfortably when they are not sensibly present).

- 6./116. This is what perceiving consciousness must just take in passively as *true*. It may itself be “taken in” if it does not apprehend the thing passively. The perceiver is aware of this possibility, since for him “universality” means *being-otherwise*. His criterion of truth is “being the same thing.” If I mistake powdered sugar for salt, it is *my* mistake.

The standard of perceptual truth is to “take the thing truly.” It is quite possible for me (as the perceiver) to be deceived. But this can only happen because I do something wilful (such as asserting *more* than I have actually perceived) or because there is some change in my own perceiving organism. It is not possible for real physical salt to “lose its savor” (as the ethical “salt of the earth” can). So if it tastes different from time to time the difference indicates some mistake on my part. Here we can see another aspect of the reason why Hegel chose the example that he did. The “sensible universal” is not immediately present; but it is always available to the sense of taste.⁴ The “thing” is self-identical by definition; so whenever the Understanding needs to explain a perceived difference, the fact that consciousness connects many perceived “properties” together into one “thing” is appealed to. My example of the coin that may be counterfeit illustrates how “otherness” must be present to the mind of a true perceiver. Every property can belong to many

things—hence “all that glitters is not gold.” It looks as if the Cartesian theory of error (which is first found in the Stoic ideal of the sage) is in Hegel’s mind. The thesis of perceptual certainty is: “God does not deceive. If we are deceived it is always somehow our own fault.”⁵

(b) “Concept” and “Experience”

- 7./117. Perceiving as experience just unpacks the contradictions in the thing. I perceive one lump of salt. But I perceive first the whiteness, not the saltiness. So the thing is not simply *one*, it is a community of properties. Also salty is not-sweet; so it is not just a community but an exclusive community. This exclusive separated thing is exclusive in many ways; so internally it is a common medium of differences. But it is the saltiness that makes the thing “salt”; and when I taste it, the experience of the thing returns to the flux of what is only “meant.” So “experience” carries Perception in a circle, back to Sense-Certainty.

We turn now from the concept that the perceiving consciousness has of its relation with its object, to the actual experience. The experience is the concept in motion (or regarded as a process). But the comparing of the concept with its “object” is a dialectical process. We shall find that according to the logical standards that are built into it as a truth-criterion, the experiential employment of a “thing-concept” is a mass of conflicts resolved by contradictory decisions about what is objective, and what subjective, what belongs to the essence of the thing, and what to the supposedly contingent relation that it has with the perceiver. Hegel warns us that *we* already know what is bound to happen. We are only going to examine the shift, made necessary by the concept of “thing” as the standard of truth “so far as it is necessary to develop it here” (par. 115); and we develop it precisely far enough to be able to recognize the moments of Universality, Particularity and Singularity in the unity of the concept (see the analysis of par. 115).⁶

The experience begins at the end. What is perceived as a “thing” is picked out with sensible certainty, as an abiding unit in the transient flow of sense-experience. But this involves my finding a way of identifying it as a thing of some definite sort. Its name tells us *what* it is, not *that* it is. The recognition of the identifying property abolishes the uniqueness of the object. My tree is one of many. What I truly perceive is a common nature. But we must give up this example, and move down the scale to the inorganic level, because the “nature” of the tree determines so many of its sensible “properties”; it would rapidly become an object of rational observation for us, rather than of perception. The world of perception consists very largely of such things as trees (or Frau Bauer’s cows). But the distance between “us” and the consciousness observed will not be just one step if we insist on talking about them. We must return to the lump of salt.⁷

Salt has several directly perceptible properties and powers. What we perceive first is that it is *white*. But the distinctive saltiness of it goes right through it and is indissolubly connected with its whiteness (which would, on its own account, be indistinguishable from the whiteness of cunningly powdered sugar). So what makes

the salt to be “salt” is not just one property among others. It is a “sensible universal” that is *perceived* only when the salt is consumed. The salt that is left is an object of immediate sense-certainty that must be tasted again.

We should notice how Hegel is placing the concept of thing. “Thing” is for him the foundation concept of the level of being that he calls “chemism.” It is an inorganic but not a mechanical concept. Trees, like the self, only become mere things when they are dead. A thing is not an indiscriminate lump of matter (or a region of extended space), but a material object that has distinctive properties—over and above its mechanical mass, gravity, weight and so on). Anything perceptible can be treated as a thing, but only inorganic masses with distinguishable characteristics are properly “things” (and nothing further).

We arrive at this concept through a series of quick Socratic transformations. They can be seen in the Analysis, but I will run over them again in order to bring out the parallel that Hegel makes with paragraph 113. I am sensibly aware of one white lump. At that stage I can say it is a “thing,” but not what thing it is. I taste it, and take in the truth that it is “salt.” As an “otherness” that was not immediately apparent this saltiness is a “universal.” This already implies that my one sensibly present thing is a *community* of properties; and the hidden saltiness is what determines the identity of that community. The white stuff is salt and not sugar. As such it is a *sundered* community of properties,⁸ one that is separate from other things. All of the properties in this “community,” visible and invisible, are fixed in contrast to their possible alternatives. Salt is white, not green (and so on). What, then, has become of the space-filling unity that I was immediately aware of? The thing, as extended, is a *medium* in which many “positive universals” (sensible properties that are present throughout its extent) passively coexist together.

So far, so good. But now what about the “negative unity”? It was the saltiness that sundered this community from others as an exclusive “one.” Within the community this *singular* property is experienced *für sich* as a *taste*. But when I have the taste, my experience takes the “object” back into the flux of becoming. The crucial “experience” of salt abolishes it as a “thing.” The concept *liquidates* itself in its experience. I can only say “Yes, that *was* salt.”

- 8./118. Thus I learn that perception is not passive truth-taking. Reflection out of the object and into my awareness (or what is not-true) is necessary. But unlike sense-certainty, perceiving is quite cognizant that only what is not true is found in the subject. This ability to distinguish truth from untruth, however, is itself the truth within perception. Let us repeat the cycle with this awareness.

The result of the first experience is that some salt is gone, and instead I have the perceptual knowledge that it *was* salt. So I have lost the “thing” but the experience of taking the truth from it has become determinate for me. I know that I do not *passively* perceive what is true, in the way that I seem to apprehend the fact that “that is Lisa, and this is Ursel” passively. My reflective capacities are involved. *Perceiving* is an activity of consciousness. I do “take the thing truly”; and now I have experienced the fact that I do more than that. So my new project is to correct the falsity

introduced by my reflection. I want to purify my reflection in its reflective form: to purify perceiving into simple apprehension.

Consciousness is no longer naïve but reflective. At this point in the dialectic of sense-certainty it became the standard of what truly is; but in the dialectic of perception it distinguishes its reflective activity as the source of “falsity.” It does this, however, in the full confidence that it possesses an infallible criterion of what is truly there, and what is the work of reflection. Thus the consciousness we are observing is now a *philosophical* consciousness. It is reflecting upon itself, and about this reflective activity it is not in doubt. Nor ought it to be in doubt, as we know from the Introduction (compare par. 118 with par. 83). But it ought to be *consistent*.

The comparison of “concept” and “experience” in this paragraph is the paradigm case of the “in itself” (of par. 83) becoming the “in itself for us.” The “first in-itself” is the simple concept of the “thing” as we derived it from the experience of Sense-Certainty. The “second in-itself” is our experience of how that concept evolves when we use it. They are identical, in that the first is perception as a fact, while the second is perceiving as a cognitive process. The only difference between them is that perceiving as a process involves the consciousness that the concept “in-itself” is *our* concept, i.e. it is the being of the concept for us; but even the degree of this consciousness can vary. *We*, who are consciously seeking to observe how the concept of truth itself functions and develops, are consciously aware of the identity in quite a different way than the perceiving consciousness itself—which is only interested in perceiving the problematic “thing” correctly.

(c) *The “Way of ideas” (or Dogmatic Idealism)*

- 9./119. The thing is one. So the manifold of properties arises from my perceiving: white for my eyes, tart for my tongue, etc. The *self* is the medium of the heap or collection.

Again we start from the point where our naïve experience began. But now we speak subjectively: The object does not “present itself as One.” Rather I “become sure of it.” I make a logical assumption, or lay down an axiom. It follows that all of the manifoldness of the “thing” arises from *my* interaction with it. We are beginning now to develop “idealism” as a critical method.⁹ Consciousness is the “medium” in which the manifold of sensible properties exists. We perceive the *one* thing differently with different senses. So it is from the plurality of the senses that the plurality of the “properties” arises.

- 10./120. But, *qua* impressions in the medium, white is a specific color, tart a specific taste; and the *thing* is One specific collection (as against others). This (negative, determinate) oneness is essential to it. But if it has *one* property that is essential, and distinguishes it, then the thing must have many other properties. For, (1) it has its *own* essence, it does not exist on account of something else. Hence (2) the determinate properties are not *just* there on account of other things either; but they are only determinate *in it* as a self-distinguishing plurality; and (3) as existing in the universal community of the

thing they are in and of themselves, and they are neutral to one another. So the thing is the *Also* after all.

This critical idealism has a long way to go. But it is a critically realistic version of Locke's "way of ideas" that is evolving. We should notice that Hegel makes no attempt to distinguish "primary" from "secondary" qualities. That distinction belongs to the evolution of "Understanding." It represents a halfway-house in which the Understanding is trying to conceive of its own "supersensible" world in a sensible (i.e. perceptible) way. The theory of "matters," on the other hand, logically belongs to the full development of the standpoint of perception, because it is not a distinction within the range of actual perceptions, but an attempt to conceive the supersensible consistently within the logical structure of perception.¹⁰

The attempt to claim that the manifold of sensation is simply subjective ignores its interpersonal objectivity. Every identifiable property is an objective essence. Whatever is "for us" must have its "foundation in the thing" (as the moderates said in the great medieval battle about the status of universals). It is our common intelligible world that is structured by the order of the many supposedly subjective properties. Not just the oneness of the thing is objectively real, but its "difference" from everything else. In being *self*-identical it is exactly like everything else, logically indistinguishable from any other thing; and since it must have some specific "difference" as well as this oneness, the thing must *necessarily* have a plurality of properties. It is not just a unit (like a Democritean atom), but a "point of singularity that rays out into plurality" (par. 115). Things must differ from one another in objective respects (and they must resemble one another in different ways) if they are to present themselves as variously as they do to our senses—especially if one sense can be crucial, as taste is for salt. The more things there are that our one thing distinguishes itself from, the more objective logical properties it must have "in itself." It may only reveal these differences in its interactive relations with the other things. But every property that it reveals is a property that it has *in itself*, and not simply for something else.

Also, the properties that a thing has for my perception are logically independent of each other. For perception the thing is a collection of perceptions that have no necessary connection. The unity of my many perceptions of the thing, is a feeling of necessity in my mind. This is the truth as I actually perceive it. Locke's conviction (of substantial unity) reduces to a Humean "feeling." The thing is a "heap or collection of impressions." But our perceptual realist agrees with Reid against Hume, since the feeling of necessity is a primitive certainty of objective reality. If we were to restate Hegel's argument in terms of the medieval battle about whether the universals are "in the thing" or not, we would have a triumph for the Scotist over the Ockhamites who called him a dunce. Our "realist" is not quite a dunce; but, as we shall soon see, she is only a sophomore.

11./121. Along with this taking of the truth, consciousness is aware that it *also* reflects itself into itself. So the unity with itself that every thing equally possesses, is what con-

sciousness supplies. The thing is a complex of *free matters* enclosed in one volume of space and displaying themselves to our different senses.

This paragraph seems like a satirical picture of the consistent Lockean common sense. Given that what perception truly reveals is “things” made up of determinate collections of perceptions (distinct impressions or “ideas” that are referred to the same thing by the self that has them); and given that the self knows these impressions or ideas to be the furniture of its own mind, supplied by experience, and not originated by the mind itself; then we must suppose that the multiplicity of the ideas in the unifying medium of our consciousness is matched by a thing that is the patient medium for a plurality of “matters.” Every distinguishable perception has its own distinct objective ground; and all of the distinct grounds are somehow together in the object. The unity that we perceive is only wrapped around this great collection of possible experiences, by the mind (which isolates that determinate volume of space).

When we seek to compose our concept of the perceptible *thing* out of our actual and remembered perceptions, we have to recognize that our “impressions and ideas” fall into several great categories. In commonsense terms, we have the impressions (or ideas) of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. These are all united in the *one* thing; and they are related in various ways. Sometimes especially in the case of sight and touch—they “overlap”;¹¹ but they remain quite different. Something in the nature of “what is” corresponds to the separateness of sights, sounds, tactile feelings, smells and tastes. The “object” of Perception in which these different categories of sensation are united, must therefore be a unity of “free matters.” For the perceived qualities are quite distinct.

In the “experience of consciousness” this fact about Perception was pointed out by Aristotle. Hegel’s doctrine of “free matters” is only connected with early modern theories of heat, magnetism, etc. in an incidental (and implicitly critical) way. The hypothesis that heat or magnetism is a kind of subtle “matter” that is communicated from one “thing” to another, is actually a misguided carrying over of the perceptual standpoint into the world of the Understanding. Forces are not like “matters” at all. “Things” do not communicate their matters; and the matters do not communicate with one another.

It is clear that Hegel holds that the theory of “matters” is logically implicit in the assumption that perception is just “true-taking.” It is perfectly appropriate, therefore, for us to *posit* it explicitly. The *logic* of the concepts that the natural consciousness takes for granted, is precisely what we are supposed to be concerned with.¹²

In the history of mechanics, and of physical science generally, it was the “overlap” of sight and touch that was crucially important. We can establish a *parallel* between these two separate perceptions; and when we do we find that sight is “dialectical.” It is the tactile experience that can be trusted in practice. It is not vision that we take as the *criterion* of size and shape; but we do *see* that things have measurable spatial “properties.” Vision has been as important as touch in the evolution of measurement; and classical mechanics evolved as a *visualization* of mathematical relations.¹³

- 12./122. Thus both the thing and consciousness have now taken the roles of the One and the Many. It is not just perceiving, but the thing itself, that shows itself in this doubled way (as being unity and plurality in and for itself). Whichever side it exhibits as true to the apprehending consciousness it has the opposite truth within itself.

In this paragraph the simple inversion of perceptual consciousness (which begins in par. 119) becomes complete. Both the “thing” and the perceiving consciousness have now served as the unity of thinghood, and as the medium of the multiplicity of the properties in turn. The reason that Hegel posits the “free matters” theory at this point is plain enough. He wants to make the mirror relation between the perceived object and the perceiving process perfect. The thing-concept has the same structure as the observing consciousness. The matters are the modes of sense-consciousness, because the things have to be constituted out of the stuff of consciousness. Thing and Properties, the One and the Many, already exhibit the logical identity between Being-for-self and Being-for-another.

(d) *The world of perceptual relations*

- 13./123. The true object of Perception, therefore, is the whole process. The thing has its own essence, but it is also for another, and it is an other for itself just as it is for another. Consciousness seeks to make a construct out of the oneness of these aspects. But the oneness of its being one and many belongs to the thing; so the oneness and the multiplicity must fall within different things; things have contradictory aspects because they are necessarily in relation to one another. The relatedness is in the world not in the mind.

The final moment of “Perception”—that which corresponds to “pointing” in Sense-Certainty—begins here. Perceptual consciousness will now both achieve its own finally satisfactory shape (for itself), and become visible to us (in that shape) as being really “Understanding,” not Perception—just as the pointing consciousness of Frau Bauer is really Perception without knowing it. The essence of being a *thing* is to be “for another.” The thing exists for a perceiving consciousness. It necessarily has two aspects, inward oneness and outward manifoldness of relations, or outward oneness (independence) and an inwardly inexhaustible potential. The perceptual standpoint refuses to accept this necessary unity of opposites. We take responsibility for putting the two distinct aspects (the absolute being of the thing-for-itself and its relative being-for-another) into the oneness of the thing. We use the locution “in so far as” in order to keep the aspects distinct. The important difference is that we no longer try to ascribe one aspect to ourselves and the other to the thing. Instead, we admit that the thing can only exist in a world of other things. Our “in so far” distinguishes between what the thing is “by itself,” and what it is “in all of its relations.” Thus difference is objective as well as identity. But it is external to identity because the world of things is a world of external relations. The whole dialectic of the object and the perceiving consciousness is now projected into

the outer world. Perception, after all, is a relation of things with my body, which is another “thing.” It is not in relation to consciousness that each thing is both one and many. That is how the whole world of things is in their necessary relations to one another.

- 14./124. Everything is specified by its difference from others. It is on its own account the simple determinacy that makes up its essential distinguishing character. Its inward differentness is necessarily the actual distinction of a manifold constitution [all of its other “properties”] but the actualization of this manifold is non-essential. So there is still a doubling of aspects, but they are essential and unessential respectively. But the “non-essential” aspects are still “necessary” to the thing.

We can see now how the perceptual standpoint maintains itself with such perfect stability. Things are both self-identical and different from other things. The concept of *thing* involves both identity and difference because of this; and we can identify the opposite aspects in each singular thing. The pattern of the argument is much the same as before—but now it is more explicit, and it can be stated in logical terminology. Now that the thing exists in a community of things we can speak of the “essential distinction” (*wesentliche Unterschied*). This white stuff is “salt” because of its taste on my tongue. That real essence is there even if no one tastes it; and so is the manifold constitution (made of up of all of its properties—beginning with its “whiteness”). In so far as it tastes this way, the white stuff is salt; in so far as this colorless liquid turns the litmus paper red it is “acid.” In so far as the stuff is white it is like sugar and unlike soot; in so far as the liquid is colorless, it is like water, and unlike ink. But none of these external relations is essential to it as the “thing” that it is “all by itself.” In this totality the dialectical contradictions are all resolved.

The salt is necessarily white and crystalline, etc. But that does not distinguish it from sugar. What I need to know, in order to identify it, is how it tastes. It is salt on my tongue, as opposed to sweet. Whiteness can go with either of these tastes indifferently. It is not “essential,” but it cannot be left out. Neither the salt taste nor the sweet taste has any quarrel with the whiteness (of table salt or refined powdered sugar). But the two tastes cannot coexist; and whichever one is there defines the “thing” even before we taste it.¹⁴

- 15./125. The determinacy which is the “essential” or “absolute” character of the thing on its own account is essentially a relation to others (which negates the thing’s independence). The thing “goes to the ground” through its essential property.

We now make our own transition to the Understanding, by observing the actual structure of this stabilized and self-reconciled perceptual consciousness. If the thing is what it is in virtue of its difference from other things then it cannot simply subsist “for itself.” Its specific difference places it in an essential relation. The difference defines its place in a community of things. The supposedly independent things are (and must be) in relation with other things in the continuum of time and space. It is only through their relations that their properties (including the essential

property that makes each thing what it is) are manifested. We are moving logically toward the absolute continuum of gravitational mass; but the “free matters” will survive as the other distinguishable modes of “force.”

We should notice that the distinction between “primary” and “secondary” qualities is the Understanding’s way of rationalizing the distinction between the “essential” and the “non-essential” properties by making the “identity” (or homogeneity) what is “essential.” This leads to the enlightened materialism in which only mechanical causation is properly intelligible. By following the common sense view that it is the “difference” that is “essential” to the “thing,” Hegel guides us towards an objective idealism in which organic development becomes the model of what is rationally comprehensible (and rational comprehension replaces the intelligent prediction of the Understanding).

Thus Hegel’s “Science of experience” is not mechanically historical. We do not have to follow the history of scientific theory slavishly. Hegel certainly knew how Galileo and Newton had established their world of Understanding. But the pursuit of the mathematical and the measurable leads to an impoverishment both of experience and of science. We can go nowhere beyond mechanics. So the atoms, and the “primary” qualities do not figure in the “science of experience.”¹⁵ Chemistry is the science that “perception” founds; and unless we follow the natural route indicated by our own sensory interactions with the world, we shall get mired in a bad metaphysics that requires the mysterious “infusion” of forces (even the mechanical force of gravity) into an inert prime matter which, whether continuous or discrete, is quite impotent to explain anything. Our own senses do better for us (metaphysically speaking) than mathematical mechanics.

- 16./126. Briefly, the logical necessity of this experience is this: the thing is posited as being absolutely on its own account. But a negative that refers to itself, sublates itself, and has its essence in something else [cf. pars. 178–196].

Hegel now offers us a summary of his argument. What is important here is to understand the logic that makes his argument properly “necessary.” The “thing” is posited by the perceiving mind as a stably independent element in experience. It is supposed to be self-contained and independent; so nothing organic can be simply a thing, since every mature sense-certain consciousness knows that living things *need* other things. The organism is an *active* negative; it consumes other things, and assimilates their being to its own; but obviously they have to be available, for without them it will die. So it is not the paradigm case of a “thing.”¹⁶ Hegel’s *salt* was the clearest example of a simple “thing” that his scientific knowledge and experience could provide. It is physically stable, and independent of everything else, or self-contained. Thus it is the perfect model for the demonstration of *logical* dependence that Hegel wants to provide.

The “essence” of an inorganic thing of this primitive kind cannot be understood without reference to the other things from which the one that is truly perceived is really differentiated. That, I trust, will be granted by logicians of all

persuasions. It follows logically from this that the truly perceived thing has its essence in something else, because things can only be truly differentiated from one another within a common concept. This common concept is the adequate concept of "thinghood" itself—the Understanding.¹⁷

When we reach the level of self-consciousness, it will be a fact of experience that the independent self recognizes its own "genus" in the other self. But again what *we* shall recognize is that both selves "have their essence" in something logically higher than they are. The absolute negation that "sublates" their difference (or "puts it by") in that case is death; and the higher genus is an actual community. Similarly, the logic of perceptual consciousness requires a physical community. At the highest generic level of thinghood (or the lowest, most abstract level, of physical reality) there has to be a continuum in which every real thing finds its necessary place. Within this continuum, there will have to be some essential differences, because it occasions the perception of so many different things. That is why the category of "free matters" is a necessary one. Whether this category has any necessary connection with the different modes of conscious perception is not so clear; but I am inclined to say that "perception" requires at least *two* senses—and the "phenomenology of experience" has to concern itself with concrete necessities rather than with abstract intuitions.

- 17./127. Thus the object has in it an essential property that constitutes its logical differentiation, but also a differentness which though *necessary* is not the *essential* determinacy. This is only a verbally disguised contradiction.

The standpoint of Perception presupposes an absolute community of "things." But the definition of "thinghood" that the perceptual consciousness set up for itself contains no necessary reference from one thing to another for its being. The independent being of the thing is what makes it the "object" that can be "truly taken"; and because it is independent, nothing else is supposed to be necessary. Everything else is externally related to it. We have now seen that in any consistent formulation of the perceptual standpoint, this is logically impossible. It is the independence that is a sham. The thing is supposed to be self-identical; and all of its differences and resemblances are supposed to accrue to it only *in so far* as it is externally compared with others. But although the "in so far" are not "essential," we have seen why they are "necessary"; and that is a contradiction. The world of "external" relations is the cloak for an internally related community.¹⁸

- 18./128. Thus the attempt to separate the inside from the outside fails. The object is a contradiction (as defined by Aristotle). Its being on its own account is logically united with its being for others; and its independence is just as unessential as the external relations that are supposed to be unessential.

The independence of the thing, its singular identity, is really no more "essential" to it, than its apparently external relatedness. Its being on its own account is identical with its being in relation with other things, because it is only through its

relationships that its being “for itself” is (or can be) known. We should seek our examples of this contradictory identity at the most primitive level at which we find it comfortable to operate; but we must take care not to go too far, or too fast. Thus we might be tempted to go straight to the level of mass and gravitation. But at that level there are no properly different things; there is only quantitative difference. So that is actually a more advanced mode of consciousness than the still qualitative one which we have reached.

Hegel’s example of “salt” can now be seen to be significant because a salt is the “neutral” result of chemical interaction. Acids and bases are not proper “things,” because they are essentially “for-another” rather than “for-themselves.” Hence they are *destructive*, they reveal the finitude of the being-for-self of anything with which they come in contact. The world of perceptual consciousness is the world of things that are passively there; things that *appear* to be independent of, and indifferent to, each other. The independence is not real. “Things” can only be perceptually known through the supposedly external comparisons that *we* make between them; and this means that even the “independence” that belongs to them conceptually is *not* independent of our conceptual capacity. What is “essential” and what is not “essential” is a function of our supposedly external observation.¹⁹

- 19./129. Thus the object of perception is superseded just like that of Sense-Certainty. From a “being” it turned into “ideas.” But as images of sensible being, these “ideas” are conditioned by it. They are a universality which splits into extremes: a negative unity raying into properties, and a positive medium of “free matters.” The extremes are only an independence that is afflicted by being-for-another. This contradictory unity is absolute universality, and we are now in the realm of the Understanding.

The logical identity of being-for-self with being-for-another constitutes the transition from the sphere of perception to that of Understanding. If we think of sense-certainty in terms of “matters of fact” and of perception in terms of “ideas” (as I have suggested in the analysis above), then we can understand perception as the halfway house between cognitive sensation and pure conception. In perception we deal with *Vorstellungen*. The essence of a *Vorstellung* is to represent a thing (x) for a perceiver s. It can represent any x for any S—and in that aspect it is already a functioning universal. But as an *actual* perception it necessarily represents *this* x for *this* S; and in that aspect it is necessarily unique, distinct not only from the perceptions of other S’s but from the other perceptions that this S may have of this x. Here it shows how it is conditioned by sensation (as Hegel puts it). Thus the concept of a perceptible “thing” is the contradictory combination of the idea of an independent singular entity which neither affects nor is affected by the external knowing consciousness that passively perceives its many properties, with that of an energetic centre or focus of a great variety of interpretations. As rooted in sensation, perception is the result of a two-sided (or “chemistic”) interaction. The “thing with its properties” arises (like a salt) from the “neutralization” of opposite forces. Hegel does not himself hold a simple causal theory of perception (or even of sensation); on the contrary, he aims to show us that the naïve empiricism which

wants to conceive of perception causally (as analogous to mirror-reflection) cannot succeed. The free spontaneity of experience as an interpretive process is a fundamental postulate of Hegel's account (and I call it a "postulate" for the present, because I take it to be an assumption which validates itself in the Hegelian circle).

We have already seen how we could not stand still at the concept of the "one thing" with "many properties." We had to admit that the multiplicity was founded in the "thing," and not simply generated by the perceiving mind; and on the other hand, the "unity" was an actively negative exclusion, which could not be simply contributed by the mind as it sorted the perceived "properties" into things. The concept of "force" which Hegel now wants to put in the place of "thinghood" does not involve any initial recognition of "freedom." The Understanding has a *mechanical* conception of "necessity." But we shall see in due course that the concept of universal mechanism is obliged to invert itself comprehensively in order to understand how it can comprehend itself. "Necessity" has to comprehend "freedom."

Forces are not perceived as such; they are perceived differently according to what the balance of forces is. The singular pole of the concept of the "thing" (which I called an "energetic centre") is a centre of force; it is the focus point of a potentially infinite range of perceptible manifestations. The adequate concept of the *thing* (that which is on its own account what it is for another) is the concept of "force"; and "Understanding" is simply the *other for which force is*. Subjective Understanding is the force that "solicits utterance." What is manifested in perception expresses the nature of the understanding to which it is manifest, just as much as it expresses the intelligible "being" that manifests itself. The manifestation can only count as "a knowledge of what is" on condition that we are willing to regard the two forces that seem to solicit one another externally and contingently as the opposite sides or aspects of the unified concept of force. This is already implicit in the concept of the "thing" (as that which is essentially the object of rational perception).

- 20./130. What emerged from the dialectic of sense-certainty was only *sensible universality*—i.e. true singularity, or a singular being with its own essence. But along with this independent singular essence there comes forth the universality of perception. These opposites are not just neighbors, they are a unity. Their common factor (independence) is *not* independent. Perception develops a sophistry of "aspects" in order to save the moments from their contradictions. But the true essence that is to be won from the logic of perceiving is a strictly contradictory concept, i.e. one that is an unconditioned universal.

The "singularity" of Sense-Certainty was a *Sache* with a name. But the *meaning* of the name is something different from what the name refers to. So we followed the "leading of language" and discovered the world as a complex of "things" of many kinds. Each thing is a real unity (referred to by the name) with many properties (among which the *essential* ones are spelled out in the meaning). But the name means a universal essence (or kind). The thing and its properties can only be identified in the conceptual context of a range of different things (or alternative prop-

erties). The real independence and unity of the thing (or of its defining properties) is conditioned by the whole range of sensibly perceptible things and properties within which it is intelligently located. It has to be compared with other things; and its properties have to be classified as “essential” (or defining characteristics) and “non-essential.” The supposition is that the comparison is “external” and that the “non-essential” properties are “accidental.” But neither of these assumptions can be maintained consistently. The thing only reveals what it is “in itself” in its own relations with other things; and *all* of its properties are equally essential to it as *this* thing.

Hegel is busily deconstructing the fortress of perceptual consciousness. The next paragraph—which is his last—is only a rhetorical climax for this. But just for that reason we need to be mindful of how solidly effective and useful the fortress is, in our ordinary lives. For Hegel himself the coming reference to *gesunde Menschen-verstand* is a sufficient acknowledgement of this. He is contemptuous of philosophers who think that “common sense” is the only yardstick that their reasoning needs. But he does not suppose that philosophy can ever overthrow “common sense”—or even that it ought to try to do so (except momentarily, in a “reflective” motion that will eventually restore it “speculatively”). So let us briefly review the progress of the argument up to this point *positively*.

In the dialectic of sense-certainty we learned the meaning of *community as continuity*. The permanent continuum of space and the flowing continuum of time are what Hegel means by *sensuous universality*. These sensible universal fields are filled with the stable things of perception. Even the most transient events of our sense-consciousness are “things” that can be identified by their universal properties. One can characterize even a flash of lightning distinctively if one’s sensory awareness is acute enough (and if for some reason one needs to do it).

To go to this extreme illustrates the reciprocal conditioning of singular and universal. The event is a momentary flash. We understand it now as the “manifestation” of a “force”; formerly it was interpreted as an act of a divine agent, and typically as the act of the *highest* divine agent. In our interpretation, the “force” is identical with the flash itself, and the identity holds no matter how specific our description becomes. The dictionary offers me “forked lightning,” “chain lightning,” “sheet lightning” and “heat lightning” as ordinary descriptions—and “heat lightning” is simply sheet lightning without audible thunder because of the distance. We can distinguish what the lightning is “in itself” from what it is “for us”; and because it is now understood as a force, the distinction is attractive. But lightning came to be understood as a force because of its effect where it “strikes.”

The point (and the example) are important because they illustrate how the “sophistry of perception” is just what gives birth to the two worlds of Understanding. The “for-itself” of the thing becomes the “in-itself” of the supersensible world; and the “for us” of perception becomes the world of phenomenal manifestation. The “being in itself” of the objective world of pure forces will now become the universal concept of the “thing in itself.” Thus the object of consciousness will now be a concept that has no sensible component.

- 21./131. These abstractions: "singularity," "universality," "essences" with "unessential but necessary" relationships, etc. are the powers whose play is "healthy human understanding." Common sense assumes that philosophy deals only with *entia rationis*; and that is true, but philosophy knows them in their determinacy as conceptual elements. Philosophy masters them, while common sense is their plaything. It changes position and contradicts itself; and instead of putting the determinacies together, it keeps them distinct by the sophistry of "in so far." In this way it only convicts itself of *untruth*, because the nature of these abstractions brings them together.

This paragraph is about the contrast between the false philosophy that can make itself at home with "perception" and the true philosophy that is driven onwards by the cumulative "experience" of perceptual consciousness as a contradictory position. I call the nominalist empiricism of "common sense" a "false" philosophy, because it does not satisfy the demand for a systematic concept of "experience." But in its theory of the world as a system of "relations" it reaches a stable shape in which it is impregnable. Whether the relations are really "external" or "internal" remains undecidable (or ambiguous). But "common sense realism" is also (quite consciously) the nominalism that posits an absolute separation between "relations of ideas" and "matters of fact." This separation does not prevent it from making its own (necessary) advance to the level of Understanding (where it asserts with Wittgenstein that "the world is the totality of *facts*, not of *things*"). The Understanding, as we shall observe it, is "realistic" (and "nominalist") in just this way. Idealism (or "speculation") requires us to accumulate our concept of "truth" progressively. So we cannot accept this contradiction, but must interpret our transition to Understanding as the resolution of it. Hence the perception of "things" cannot continue to function as our criterion of what truly is. But it *does* continue to be the standard of ordinary consciousness, and all the deliverances of the Understanding are interpreted in accordance with it.²⁰

Once this has been said, it is easy enough to comprehend the argument of the paragraph. For it only summarizes the shifts that perceptual consciousness must make in order to maintain itself—and we have been through those already *ad nauseam*. Using "singular" and "universal" like the hardheaded followers of William of Ockham, and "on its own account" (or "for itself") as opposed to "relative to an external other" as if this distinction was itself a matter of direct perception, our common sense is able to dismiss "philosophy" as a language game with verbal counters. It could not maintain itself without these counters: and now that it has been permeated by the scientific revolution, it has in the main transferred its operations to the territory of Understanding (i.e. it accepts the theoretical entities of science as "real"). But it continues to regard logic as a game with verbal counters—which implies that it does not yet understand what its own real "forces" etc. are.

It is the Understanding itself that makes the distinctions which enable perceptual consciousness to maintain its confident realism. The Understanding aims to establish the *reality* of its own *concepts* (for a "force" is not a real "thing," but a real "concept") while at the same time maintaining that only "things" are "real," that the real is both singular and independent (and in those senses opposed to thought

in general). In order to achieve this end it generates a mass of thoughts that are indeed “unreal” because they are *untrue*. Their untruth and the consequent certainty of their unreality is a logical matter. They form an inconsistent cycle, a circle of self-contradiction. The moments of unity and multiplicity are systematically exchanged first between the perceiving consciousness and the real object, and finally between the real objects as essential and non-essential (though necessary).²¹

Hegel puts the mistake of perceptual Understanding two ways. On the one hand he points to the opposition of being and thought, or to the Understanding’s insistence that it knows the difference between solid reality and mere *entia rationis* (*Gedankendinge*). But on the other hand he wants to insist that it is the ordinary realistic Understanding that is actually at the mercy of *Gedankendinge*. What it takes to be the truth (i.e. to be the true “copy” of the real) is only an alternation of one determinate abstraction after another. The abstractions becomes “absolute elements and powers” for a speculative observer because their determinacy is recognized. In other words they are grasped as moments in a process; and then they are real “powers” (*Mächte*) over which the philosopher is master because they are never abstracted out of the whole. They are moments in the *structure* of actual experience. The mistake of perceptual understanding is to assume that “cognition” is an activity that supervenes upon an object that is already there; but actually it is the construction of “the object” in a process of *interpretation*.

Notes

1. W. Purpus (1905, 13, line 42) thinks that “*herausfallen*” is borrowed from Plato’s *synekpiptousa* (*Theaetetus*, 156 a–b). If we could rely on this as a true echo, then there would be an implicit presupposition of “Force and Understanding” as the world of motions out of which the *Dasein* of Sense-Certainty and Perception “fall.” But Hegel speaks only of the *objects*, and nothing in his *herausfallen* suggests Plato’s *syn*—the falling out *together* of sensing and thing sensed.

2. Q. Lauer has a valuable note on *Eigenschaft* (1976, 56, n. 9). We should note especially “that the quality in question ‘belongs to,’ ‘is owned by,’ ‘is the property of,’ the object perceived—is not *attributed* to it from outside.” (P. A. Simpson [forthcoming, chap. 1] calls Perception the “inductive in-itself.” This is a sound insight; sec. 2 of his chapter is an important contribution to the literature dealing with chapter II.)

3. We might still come to *understand* that the masked substance was really salt, because of its effects (or its behaviour in tests). But this would not be proper “perception.”

4. Hegel would not have chosen this example if any salty tasting substances other than sodium chloride occurred naturally in our everyday experience. The possibility of a *salt-savor* that is not “real salt” belongs to the realm of Observing Reason.

5. See Descartes, Meditation V; and (for the Stoic tradition) E. V. Arnold, *Roman Stoicism* (London, 1911, sec. 148).

6. This chapter does *not* contain Hegel’s theory of sense-perception—as D. W. Hamlyn (1961, 144–145) like some others assumed. W. A. DeVries (1988) has corrected this mistake.

7. Hegel’s examples of Sense-Certainty are *generic*: “tree,” “house.” Perception has to be more specific: “oak,” etc. But I do not think we can distinguish the standpoints effectively in

this way. Everyone in the poet's village knows that it is a chestnut tree that shades the smithy; and Frau Bauer would very probably know (let us say) that Lisa was her only Holstein. Sense-Certainty was a practical point of view; Perception is theoretical.

8. Not "broken up" as Miller mistakenly renders *getrennt*.

9. The critical idealism of Perception is very naïve. There are as yet no privileged perceptions (as in the theory of primary qualities that we meet in Galileo). The distinction is between what is "by nature" or "in truth" as against what is "by convention" or "for us." But again, there is no hypothesis of the atoms yet. On the other hand, what is "in truth" is a *determinate* thing, not the absolute One of Parmenides. Only in the Greek Sophists (and perhaps in the "mitigated scepticism" of the Late Academy) can we recognize something like this "shape of consciousness." The dogmatic certainty that there really is just *one* thing there (which is essential to the position as a true successor to Sense-Certainty) makes this position a form of "Common Sense" philosophy. Hyppolite (1974, 78, 109) is not far wrong in referring us to Locke. But even Locke's recognition that there is something *problematic* about the substantial unity is not yet present. We have to think of Locke as a historic force in the Enlightenment, rather than of the actual arguments of the *Essay*. This is typically how Hegel does think about the history of philosophy.

Q. Lauer (1976, 63–64) refers us to Aristotle at this point (*De Anima* III, 2, 425 B, 26–27). His doctrine of the "identity of the sensible in act with the sensing in act" characterizes *our* position throughout, and not the position of the observed consciousness at any stage; but see further note 12 below.

10. The atoms and corpuscles in the physics of Democritus and Galileo are logically troublesome, because they are in principle perceptible. "Matters" are determinate universals—i.e. they exist as permanent possibilities of a perception like that which we are having at the moment.

11. Charles Taylor has a valuable note pointing out that the overlapping of sense-perceptions actually affects the interpretation of what is "perceived" by one sense (A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 172–173).

12. Aristotle's theory of the special objects of the senses (*De Anima* II, 6–12) provides the historical foundation that Hegel's theory needs.

13. It is precisely because it was the key to the *mathematization* of natural knowledge, that Hegel takes no account of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities in the *Phenomenology*. Important as that distinction certainly was in the development of the "Truth of Enlightenment," it is only a side-issue for our comprehension of "experience."

14. In most cases it will be wiser not to taste the acid—perhaps not even to touch or smell it. This serves to illustrate how the world of Perception has expanded in its final stage. (With most *acids*, Perception will be inadequate; Rational Observation is needed.)

15. Some commentators have failed to appreciate this fact; and in spite of the polemic against mathematical method in the Preface, no one has grasped the reason behind it. See for instance, R. C. Solomon (1983, 343). R. B. Pippin (1989, 286, n. 17) thinks Solomon's historical discussion is useful. But except for his discussion of the Leibnizian *monad* it is generally on the wrong track.

16. The "thinghood of the self" is a fundamental theme of the *Phenomenology*. The self-conscious observer has to be grasped and understood as a *thing* in accordance with the definition here. But the only simple thing that is there for the perceptual consciousness is the human *skull* (we know perceptually that that is the absolutely characteristic *human bone*).

This result is, of course, absurd; but its absurdity directs us to look beyond the perceptual level of comprehension. The “thing” that we eventually find is the experience of the human community (comprehended within the skull of the philosophical observer).

17. Hegel refers to the concept as “something else” (*in einem andern*). Miller translates this “in another thing.” That is how the perceptual consciousness perceives the truth—when I taste the salt it disappears into my body. That is the truth of “experience”; and because of the bad infinite continuity of experience (as “one thing after another”) the perceptual consciousness never has to reflect upon the absurdity of finding the “essence” of one thing in another. What saves Hegel’s statement from being a sophism is precisely the fact that there *is* “something else”—to wit, the Understanding and its world—in which “the thing” does have its true essence.

18. I hope that I have shown that the complete *Gestalt* of Perception really *is* the position of “common sense” (*pace* C. Taylor in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 177); and further that the “contradiction” is of a very ordinary kind, which it is easy to overlook. “Perception” skips back and forth between the conscious view that relations are “external,” and the working admission that they are “internal.” The philosophical consciousness must recognize the “working admission” and follow where it leads. But this has nothing to do with our supposed possession of “absolute knowledge” already, or even with the formal assertion (against “common sense”) of the validity of absolute idealism (“Fichte’s contribution”). At the moment, we are only uncovering the reason why empirical scientists (and even a religious seer like Zarathustra), who are as wedded to “common sense” as the most ordinary perceptual consciousness, are obliged to move from the “thing-concept” of the world to the “force-concept” of it. Heidegger’s claim that “we understand the transition from perception to understanding only if we register in advance that, as a mode of knowing, perception is already placed in the perspective of absolute knowledge; only then is further advance a necessity” is quite mistaken (1980, 138–139; 1988, 96). (Flay’s position is different [1984, 64]. But since he thinks that the progression involves “self-consciousness,” he is quite as badly mistaken as Heidegger.)

19. M. Westphal (1973, 101) rightly calls the identity of “for self” and “for other” “the most explicit contribution in the *Phenomenology* to the understanding of Hegel’s theory of contradiction.” R. C. Solomon’s (1983, 343–346) reference to Leibniz, and the “identity of indiscernibles,” is in place here. But the *Monadology* is the theory of “contradiction” because the independence assumed in the “thing-concept” is there maintained. “Things” are actually terms in a relational system. No two “things” differ only in number because the spatial separation of two (otherwise identical) grains of salt makes them distinct terms in such a system. “Space” as the system of external relations is the ground of the “also” aspect of things. The “monadic” aspect of the “thing” is its functioning as a “negative One.” But that “independence” dissolves into the continuum of “Force.” “Living things” carry the evolution of the “monad” further—but they fail to be true monads. The “truth” of the *Monadology* is reached only in Hegel’s spiritual interpretation of the Christian image of the individual as “child of God.”

20. L. J. Goldstein (1994, 46) says quite correctly: “There is nothing about sense certainty that precludes Hume or Russell contemplating the content of sense until the very end of time. Terry Pinkard (1994, 8) characterizes the positions of consciousness as “social spaces.” This is a good way of expressing their objective significance. (His conception of a “social space” comes from Jay Rosenberg, 1986.)

21. The transition from Perception to Understanding is *one* place (perhaps not the only one, but the most important one) where the claim of P. Fuss and J. Dobbins (1982, 391) that

the transition occurs because the arguments of the present *Gestalt* are recognized to be “rationalizations,” is valid. Whether the position of Chip Sills (1989, 30) that the transitions are “metaphorical” should be accepted, I cannot decide. I am not sure that the claim that the *Phenomenology* deals with “the self-elimination of the tropological standpoint” (24) is consistent with the view that the *Science of Logic* is a “critique of pure trope” (33). But I don’t know what that is. Practical Rhetoric (being the “art of persuasion”) depends on the primacy of the literal (i.e. of Perception). The modern rhetorical theorists seem to ignore that; and one result is that they become very difficult to understand—and often unpersuasive. There is a growing literature for the rhetorical interpretation of Hegel’s system—see for instance J. H. Smith (1988) and Henry Sussman (1982)—which I shall generally leave aside (except for occasions where I seem to have derived insights from it myself).

Chapter 6

The World of Intellectual Theory

III: Force and Understanding; Appearance and Supersensible World

The title offers us two different antitheses. “Force” is objective, Understanding is subjective. But both belong to the supersensible world. Force is the supersensible reality that is manifest in the phenomenal world: understanding constructs the supersensible world as what stands under the world of phenomena.¹ “Appearance” is the sublated shape in which the thing-world of Perception is comprehended and carried forward in the new “object” for our observation. The concept of the “thing” suffered first a simple inversion into its direct antithesis—my awareness of things (pars. 119–122); and then a double inversion which unites both the concept and its antithetic moment in the higher concept of the infinite or unconditioned Being that appears. Thus we have now arrived at the point where the primitive intuition of Sense–Certainty (the sense of an absolute Being) returns into its antithesis (our finite world of things). We have also arrived at the concept of the purely intellectual thing—Kant’s Ding an sich.

(a) Retrospect and Prospect

- 1./132. The essence that is *taken truly* is a thought-entity not an immediately sensed one. It is still an *object* however, and not yet the self-conception of the cognitive consciousness. We know that the perceiving consciousness has produced it, and that the reflection of essence in the world is the same as its reflection in the mind; but consciousness takes the objective reflection as the essence.

Looking back we can see that the perceptible “thing” turned into the *thought* of the bonding-force that unifies many “properties.” Both the “one” and the “many” are perceptible, but the thing is the imperceptible bond that unites these extremes. And what differentiates between one thing and another is a relation between them. What the thing is on its own account, is what it is for another (for other things, and especially for us who perceive it). For if the purely intellectual world of things were to exist simply by itself it would lose the intelligible status that we have discovered to be its “essence.” The “thing” has “returned into itself” as a sensible appearance that *has* an essence because of our reflection upon the perception of it. But this is

only what *we* understand about it, not what the naïve Understanding recognizes. For the naïve Understanding this intelligible essence is simply the *object* that is out there. Our task now is to understand this object as it is.

We must remember that actual seeing and hearing etc. were the basis of sense-certainty. Sense-Certainty was conscious of “matters of fact” (*Sachen*). But, as seen from our present “relational” standpoint, Sense-Certainty is the sphere of what Hume called “impressions.” Perception was already the sphere of what Locke (and his hosts of followers) called “ideas.” In the perceptual perspective those “ideas” are “properties” that are taken to belong to things (and to *represent* things in many ways “for us”). When all of the moments of the concept of thing were brought together, we arrived at an “unconditioned” universal—i.e. something that does not have a sensible aspect that is the condition of its existence. This is Locke’s “substance, I know not what” or Kant’s *Ding an sich*.

The thing-status of this intelligible community of things is the basic problem of this third chapter. “Consciousness” is *essentially* “thing-consciousness”—that is to say it has an “object” that is categorically assumed to be what it is independently of whether we are conscious of it or not. But the consciousness that we are observing has been driven by the dialectic of thinghood to abandon the view that any finite thing can be what it *is* simply “for itself.” The simple concept of the directly perceived thing (such as “this cube of salt”) has evolved into an unconditioned community of all things. But as perceivers we still assume naïvely that the reflection which brought this transformation about in our minds is *external* (i.e. quite contingent and unessential to the objective being that has been reflected upon). The unconditioned community of things—in which every singular member is “for itself” the totality of what it is for all the other things—this community is just like an unperceived “thing,” i.e., it really is what it is, whether we are conscious of it or not. This “unconditioned Universal” is the “thing-in-itself.” We have finally freed it from its dependence upon our sense-awareness.²

But *we* have already seen that the concept of the “thing” logically involves our awareness of it. “Being” and “being known” are the moments of thinghood. So the resting essence of the “unconditioned Universal” cannot be taken *simply* (or as an objective “thing”). For then it would become the extreme of “being for self”—and we find ourselves back again in the very dialectic of thing-consciousness that produced it. It will then be confronted by an “other” that has no essence at all (*das Unwesen*); and if it is connected with this *Unwesen*, then it must cease to be the “essence” itself. If we allow that, we shall be thrown back into the contradictory pretences of perceptual consciousness. This backturning circle is, of course, the normal condition of the “perceptual understanding” of common sense.

So we ought not to call the “unconditioned Universal” the “thing-in-itself” (as Kant does); for we have seen that it is the resolution of all those pretences. When it “returned into itself,” it did so because we recognized that our reflection upon it was its own self-reflection. Thus we have already moved from the concept of the “thing” (as the *object* of experience) to the self-concept of experience. We know that this has happened, although we do not yet know all that it means. But the con-

sciousness that we are observing has gone forward into the “supersensible world” with its primitive structure of object-consciousness (or world-awareness) still untransformed. Its object is *an sich* (or, as Miller properly says, “in principle”) “the Concept”; but the cognitive consciousness is not yet the Concept “for itself.” In other words, the objective Concept (i.e. the unconditioned Universal or the supersensible *world*) is not yet recognized *as* a concept—i.e. as something that logically involves the cognitively reflecting subject.

The consciousness that we are observing has become *scientific*. It is aware that it is operating in the realm of pure theory. But it takes this theoretical realm to be a “supersensible *world*.” That the observing intellect is the *place* of this world (and the only place that it has) is not yet recognized. Consciousness takes the supersensible world to be the “beyond” of our perception—the absolute thing within which all perceived things move and have their being.

We know this is a mistake, because we have seen how the dialectic of thing-consciousness gave birth to this self-concept which is not, and cannot be, a thing in the simple perceptual sense. For us, the two “reflections” (the concept in the scientist’s mind, and the reality in the supersensible “world”) are one and the same.³ But the understanding mind is intent upon the real world. For it, the “supersensible world” is a nonvisible foundation or ground for that “external” reality. It must work out the contradiction involved in taking the “unconditioned universal” as the absolute “thing” before it can arrive at the self-conscious concept of the Understanding that we already have.

Hegel’s phenomenological method *works* precisely because we actually observe in the logical process and result of each stage just what the observed consciousness must discover in its experience at the next stage. The adequate concept of Sense-Certainty is the identifiable “thing”; and the adequate concept of Perception is the intelligible community of things. But this means that the experiencing consciousness conceptualizes each new stage in the terms of the previous stage. And for this reason it is bound now to conceive of the “unconditioned” as a “thing.” *Our* object is precisely the “Understanding” as the still unselfconscious *Concept* that has the “thing-in-itself” as its object.

- 2./133. The Understanding watches while this concept of truth, which has being-in-itself but not for-itself, goes its own way. As philosophical observers, we must be the Concept that fills out the result. It is in this developed object, which exhibits itself as simply being, that consciousness first becomes comprehension.

Our position is so different from that which the Understanding is in, that just stating how we see things as philosophical observers makes us into the effective agents of this stage. The understanding consciousness is now in the observing posture of the onlooker, and it is observing the way the world truly is. Its object is the concept of the true, but it is aware of it only as the thing-in-itself. In the language of the Preface (par. 17) we are going to observe the True as *Substance* (but without even what is there called the “immediacy of knowledge,” because the universal organism is not understood to know itself). Here, where the observed consciousness has

become a pure observer of the “whole” of reality (as it supposes), *our* contribution as lookers on cannot be confined to “simple observation” because we see the total process of intellectual consciousness, and we have to *say* what the Understanding does not recognize, and what it is doing without realizing it. The Understanding does comprehend *the whole*; but it does not recognize that its comprehending is an essential moment in the whole—that the Understanding is precisely what the wholeness of the whole is, and the only way that the whole can *be* a whole. It is *we* who are the self-conscious understanding of what Understanding is.

The Understanding *watches*, while we must both watch it, *and* say what we see. This gives us, first, the key to the difference between the Understanding and Observing Reason. Reason as Observation will not need us to tell it what it is doing. Like the Understanding it simply observes, but unlike the Understanding it knows that what it is observing is *itself*. What the Observing Reason has to learn is that “observing itself” is not the way to know itself. The Understanding (on the other hand) is perfectly successful in its observing, but it does not properly understand what it has succeeded in seeing. Observing Reason knows exactly what it is doing, but it is faced by its own ever-increasing and finally total failure to learn anything by doing it. Just why “what is” can be observed as a *substance* but not as a *subject* is the implicit problem.

Secondly, we should note that once we have raised the consciousness of Understanding to its properly rational status, there is no reason in principle why we should not go on to do logic. This is very nearly what Hegel did in the Berlin years. The reason why he does not adopt this policy in 1806 is plainly stated in the Preface (par. 17): “Everything depends on grasping and expressing the Absolute not as substance but *just as much* as subject.” It is the evolution of natural subjectivity into *substantial* subjectivity that is the main topic of the *Phenomenology*. The phenomenology of simple “consciousness” is strictly preparatory.

In the third place, the Understanding coming to be comprehension by comprehending *the whole*, provides us with the absolute concept that we need if we are to follow the evolution of the subject that *does* always comprehend itself, and knows that it *is* self-comprehension. Three times (at the beginning of chapters IV, VI, and VII) we shall have the repeated experience of going back to follow the phenomenal development of what we have grasped (in principle but *completely*) at the end of the preceding stage. This warning about our stepping in and supplying the self-conscious dimension of the *Concept* is the only point at which Hegel prepares us for this repeated procedure. What *we* do here in the way of expressing what is comprehended, provides the *context* for our comprehensive understanding of what the observed consciousness has to go through in the later stages of its struggle to comprehend what it is doing and has done.

(b) *The Shaped Concept of “Force” (Parmenides and Spinoza)*

- 3./134. We have reached the unconditioned universal negatively, by surrendering all one-sided concepts. This has *the positive* significance that the antithesis of being-for-self

and being-for-another is a unity that embraces everything. Truth is the system of relations.

The first thing to notice is that the Understanding forms a very peculiar "*Gestalt* of consciousness." The "result" of Perception was the *world as a system of relations*. The Understanding comprehends that as an *intelligible system*, i.e. a reality that cannot be perceived, but only *conceived*. According to the Understanding, this is what "truly is." All perceiving (and its relationships) is just our subjective consciousness of this intelligible world. But *we* know that the system of perceived and perceivable relations *is* the intelligible world (for otherwise we could not have come to *know* that this intelligible reality is what truly is). This identity of the *conceived* reality with the *perceivable* is the "positing of the absolute *Gegensatz* as that same essence" (the one that does not need our awareness of it).

So the Understanding is a world-"shape" not an individual shape. In fact it is the Concept itself as a "shape" constituted by its making *itself* the *object* of cognitive *consciousness*. This "object" is supplied in its logical form by *our* comprehension of the result produced by the cumulative process of the experience of Perception.

It is important to realize that it is the *scientific* Understanding that we are concerned with here. Thus although it is a "world-view," the *Gestalt* we are dealing with is that of the scientist who does a certain kind of natural science—in contemporary terms we could appropriately say "the atomic scientist" or "the energy theorist." We must distinguish the empirically scientific Understanding, from the philosophical Understanding. The philosophical Understanding produces the "common sense" theory of Perception which Hegel attacked so viciously in paragraph 131. The scientific Understanding misunderstands *itself*, but not the world. Many of the self-styled Hegelians who delight to join in Hegel's attacks on it, would do better to ponder the aphorism in the *Wastebook*: "Reason without Understanding is nothing, while Understanding is still something without Reason. One cannot make a present of Understanding."⁴ There is plenty of soi-disant "Hegelian" Reason that is as pompously empty as Michael Rosen says it is. But Hegel himself said that first (see par. 14).

For Hegel, the world-view developed by science, the concept that it offers of the whole within which we live and die, is one form of the necessary *knowledge* of the Absolute that we have to have from the start. The scientists who develop that view may or may not understand the transition between perception and understanding (even in the Understanding's own terms).⁵ But even a scientist who has no conception of what Hegel means by saying that in the understanding of perception we have a result in which "the unity of *being for self* and *being for another* is posited" may be wiser than the sages who despise his "understanding."

"Our result was the unconditioned universal, initially in the negative and abstract sense that consciousness negated its one-sided concepts and abstracted them, namely gave them up. But this result has in-itself the positive significance that in it the unity of 'being-for-self' and 'being-for-another,' of the absolute

antithesis, is posited as the same essence." Through the experience of Perception, we have learned that we must give up the one-sided concepts of the perceived thing, and the perceiving self. We must abstract from this mistaken opposition, and recognize that what the thing is "for itself" is identical with what it is "for us." Every thing is the sum total of its possible relations with everything else; and our own sense organs are the central focus of this universal community of relations.

We have now to conceive this universal community objectively as a two-sided identity. The "form" (which we have been calling the "perceiving consciousness") is identical with the "content" (previously the "perceived thing"). Giving up the distinction means that we are left with the concepts of "being for self" and "being for another". These are pure "forms," which belonged, from the standpoint of Perception, to the consciousness that reflects externally upon "things." Now they are the *content* as well. The *process* of perceiving, the process of "taking the truth," is what is there. The Understanding observes the world as a real process of perceiving in which "things" are actualized as perceptions. The perceiving body with its sense organs is just one of these actualized perceptibles—the one that must be actualized if there is to be perception at all.

If we start from this focal thing and give up the one-sided concepts of sensing and thing-sensed, being for another and being for self, then we can see that what we are observing is the process of consciousness itself as what Hyppolite calls "expansion into the realm of differences [i.e. perceiving] and contraction into the unity of being-for-self [i.e. conceiving]." In virtue of the positing of "the absolute antithesis as one and the same essence" this reciprocal movement in consciousness (or thinking) is identical with the movement in the world (or being). The Understanding itself, with its fixation on the perceptual thing-structure of consciousness, takes the movement of the object to be distinct from its own movement. This is what distinguishes it from Reason properly so called. Reason recognizes its identity with reality; the Understanding is still unconscious of this identity because of its inheritance of the standpoint of perception. Since this is precisely the respect in which we see more than the observant Understanding, *our* position as observers of consciousness throughout its evolution can be identified as one of the shapes of "Observing Reason."⁷

We are now observing (as "content" as well as "form") the identity of the knowing self with the world that it knows. Our position has become "comprehensive"; nothing can now fall *outside* our concept. The "infinite riches" that were a transcendent Beyond for Sense-Certainty, and a bad infinite of "possible experience" for Perception are all embraced in the understood identity of the self with its world. The independent thing has dissolved into the unity of intelligible being. Every content belongs to this form, because every thing is a phenomenon of the universal order. And the content is universal, too, because every phenomenon refers us necessarily to the infinite web of phenomena. The *Ding-an-sich* at which we have arrived is the whole order of Nature; the result is "radically universal" (*schlechthin allgemein*).

- 4./135. As object for consciousness the antithesis presents itself as that of many matters and one form: the passive multiplicity that appears for another on one side, and the invisibly active unity that is in itself, on the other. The unconditioned universal is the transition of these moments back and forth.

As a preparatory summary, we can say that because the Understanding takes “what is” (or “the truth”) to be its *object*, the distinction between the form (of our cognition) and the content (of what is known) still *appears* to it. So “what is” is the same contradictory combination of One and Many that the “thing” was. But now it is the unique *system* of things so its contradictory moments cannot be successfully divided. It is plain that they are moments of one and the same reality—the One is “force”—the Many is its “utterance.” But the “*unconditioned* Universal” is posited only in the transition of these opposite moments back and forth.

We can see now that Hegel’s analysis of the lump of salt perception, was conducted with one eye on the world-view of Understanding. There are many kinds of “matter”; and there is nevertheless a *balance* of forces. Everything stable—so far as it *is* stable—is stable because it is in the state that the total balance of nature requires; and the example of salt was chosen because it exemplifies the state of *neutrality* (or stable balance). The neutral “matters,” which were the objective side of Perception, turn into the *phenomenal* side of Understanding. “Things” are not independent; they are simply stable appearances for us. The One is simply the dynamic cycle in which everything is caught up.⁸ If we take Hegel’s insistence that the multiplicity is *passive* seriously, then we have to say that all multiplicity belongs only to the sphere of perceptual manifestation; while the One is an essentially dynamic *moving* principle. Passive *oneness* would be reached only if the physical universe ever arrived at a condition of perfect material homogeneity.

- 5./136. The moment that has stepped to one side [perceptual consciousness] is a multiplicity of independent but perfectly interfused matters. [Perceptual consciousness] as medium is the absolute mutual porosity of logically independent qualities. “Force” is both the absolute source of this spreading-out, and the unity to which it returns [the Understanding]. The moment of spreading-out is Utterance. “Force proper” is the exclusive unity. But the moments are identical, and this identity is the concept that *we* hold together and speak for. *We* separate the moments, and we think the difference in the unity. But the Understanding is conscious of force as real. The object is *for itself* the self-uttering force that appears to consciousness as other. To be real is to be released from thought. But Force proper is also the comprehended whole. So it is the one concept of force that exists in these opposite ways. These two independent forces are the moments of Perception unconditionally universalized. *Our* Concept of Understanding is their logical unity. So what happened in the concept at the level of Perception, happens in the object now; and the Unconditioned Universal emerges as the non-objective inwardness of things.

It is in this paragraph that *we* are the Concept which fills out what is contained in the result (par. 133). The gulf between our standpoint as observers of the Understanding, and that of the Understanding (comprehensively observing the

world of perceptual consciousness) is established here. Ours is already the standpoint of speculative logic; the standpoint of the Understanding itself is that of Kantian critical logic. This paragraph analyses our standpoint. The full exposition of how the Understanding itself goes through the dialectic of the world it comprehends is given in the following paragraphs.

Passively, for the knowing consciousness, there is all the perceptible content of space and time. This multiplicity is now understood to be the expression (or utterance) of *Force*. It is as the aspects of one force that the matters of our different modes of sense-awareness can be perfectly *porous* to one another, so that they are all in the same place. The concept of Force is the concept of a centre, *and* the concept of a field. Both moments are equally necessary. The force is just what it manifests itself *as*. It is *me* to whom it is manifest, we who are the necessary “other,” when the whole of objective reality is conceived as Force. Perceptual knowing is the place of manifestation or utterance. But the force (as “force proper”) is *all there* even when it is unperceived, not manifest.

If we insist that the force is really all there, then we have a reality that is a centre or focus on the one side, and an extended field on the other side. As a focus it is exclusive—nothing else can be at the centre where it is; as a field it exists for another (upon which it is influential). The field of *matters* is its objective being for the perceiving consciousness; and it is clear that the structure of the concept generally is the structure of perception specifically. Force proper is precisely what is *not* manifest, not perceptually objective, but *inward*, or intelligible.

The perceptual world is the moment that has been sublated—both for us and for the Understanding (but in different ways). Perceptual consciousness has “stepped to one side” as a kind of passive Platonic “receptacle.” Space and time, as truth inherited from Sense-Certainty, are the medium filled by a plenum of matters. But the receptacle is identical with its content. Hegel borrowed the concept of “porosity” from Dalton’s chemistry as a means for the formulation of a dynamic (or energetic) theory of matters. His concept is not an empirical scientific hypothesis, but the logical way in which Perception is sublated (set aside but preserved) in the general concept of the Understanding. Perceptual phenomena of different kinds are different sensible matters. The extended world that we perceive (including the body that we experience perceptually as having the sense organs through which we perceive everything else) is a plenum of independent matters—i.e. varieties of the different modes of sense perception in space and time. The matters are all interfused in perceptual reality, but in the medium of Understanding proper they are “independent.”⁹

Hegel’s concept of Force is the identity of the physical *source* of this variety of appearance with its concept in the intellect. The physical source cannot be located on one side or the other of the divided structure of perceptual consciousness. It is not *in* the perceiving body or in the perceived body, or in both together, or in their coming together. On the contrary, *they*, being all of them “phenomena,” are equally manifestations of *it*. They are *in* it (as moments in its process). Force is the concept of that which manifests itself *as* this whole process; Utterance, or the manifestation

of Force, is the sublated concept of Perception—the identity of actual perceiving with the perceived object.¹⁰

Force, therefore, is what logically *must* manifest itself. If we ask what is there “for itself” (or in the absence of perceivers) the answer is that this is the moment of the undistinguished *unity* of Force; and though we can think away all actual perceptual consciousness (for our thinking consciousness may have a perceptual aspect, but it is not *physical* perception) we cannot think away the conceptual moment of extension or dispersal. Spinoza’s God does not need Spinoza’s *Ethics* and its readers; but he needs to be extension as well as thought. As Hegel puts it, “In the first place force driven back into itself *must* utter itself; and secondly, in its utterance it is just as much force subsisting within itself as it is utterance in this self-contained being.”

In other words, from the standpoint of the Understanding the question “What is there when we are not?” is not a well formed formula. It belongs to the standpoint of Perception; and because of the identity of actual perceiving with the thing perceived it can be answered at that level only as H.G. Wells answered it in *The Time Machine*—by *imagining* the perceiver of an empty world. Wells did this by using his Understanding (just as we can criticize what he did, and agree or disagree, by using ours). The Understanding is no more “here” than “there,” no more “now” than “then.” Just as it can spread out and separate what is all miraculously interfused in perceptual space, so it can bring together what is irretrievably spread out in the immensity of perceptual time. We can *answer* the question “What is, was, will be, when (or where) we are not?” precisely in the measure and the sense in which we can *understand* it. For the Understanding is our actual concept of the whole.

This is what *we* can see when we observe the Understanding; and we shall find that this comprehension helps us to understand many seemingly puzzling things that Hegel says about it. But the Understanding itself is observing the *world* from this absolute standpoint of the intellect. The fundamental distinction that it makes in its object is that between force as potential and force as uttered. In our perspective, the Understanding is the unity that distinguishes itself as “force” from itself as “utterance.” When it comprehends perceptual experience as the *expression* of force, it is *returning* to itself. It sets force as reality free from itself as thought; and then it takes perception as the evidence of the *reality* of its self-concept.¹¹ We can see that this “setting free” of force from the thinker to whom it is manifest as the world of perception, is the free act of the Concept. “Utterance” shows what is there, and there is no *real* difference between the potential and its utterance; both of them are conceptually necessary, and they are posited together by the thinking that says the force is *real*, and is not just a thought. Force “is in itself what it manifests itself to be for another.” That is how it can be the “unconditional universal” of Perception. The sensible *thing* has vanished and only the logical identity of the “for itself” and the “for another” remains.

The best paradigm of the force that satisfies this concept is gravity. The solar system is the “whole force essentially abiding *in and for itself*”; and the Sun with the planets and comets moving round it, and the satellites moving round the

planets are “its distinctions as *substantial* or as moments subsisting on their own account.” The Sun, regarded as the stable fixed point for the system, is the exclusive One; and planets and comets are two modes of matter that behave in different ways. But this objective model does not satisfy the pure concept. Only the relation between this physical system and our perception of it meets the requirement that the differences should remain pure forms or superficial vanishing moments. The whole system is there both in the daylight when nothing but the centre is visible, and at night when the centre is not visible, but many of the other elements are; and the movement of the moments in which “they continually make themselves independent [*sich verselbständigen*] and sublimate themselves again” is exhibited in the *double motion* of the planets. Their axial motion is *independent* (making the system, and especially the sun, *go round them*) and their elliptical paths are the self-sublating motion.

This is what physically controls our understanding perception of the truth of “things.” But for the moment the solar system is only a model. Eventually we shall see it as the abiding shape of this *Gestalt*; but in the present paragraph Hegel is talking about the general relation between our concept of perceptual experience (as the realm in which the “free matters” are uttered) and our understanding (as the moment of contraction into purely conceptual unity). Perception must itself be conceived as the utterance of Force (“the One reflected into itself”). The perceived thing is one moment of Force, and the knowing mind is the other. We can readily use the solar system as our example, since it is a thing but we only *perceive* it piecemeal, so that we must construct it in our minds, before we can build our own perceptible models.

The two *moments* are independent and self-contained. The Understanding has to repeat the whole dialectic of Perception because it is a form of “consciousness.” Its object is “real”; and this entails that the object as object is “free” from itself as concept. Thus, in accordance with the concept of Force itself, the realization of the concept requires *two* forces. The world of perceptual consciousness is the *middle* between the formal concept (in our theory) and its objective reality (in the super-sensible world); intelligent perception is the point of meeting for these two sides of the Concept as a whole.

But now that the two terms are not conceived as sense-certain thing and sense-certain self, the result of their meeting is quite the opposite of what happened in Perception. The dialectic of Perception caused the terms to collapse into the unconditioned universal of Understanding. This is the “objective” *order of Nature*. Now that both of the terms are the same unconditioned universal (Force as Understanding, and Force as Order of Nature) the result of their dialectic is that they become completely dissociated. What the Understanding concludes is that the inner reality of things, the force that is their intelligible source, is beyond all Understanding. That is the permanent shape of Understanding as such. It is only in *our* speculative consciousness as logicians that this transcendent reality “comes forth as the inwardness of things.” For us, *Self-Consciousness* as the “inwardness of things” will be the *result* of Consciousness.

Let us now *paraphrase* this long paragraph (abbreviating it only where what we have already said makes the meaning obvious): The moment of being for the perceiver appears within the concept of experience as the force that is the medium of all manifestation. This is the intelligible medium of extension in which the manifold of matters coexists. The coexistence is identical with the intelligible status of this medium—it is *not* simply perceptible space. All of the matters are manifestations of the one Force. The spreading out of the matters, as independent objects of the understanding is the Utterance of the Force.

The unconditioned universal into which they disappear when we conceive the force as driven back into itself is *Force proper*. To call it Force is to say that it is essentially a drive to express itself. In the explicit manifold of Utterance it is *implicitly* the unity of force; and in the same way it is the manifold of Utterance implicit in its being by itself as Force proper. When we hold the moments together in their immediate unity, the Understanding that has this concept of the world properly is the Concept, and in its simple unselfconscious being, it *carries* the two sides (Force proper and Utterance) as distinct. They are not supposed to be distinct in themselves, but only as moments of our understanding of what is. Thus, all we have done so far is to state the concept as it exists for our intellect. But what we are talking about is the *unconditioned* universal that is independently real. It is in itself what it is for our understanding (the *other* for which it is). By being the *real* Concept it contains the distinction of being-in-itself, and being-for-another. We must thoughtfully let it go free from our thinking awareness. It must be the one substance in and for itself that differentiates itself (into intellectual unity and intelligible multiplicity).¹² The being-in-itself and the being for another are both real, and they are different, though they are only sides or moments of the one substance. The distinctions (of what is potential and what is uttered) remain pure forms, transient appearances that disappear. But at the same time the distinctions of Force proper and Force unfolded¹³ would be nothing at all if they did not have a permanent standing. Force would not be real if it did not *exist* in these opposite ways. So there has to be a world of being and a world of thought that are independent of each other. The interaction of these two and their eventual coincidence is the topic of this chapter—the movement of the Understanding is the same as that of Perception, where the truth-taker and what is truly taken coincide at one moment, yet each side is also reflected into itself and subsists separately. Knower and known are similarly moments of Force. They are identical, but their unity is one which perpetually splits up into these extremes (for which it mediates. The movement in which the contradictory concepts of Perception wiped themselves out subjectively now takes on *objective* form: it is the movement of Force which results in the emergence of the unconditional universal as what is *not* objective, or as the *inner* nature of things.

6./137. Force proper is one side of the Concept: it is the substantial unity of the perceptual matters. But it must utter itself; so it must be solicited by its own other, and that Other (in which it is manifest) is a moment in it. Hence Force is *not* the unmanifested

unity, but the medium of utterance. It is the One that is outside it. But this One into which it *returns* is what it truly is. So its own Other is the internal moment that solicits it to be One. But the Other knows Force to be One *in itself*. So Force is this thought-process, and its Other is not other.

Hegel now shows how the objective concept of Force, as the reality which the Understanding observes, is indeed identical with our Concept—or with the totality of the Understanding itself as we are observing it. The Understanding posits force as *real*, i.e., as a substantialized extreme which is free from the Understanding as its concept. The manifestation of Force as Appearance therefore occurs only because the other *for* which it has the actuality which it potentially *is*, approaches it and *solicits* it. The Utterance of Force is the perceptual world, the world of its appearance. All appearance has its *fundamentum in re*. In other words, the whole range of Utterance has a conceptual existence, just as much as the unexpressed unity does.

It is the *essence* of Force to express itself; so solicitation is necessary to it, and in order for there to be Force at all, there must be *two* forces. In order to be what it is *in itself*, Force must express itself for another. This other belongs to its concept. Hence Force is not properly *one*; it is the whole cycle of self-expression. It must be *conceived* as the unity that has (eternally) expressed itself. It is always all there available for perception.¹⁴

So we ought not to have said that Force is the unity that is solicited by the perceiver (as an external other). It is already fully expressed. We *know* that the world is all there, even in the night-time when we are asleep. But Force is not just the plurality of all possible perceptible “matters” either. When we think of it as a world of Appearance that is already manifest, then it is the unity that has to come to it from outside; it comes now as the thinking mind which knows that what is there unperceived is not the world of appearance as such, but a *unified balance of forces that sustains itself*; and this external *thinking* reflection knows that it is superfluous. What it knows force to be, is what force *is* in itself. “Force proper”—or “driven back into itself” is this thinking comprehension. It is the real *concept*—a world of Appearance that is thoughtfully comprehended. The thinking that knows it as one (like the perceiving for which it appears as an “unfolded order”) is the other necessary moment of its comprehensive being as the One that is (always) in the state of having expressed itself.

- 7./138. In both its perceiving and its conceiving role the soliciting other is itself *Force*. But in its duplication, Force has not departed from its concept. Because there are two forces, the antithesis [being-in-itself and being-for-another] seems to have escaped from the dominion of the concept. But the two forces are reciprocally complementary. Each is fulfilled as force because it both solicits, and is solicited by, the other.

Once we have grasped the argument of paragraphs 136 and 137, this paragraph is easy to follow. I have already anticipated the point that the soliciting “other” is necessarily another force. All that happens here is that the logical necessity of that

is spelled out. The Other for which Force displays what it is in itself is the Understanding. The Understanding is simply the reversal of the movement of Utterance. It moves from being the medium in which perception is spread out to being the unity of conceptual comprehension. But according to its own view it exists as a medium only because it is solicited by the objective extreme (the external force). It is itself the soliciting of that uttered force to return to unity. So the two motions are strictly complementary. Each extreme both solicits and is solicited; and each moment (that of Force, and that of Utterance) is a movement that necessarily vanishes into its opposite.

The objective extreme has been posited as a free force on its own account. But because it logically must utter itself if it is to be a force at all, it *requires* to be solicited. Consciousness, on the other hand, only solicits it into utterance, because it is solicited by it. The world of perceptual appearance is the middle between these two movements of solicited soliciting. Each extreme is the whole movement of Force; and the two together are the whole movement of Force. (I have anticipated what Hegel will say in the next paragraph.)

- 8./139. The interplay of understanding consciousness and real world is this mutual determination of two forces. Each can take either role (medium of perception and unity of concept) and each must take both. The definition of each imposes the reciprocal definition on the other, because each logically requires the other for its own completion.

The “play” of the two forces is just that. As Aristotle said: “Cognition in act is the same as the thing.”¹⁵ The field of perceptual consciousness (in which this interplay occurs) is both intelligible and real. When we think of it idealistically, as the spreading-out of our own Understanding, then the real becomes the unity of Force “driven back into itself”; when we think of it realistically, as the manifestation of the world, then our conceptual comprehension becomes the unity. But we cannot ignore the fact that this “middle” is both ideal and real. It is ideal because the intellect solicits the world, and real because the world solicits the intellect; and each side solicits the other because it is solicited to solicit. The two independent forces are moments of each other; each of them logically requires the other in order to be what it is.

I have quoted Aristotle here, because the “unconditioned universal” must necessarily be identical in its opposite aspects. It must be the same “in the intellect” and “in the thing” (to use the perceptual language of Aristotle’s medieval followers). But we should notice that the Hegelian Understanding is not intuitive. We are still far away from the absolute knowing to which Hegel is prepared to apply Aristotle’s *noetic* language. We are simply observing what it means to suppose that our experience is understandable. This is just the foundation stone for the *spiritual* doctrine that our experiencing self-consciously comprehends itself.

- 9./140. The concept of force exhibits a *formal* difference (between soliciting and being solicited); and a difference of *content* (between being a centre, and being a medium of manifestation). The content distinction is how the extremes are distinct *for us*; the

formal distinction is how they are *independent*. Consciousness itself will experience the vanishing of the extremes distinguished in this way. But *we* have already observed that the content/form distinction vanishes: soliciting *is* being a centre, and being solicited *is* being a medium.

The repetition of the dialectic of Perception (from the last subsection of par. 136 to this point) has given us the Understanding's concept of itself in its world. But we have been supplying the consciousness of the Concept (and seeing the Understanding as the actual concept of its world) all the way. Hegel now anticipates what the Understanding is going to experience in applying its concept, and points out that we already *know* both what it will discover and why it will discover it.

The extremes (intellect and world) are distinguished in *content* according to which contains the unity, and which the multiplicity. They are distinguished in *form* according to which acts as the solicitor, and which as the solicited. But we have already seen that these distinctions are dialectical—i.e., each extreme must assume both roles. When we want to say which of them is the unity, and which is the multiplicity, or which of them is really the solicitor, and which the solicited, we cannot do it. Each of them is necessarily both. Each of them is both the unity and the multiplicity (for us); and each is (in itself) both the solicitor and the solicited. The consciousness that we are observing is going to discover that its sides do not have different essences that can be distinguished by the stable attribution of these differences. Each of them is necessarily both one and many, both soliciting and solicited. The opposite aspects vanish into one another, because they are inseparable.

We already know more than this. For we know that the distinction between content and form, between the “for us” and the “in itself,” is dialectical. Each vanishes into the other because they are inseparably identical likewise. Hence the basic project of “consciousness,” the project of knowing what truly is as an object other than itself is mistaken. The soliciting force is the same as the force in itself; and the solicited force is the same as the manifest force. So when the Understanding discovers that it cannot stabilize the opposites in consciousness, we shall know that the effective identity of the two contradictions is *self*-consciousness. The result of the dialectic of Perception—that the thing is “for itself” what it is “for another”—will have been shown to apply to the unconditioned universal as an intellectual thing.

- 10./141 The concept becomes actual by *doubling*. Each force is posited by the other, and they vanish into the middle term. They are not substantially separate and external to each other. The Concept remains the essence as the actualizing of force—which is actual in utterance, where it ceases to be force. The realizing of Force is its loss of reality. Force proper is just the potential moment. The truth of Force is its comprehension as a concept. What comes to be is the unconditioned universal (which was the Concept that we began with).

We move now from the *concept* of what is to the *experience* of how it appears. This is the experience of scientific inquiry as conducted within the context of this concept of the truth. It will lead us finally to an “inversion” of the concept in which

it is enriched by the comprehension of its own negative. This will transform it into the Infinite Concept.

Force is the Concept of the essence-being (*Wesen*) that manifests itself necessarily. For this reason it must be doubled into the self-manifesting force, and the force to which it is manifest. On the one side there is “the mind” to which “the world” appears. The mind and the force that generates its perceptible world exist as essence-beings (i.e. “supersensible” *realities*) on their own account. But they cannot exist without reference to one another. What manifests itself as the “world” is manifest to the mind. It vanishes into the perceived world; and the perceived world vanishes back into the Concept of the force that produces the mind’s world of perception. The two essence-beings do not just touch one another externally. Force simply is the motion from essence (unity) to appearance (manifestation); and the mind is the motion from manifest appearance back to conceptual unity.¹⁶ Force manifests itself as the phenomenal world only in order to understand itself *as* Force. It expresses itself in order to sublate the expression. We think of the actual (effective) force as free from its expression, because it can be expressed differently at the manifest level (day turns into night and so on). But the “truth” of Force is that “force proper” and “our theory” are simply *moments of the comprehensive concept*, i.e., different *sides* of the same “actual force.” Only Utterance is “out there” in the sphere of perceptual reality. In that sphere the force that is driven back into itself, the force that is a potential held in check, is a moment in the real process of appearing. When it appears it exhausts itself as force, it sublates itself. This is only the “supposed reality of force in the actual substances.” In order to be actual in its own right force must suffer the “loss of reality” in another way: we must recognize Force proper as what is purely intellectual. Force becomes actual in pure theory. (The initial concept of Force is that of *necessary appearance*; its actuality is as *what is known, but does not appear*. We must be ready for a result in which these opposites are both reconciled and sublated.)

- 11./142. The *actuality* of the concept we began with is the essence of force in and for itself, the negation of the immediate sensible experience of force. We have moved from a supposed substance to a comprehended concept.

The Understanding begins with the concept of Force as Substance. Aristotle employed the concept of “Substance” for *things*. Hegel’s concept of “Substance” is both pre-Socratic and modern, but not Aristotelian. In the “result” of Perception the unconditioned universal emerges as the absolute community of interaction. The essence of that “first universal” (as Hegel calls it) was to *utter* itself, to be for the other, for consciousness. Now we have reached the “second universal,” i.e., the actuality of the concept in and for *itself*. This is its essence in the noumenal realm, the sphere of essence proper. In traditional terms this is the identical being of the Universal *in the intellect and in the thing*. What Hegel contributes is the recognition that the “identity” of the two is an *ongoing process* in which these supposedly substantial extremes are actually conceptual moments.

In this perspective the “actuality of force” is the *negation* of it as immediately real, i.e., as perceived in its utterance. We are now concerned with the essence of Force as an *object* for the Understanding. We are observing the Force-concept as the “inwardness of things,” the actuality behind (or beyond) what appears. In virtue of the necessary identity of Force and Understanding, or of what is “for another” with what is “in itself,” the “inwardness of things” is identical with the conceptual inwardness of scientific theory. When a scientific observer speaks of the *order* of Nature in terms of “Law” and so on, she is not just weaving a verbal fantasy, but talking about what is there in nature, although it is not apparent as such. The standard of truth for scientific inquiry is the identity of what the theory asserts with the “inward being of things.” We need not be concerned here about how that identity is empirically established. Our task, as observers of the evolving Concept of “absolute knowing,” is to comprehend that this identity is what “true understanding” is, and to see that it is one actual concept, not a mirror-relation between two supposed substances of different kinds.

(c) *The Experience of Force (i) Appearance and Natural Law*

- 12./143. The mind now looks through perceptual appearance into the supersensible world. Appearance forms a universal totality in thought which is not a mere show but the manifestation of the inner unity. In this process all the perceptual moments turn into their opposites. This play of mind and phenomenal world is the development of thought as negative. But the result is the truth of theory (which is projected into a supersensible beyond. This beyond is an intelligible Concept, but that is not recognized.

As anyone can confirm by a glance at the next paragraph we are now intellectual observers in the noumenal realm. The difference between us and the Understanding we are observing is just that the Understanding takes it to be another kind of *place* behind or beyond the physically manifest world; while we know that it is the activity of the Understanding as the interpreter of the world of perception. There are not *two* worlds, there is only one; but when we “understand” it, it acquires a new dimension through our interpretive activity.

The world of perceptual experience, interpreted as the result of a “play” between Force and its Other, is the “developed being” of Force. The immediate manifestation of force in the sensible world is only a “show”—a being that reveals itself at once as non-being, i.e. a flux of Becoming. This surface show (*Schein*) becomes a world of Appearance (*Erscheinung*) when it is put together intelligently into a “whole.” Xenophanes took this step when he “looked at the whole heaven” and decided that “the One is God.” The “developed being” of Force—the whole phenomenal world—became for him “a vanishing.” But our scientific understanding promises much more than the “formal” discovery of conceptual unity. When we put the “show” together, the heaven turns into the solar system of Copernicus, Kepler and Newton. For we have the identity of Force with the totality of its manifestation to guide us.

As Hegel says, the totality of Appearance (which is what is achieved by the return of Force into itself as “the Understanding and the inner”) is what “constitutes (*ausmacht*) the inner.” We cannot totalize appearance in any way except by forming a concept that unites its many manifest forms, and so “explains” it. There is no contradiction between the earlier assertion that the conscious Understanding “looks *through* the play of forces into the true background of things” and the statement that the “inner” is itself “the play of forces.” For the inner is “the play of forces as *reflection* of the play into itself.”¹⁷ The play that is “looked through,” on the other hand, is the reflection of force out of itself (as perception of the “outside world”). Our initial concept of Force was focussed upon the movement from unity to multiplicity; now we are focussing upon the same movement as the return of the unity into itself.¹⁸

In this return the “essences”¹⁹ of Perception are recognized to be the dialectical contradictions that they showed themselves to be already “for us.” The “one” turns into the “universal medium,” the essential into the unessential, and then they turn back again. This backward reference indicates that Eddington ought not to have been troubled by his “two tables.” Even the consciousness that we are observing can become “critical” in the Kantian way, when it arrives at Understanding. But Eddington’s problem shows that the observed consciousness remembers and forgets rather more erratically than Hegel’s idealized model would have us believe. The Understanding is the *complete* shape of Consciousness; and the “supersensible world” that we are entering is the world of Reason that Kant inherited from the rationalists. The empiricists, and those who developed atomist conceptions of the subsensible (rather than the supersensible) did not have any such dialectical concept of the thing-world. Perhaps it will be best to take Hegel’s remark simply as a confirmation of his analysis of Perception “for us.”

When we attempt to explain perceptual experience as an interplay of two forces we do indeed “develop the negative”; for we end up, as we have seen, with a lot of distinctions that collapse into one another, and make no difference. We could easily be thrown back upon the sensible world as the only reality. This is the path of scepticism, and of all the instrumental and operational conceptions of science. There is a path *forward*, a way of understanding our results positively; and we shall be more inclined to follow it if we have already discovered the dialectical character of common sense consciousness, and have arrived at the concept of Force as the resolution of our difficulties about the “thing.” But there is no empirical necessity to follow this path. Only an unwillingness to rest content with scepticism can motivate us to follow it. To insist that the World-Spirit *has* followed it, amounts to the claim that by this path, and this one only, can we arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the world we live in.

We shall see that Hegel deals with other world-views (specifically with instrumentalism and materialism) in due course. So he does not *ignore* the other traditions in scientific development. But he follows the evolution through Leibniz and Kant, because that is the tradition of conceptual realism which his method dictates that we must follow. If we were seeking the truth about perceptible things simply, we would not know which way to go at this point; but we are seeking the truth

about our experience of things. So we must go on without hesitation into the realm of concepts.

The Kantian (or the rationalist) Understanding thinks that this noumenal world is a world of intelligible *being*. For this Understanding the outward “play of forces” is the coming to be of the *imaginary* world of perception, the world of “appearance” which it interprets from the standpoint of Reason. It does not see its own movement from *imaginatio* to *ratio* as the movement of the rational world at all, but only as the dissolution of its own sensory illusion. The Understanding does not see (as we do) that the “unconditioned universal” cannot have any being-for-self except the being-for-self of the Understanding; it cannot *be* any concept except the self-concept of the Understanding. That self-concept came to be through the evolution of Perception. So it cannot cast Perception away, and *substitute* the supersensible world for the sensible one.

This is not something that the consciousness we are observing will discover in a hurry. We shall be led on from the Understanding to the Self-Concept, but not directly to Reason as the self-concept of Understanding. That is the *logical* step beyond the observed consciousness that we are able to make in virtue of our observational advantage. But in the Science of Experience the story of the Self-Concept is a long and complex one. Hegel himself begins it by announcing that we are entering the “homeland of truth.” But the *Gestalten* that we meet are of the kind that are quite happy in the theoretical posture of Sense-Certainty—at least until we reach the Stoics. So *our* relation to the observed consciousness is radically transformed by our introductory progress through the dialectic of Understanding.

The Understanding is well aware that the scientific truth is the reflection of its perceptual experience “into itself”—it knows that only the thinking mind or *ratio* can comprehend Appearance (the multiplicity of the *imaginatio*) as a totality. But if the concept in which Appearance is totally comprehended is *true*, then that means that the concept corresponds to the supersensible *reality* of what appears. The scientist sets up the ideal of simply observing reality as it *objectively* is. She knows that it has been truly observed, when everything fits together in a logically coherent whole. That is Reason’s “certainty of itself.” But the identity of this subjective rationality with “objectivity” is not recognized. “Objectivity” consists in letting the objective world of appearance *vanish into itself*. The scientific observer is conscious that the flux of appearance vanishes into an intelligible reality (the “order of nature”) which she supposes to be simply “there.” But this order is a *concept* not a thing. It is an *objective* concept; and the objectivity of concepts is different from that of things. We are dealing now with a consciousness for which “the being of perception and the sensibly objective in general has only a negative significance.” The objectivity with which we are concerned is that of Reason for a rationalist. What is not yet understood is the relation of that substantial objectivity to the cognitive activity of rational consciousness. An empiricist will not speak of “Reason” in this context. But she will admit readily that the “order of Nature” is *objective* in a “supersensible” way. It will not be worn away or crumble into dust, as even the hardest rocks do.

- 13./144. This recognition of the truth as abiding in a world beyond the flux of time is the primal, immature *Erscheinung* of Reason.

The real world is now a world of purely conceptual being. The unconditioned Universal which has been *purified* of the antithesis of the universal and the singular is an eternal dynamic structure. It is what eternally *is*: the Logos of Heraclitus or the actual Force for which the Goddess gave Parmenides the formal concept. Once we have purified the noumenal unity out of the sensible manifold of singular phenomena we post-Kantians can say more about it than those great pioneers could. *Beyond* all the transient *being that is not*, there is that eternal Truth of which we can say: It is. The great tradition of “purification from the antithesis” by making the antithesis *absolute* (or by reifying Reason into its own supersensible world) runs from Parmenides through Plato and neo-Platonism to the modern rationalists and Kant. Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, the nature-mystics and Schelling are different. Aristotle is closer to this second monistic tradition; and so, as we shall see, is Hegel.

Hegel’s theory is Aristotelian in the sense that it, too, represents an attempt to reconcile the traditions. His “Concept” is the *Logos* of Heraclitus, and the *Nous* of Anaxagoras. But Parmenides is the father of philosophy for him because without the clear recognition of the intellectual world as an independent realm of eternal truth, the maturing of “Reason” could never happen. The dynamism of Reason originates in consciousness. The Identity Philosophy from Anaxagoras to Schelling cannot effectively get us beyond the concept of a “divine life” that does not *need* self-consciousness. We have to “hear the Logos” of Heraclitus, and undertake a Parmenidean journey of rational purification into the supersensible world, if we are to achieve self-possession as rational beings. The supersensible world of eternal truth, which Understanding discovers behind the curtain of sensible show, when it learns how to integrate the “show” into the “appearance” of a rational order, is the *element* of truth. To call this element “aether”—as Hegel did in the Preface (par. 26)—picks up a Platonic metaphor, since for Plato “aether” was “the element beyond the elements,” i.e. the purely theoretical continuum which makes the transmutation of the actual elements possible. Similarly the aether of cognitive consciousness, which makes the transformation of understanding from one fixed shape to another possible, is Reason. But in this first “shape” as an object of consciousness it is still quite *unfulfilled* (*unvollkommen*). On our first venture into this element, we shall discover the “essence” not of Reason itself, but of Nature.

- 14./145. We are now concerned with the syllogism in which P is this inner world, S is the Understanding and M is *Erscheinung*.

Any reference to Reason (since it must transcend the standpoint of consciousness proper) is a reference to *our* observational standpoint. We are going to draw a conclusion that the Understanding itself does not draw (and does not *need*). Hegel characterizes the three terms of the mediation (which have already been identified before) as the terms of a syllogism.²⁰ The movement of this syllogism, he says, “Yields the further determination of what the Understanding describes in the

inward being of things by means of the middle, and it yields the experience that Understanding acts out concerning this relationship of being locked in a syllogism [*Zusammengeschlossenheit*].”

The form of the ideal scientific syllogism (the “first figure”) is “M is P; S is M; therefore S is P.” So this must surely be the *Verhältnis* that Understanding is locked into. The terms were first identified in paragraph 143: S is the Understanding, M, is perception as a play of forces, and P is “the true *Hintergrund* of things.” The major premise, (M is P) corresponds to our getting a sight of the inner world by understanding perception as a “play of forces.” The “experience that Understanding makes” is represented by the minor premise in which S appears, and by the conclusion in which it is “locked together” with the inner world. The dialectic of the argument that follows ought therefore to be reducible to this form. Let us see whether we can read it in that sense.

- 15./146. The *Ding-an-sich* is what does *not* appear. This is a logically determined truth, not an empirical limit. The Beyond may be pure light or blank darkness, and *Verstand* may be blind or sighted; it makes no difference, since there is no mediating link. We must either call *Erscheinung* truth, or fill the void with subjective imaginings.

That the major premise must hold is logically necessary. The organization of *Schein* into the totality of *Erscheinung* must give us a sight into Nature’s inwardness, in spite of pious poets like Albrecht von Haller, and sceptical philosophers like Kant.²¹ Otherwise we are in the paradoxical position of saying that we do have knowledge, but we know that it is not *real* knowledge, that *our* truth is not the real truth. This Kantian policy involves a misunderstanding of the logical function of “knowledge” as a standard. Once we have understood that function we realize that this sort of self-contradiction indicates the need for a redefinition of the concept. Kant is a self-made “blind man” in the supersensible world or a sighted man in a realm defined as pure darkness.

Hegel’s reaction to the mystical scepticism of von Haller and the critical scepticism of Kant is obvious and explicit enough: and the argument is easy to grasp. But the implication of *our* being able to go forward from this point (as philosophers of the Absolute Identity) is more important. The blind man, or the sighted man in pure darkness or pure light, is what critics like Schlegel and Jean Paul saw in the Identity philosopher. In commenting on paragraph 16, I argued that the “monochromatic formalist” is a mystic like Eschenmayer—who perverted the scientific intent of the philosophy of nature under the influence of Jacobi. But it was Schelling himself who first claimed that the absolute Identity is pure *light* rather than pure darkness; and there cannot be any disputing that when Hegel says pure light is as blinding as pure darkness he means to rule out the simple appeal to “intellectual intuition.”²² Xenophanes and Parmenides made a great step forward. But we have to be able to find “difference” in the supersensible realm, as well as “the One.”

In Hegel’s own “science of experience” what is ultimately grasped by the intellect is the world-system as an immortal *organism*. This (*not* the “pure light” of Reason) is what we observe to be the nature of the intellect itself. So far, of course,

Hegel is a true disciple of Schelling. For “the soul of the world” is the fundamental “intellectual intuition” in Schelling’s natural philosophy,²³ and that is just what we shall arrive at as the “infinity” of Understanding (par. 162). But we reach it through a “construction” of the Understanding that is far removed from formulas such as “the Understanding is electricity.” And when we get there, we are only at the beginning of the real “phenomenology of spirit.” So Hegel’s attitude to Schelling’s philosophy must be called, at best, *ambivalent*.²⁴

If we do not admit that the organization of *Schein* into *Erscheinung* gives us real insight into the “beyond”—that the supposedly mysterious “cause of gravity” is actually patent in the night sky—then, because it is *our* nature that “abhors a vacuum,” we shall find ourselves obliged to fill the void with dreams and truly subjective *Erscheinungen*. The use of this term here to designate the “dreams of the spirit-seer” (Swedenborg) whom Kant had criticized has the effect of underlining the fact that the scientific concept of *Erscheinung* contains its own new standard of “objectivity” (and hence of truth). By combining this reference with a side-glance at the post-Kantian spirit-seer, Eschenmayer (who is the one who finds *das Heilige* in the Void), Hegel turns the criticism against Kant himself—who “made room for faith” in the supersensible Beyond where these subjective dreams and premonitions can flourish.²⁵

- 16./147. But there *is* a middle, because the Beyond has arisen *from* appearance. The supersensible is the true intellectual *interpretation* of the sensible. It is sense-perception posited as sublated, or as an inner world. The word “appearance” is not taken seriously enough by the two-world interpretation.

Our very concept of the intelligible world arose from the attempt to understand the transience of our sensible experience. We established it in order to be able to say what “truly is,” or what the permanent and invariant ground of all the transience and change is. Properly speaking, therefore, the supersensible is the *thought* that the totality of appearance shows forth. That is the best paraphrase I can produce for the paradoxical claim that “the supersensible is *appearance as appearance*.” Hegel does not mean that the supersensible world simply *is* the sensible world just as it exists for sense certainty and perception; but rather that the “supersensible” is this world rationally interpreted as the *Erscheinung* of an intellectual truth. It is the supersensible therefore (not the sensible world) that is a “real actuality”; and this actual stability is just what “appears,” when the passing show of sense-certainty is interpreted in the context of a theory which unifies its variety by displaying it to us as the manifestation of a “play of forces.”

On this reading, Hegel’s “*appearance, as appearance*” means “perception understood as the appearing of order.” It means the self-confirmation of the theory. But this still needs careful interpretation. “Appearance” cannot be the actual embodiment of theory until we have a theory. Controlled experiment in the ideal circumstances where the results are crucially decisive does approximate to this ideal. But even then, it is still only an ideal. The sense-world itself never stops moving and changing. That is why even the most perfectly controlled experiment needs to be

repeated. The report of a successful controlled experiment (with all of its theoretical background, and an unambiguous description of the conditions for its repetition, as well as an equally unambiguous interpretation of its results) exemplifies what Hegel calls "*Erscheinung als Erscheinung*" here. It is correct to say that *this* "appearance" is "the supersensible," because although it refers to sensible data, it is conceptual through and through. It is not a pure theory (a statement of laws or regularities in the abstract) but it is *completely theoretical*. That is the condition for its counting as a properly completed piece of scientific research. The laboratory, with its experimental materials and equipment, is left behind.

Modern discussions of scientific method typically emphasize that we can go back to that laboratory and do the experiment again. But this emphasis obscures the (arguably more important) fact that when a piece of scientific research has been properly completed (including its repetition by others who have only the report to guide them), we do not then regard it as rational to repeat it. "Science" (as a result) is what does not need further repetition. In the event that our theory breaks down, the gradual construction of a new theoretical framework may reach the point where the same experiential procedures are gone through again. But the repetition of the procedures (if it is really needed) will not then be a repetition of the *same* experiment. The repetition of procedures has become necessary because, in the new theoretical framework, the older description of what was done is (for some reason) no longer adequate. In Hegel's terms, what happens is part of a new *Erscheinung*.

In this example of the controlled experiment as *Erscheinung* we can observe another dimension of the thoughtlessness of Understanding. According to its own concept, it ought to be concerned with the eternal or "the divine" (as Aristotle would have said). It cannot act, it can only observe. Its experimental techniques ought therefore to be limited to the kind of thought experiments that Kepler employed in his lengthy quest for the laws of planetary motion. Real experiments (even Galileo's experiments with falling bodies) involve a free self-conscious activity (one that involves rational planning and choice). How this is conceivable in the context of an order that is all there as an eternal object of its thoughtful contemplation, the Understanding cannot explain. Only when we reach Observing Reason does experiment become comprehensible. *Freedom* is the dimension of the Concept that is developed in the intervening chapter on Self-Consciousness.²⁶

- 17./148. The Understanding has performed the Kantian reduction of all perceptual knowledge to appearance. It is the thoughtful interpretation of this appearance that fills out the void which Understanding itself faces. We have seen how the "play of forces" shows that Force is necessarily soliciting as well as solicited, it is the same on both sides of the "play." Thus any determinate utterance is the same on both sides. It is something that can be quantified and measured ("universal distinction"). Thus the Understanding discovers the "law" of the Force. [Force can be expressed as an *equation*.]

We can now see that in his exposition of the concept of Force Hegel has offered us a kind of simplified version of Kant's theory of perceptual cognition. The Understanding is confined to the interpretation of perceptual experience through

the application of its own universal categories. It can never reach the “thing in itself” regarded as the force that solicits it. But the view that there *is* another force soliciting it is a dialectical illusion induced by the concept of Force itself. The “thing-in-itself” is the comprehensive concept of Force, or the identity in act of the Understanding with its world. The essential transience of perceptual appearance is a curtain that draws itself aside to reveal the Understanding and its world of scientific law as what *really is*.

This eternal order of Nature is the *object* of Understanding. For the Understanding it is simply “out there.” This is the dialectical illusion that arises from the mediating role of appearance. But the motion of the concept of Force back into itself as what really is, is just the motion of the intelligible back into itself as Understanding. What the passing show of appearance displays to the intellect is the eternal reality of natural law. When the concept of Force “returns into itself” out of its perceptual utterance it becomes scientific law.

How does this happen? This is where we finally encounter the distinction between “primary” and “secondary” qualities—or in the language of Hegelian logic we make the transition from Quality to Quantity. “What is immediate for the Understanding is the play of Forces.” The two Forces (Mind and World, or Thought and Extension) meet at their opposed *tips* to produce the great “show” of the Imagination. But with or without a glorious sunrise and sunset, night cycles into day and back again. Here the *totality* of appearance takes us into the “simple inner.” The Understanding identifies the “simple” movement of force, and we have a table of sunrise and sunset. The cycle of day and night, the phases of the moon, the passage of the Sun through the Zodiac, these are “determinate entrances” of Force. It ceases to be a perceptible show and solicits thought to express itself; or we can equally well say that thinking reflection solicits the perceived force to be the unity of appearance that it is. There are not two distinct forces. The distinction between them collapses. There is only “distinction as universal distinction,” distinction of *quantity* in the intelligibly universal medium of pure extension—an extension which is *pure* because it is indifferently both real and ideal. Now we can have *laws* about sunrise, moon phases, Zodiac houses.

- 18./149. The absolutely alternating appearance becomes *simple distinction* through its connection with the quantitative homogeneity of the Understanding. A permanently stable set of equations lies beyond appearance, yet is *present* in it as its still picture.

In Hegel’s view the transition from the qualitative to quantity is based on the experience of an “absolute alternation” (or “exchange”) in appearance. His word is *Wechsel*—and Miller made a disastrous mistake when he adopted “flux” (Baillie’s rendering) for it. The way Hegel introduces *Wechsel* in paragraph 148 shows that he means an alternation of *two* “sides” or two values. The “antitheses” that collapse into unity in paragraph 148 are the two forces, the two roles (soliciting/being solicited), form and content, negative unity and positive medium. They all collapse into “distinction as universal distinction.” So when Hegel says *now* that “the absolutely alternating appearance becomes simple distinction” he means that the

alternation of “is” and “is not” in Sense–Certainty becomes a simple continuum in the Understanding. The “simplicity of the inner” is to begin with just what is “universal in itself,” i.e. sameness, homogeneity, continuity. “But this in itself simple universal is essentially *universal distinction* just as absolutely.” This is because it is “the result of the alternation itself.” So we are meant to think immediately of the positive continuum (or community) as necessarily *divided* into the “is” and the “is not”; the “universal distinction” here is between *positive* and *negative*; and the “negative one” enters as the point on the axis of a graph that divides “plus” from “minus.” We are now in the world where we can speak of “past” and “future” as equally real and objective; but of the “present” we speak only *eternally*, as that inner world where “the alternation is distinction at rest and remaining self-same.” With our natural laws we can both predict and retrodict. But we need our pluses and minuses in order to set up the equations that make this possible. Our system of laws is a “still picture” of the resting equilibrium of Being in this Pythagorean supersensible world.²⁷

- 19./150. But there is more in appearance than this realm of laws. Appearance is not *totally* comprehended (sublated). When we try to comprehend the different actualities of our ideal order the realm of laws becomes an indefinite plurality. The multiplication of empirical laws impels the Understanding to seek for the principle of unity in its inner world. The *basic* law must be found—as in gravitational theory. But this is abstraction not comprehension—for moon and apple have crucially different circumstances. *Universal attraction* is only the *concept* of universal law (without any differentiated *actuality*).

In this paragraph, Hegel shows us how scientific abstraction is generated when the Understanding strives for comprehensiveness. The Understanding (or the concretely intelligible concept of Law) goes forth into a manifold of utterance and withdraws into its pure unity again (but this “unity” is a pure abstraction which establishes Law as the foundation of natural science).

It is vital to conceive the “realm of laws” at which we have arrived as concretely comprehensive. In accordance with Hegel’s declared method, Law is the *actuality* of Force. Thus, the fact that the moon rises each night with a slightly different shape (until the phase comes where it does not rise at all) constitutes a difference of “reality” for the Force in perception, but not a difference of “actuality” for the Law in the Understanding. The Hegelian “law of nature” cannot lack a “statement of initial conditions,” since it “arises from” the comprehensive totality of all the observable states that it predicts (or retrodicts). But no actual concept of the celestial motions (from that of Pythagoras to that of Einstein) can prepare us for the advent of the night when the moon is not observable because it is occluded by clouds; and the whole classical conception of the Heavens as the “utterance” of Eternal Law was thrown into confusion, when the telescope revealed extinct volcanoes on the Moon, and dark spots coming and going on the Sun. All of a sudden, the “realm of laws” did not “fill out appearance” properly. The law was not all that was present in the heavens, any more than it is here on the chance-dominated

earth. The sunspots required *another* law, like the cloudy night; and the dead volcanoes strongly indicated that the same system of laws that operates on Earth, applies everywhere else.²⁸

In that situation, the Understanding was faced with a great proliferation of laws. Nothing but a “bad infinity” of explanation appeared to be possible. Then Newton restored the unity that the Understanding had lost, by replacing the old physical dichotomy between the immutable and the temporal, the heavens and the earth, with a conceptual abstraction. He distinguished what is “understandable” from what is not, by establishing a properly universal concept of motion. This is the “bare concept” of law, because it identifies the “distinction” between things that is universally quantifiable.

But this return of the concept into itself lets everything specific in the sphere of appearance go. Everything becomes simply a physical mass—a certain quantum of intelligible force in the cosmic balance of forces. The dead volcanoes, the sunspots, the pie-death or rotting of Newton’s not very tasty apple,²⁹ are all left out. But Newton’s is deservedly one of the greatest names in the history of science, because in his universal theory of *motion*, the Understanding arrived at its objective concept—the “unconditioned universal” as observable.³⁰

Hegel concentrates attention on the principle of “universal attraction” because this is the *constant* difference of the universally actual force. Repulsion is an equally universal principle, but it is a variable quantity (hence *specific*); and in all finite motion it culminates in resting contiguity. Only in the polarity of forces like magnetism and electricity do the opposites of attraction and repulsion develop into fully active equality. But the universality of the gravitational field is the final overthrow of the commonsense view that the world consists of “things” that are *externally* related. As a gravitational mass everything is *essentially* related to everything else. “Attraction” is the bare concept of Law, because gravity is the universal unity of Force. (The perceptually misleading externality arises from “repulsion”).

- 20./151. This pure concept stands opposed to the determinate laws; and as a pure concept it goes beyond law as such. It is turned against *law* itself, because the universal law grants subsistent being to the determinate moments of appearance. These different moments must be grasped as a unity in the law itself. Then the “concept of law” is seen to be the *necessity* of natural law.

It is extremely difficult to decide just what Hegel means by saying that the pure concept of law—universal attraction—“goes beyond law as such” and is “turned against the law itself.” But if we look back we can see that he was unwilling from the first to admit that “universal attraction” is a proper law. The “one law that unites the law of falling bodies on earth with that of the heavenly motion” is “the mere concept of law itself” because it has lost all determinacy. That is why it has “gone beyond law” and can be “turned against it.” On the other hand, when we look forward to the next paragraph we see that out of the transition in the present paragraph two kinds of law emerge: the familiar law of gravity, and the polar laws of attraction and repulsion that comprehend magnetic and electric phenomena.

“Universal attraction” is not a law at all, but a “pure concept.” *In* universal attraction³¹ the concept is “posited as being.” In other words “universal attraction” is the *aether*. It is Force itself as an energetic continuum. It pertains just as much to space as to bodies, because space is as much the utterance of Force as body is. Hegel does not think of gravity as a force that is propagated in Newtonian absolute space, but as the force that is expressed as both bodies and space. “Universal attraction” is the pure continuity of energy that “posits itself” in these opposite modes. There cannot be any *laws*—not even the law of gravity—until these opposite modes exist.

That is how the “pure concept of law” is *beyond* law itself. The way in which it is “turned against law” is (if I am not mistaken) in the logical structure of the law of gravity itself. Gravity is the law that expresses itself as the behaviour of bodies in this continuum: it is extended being as such that is “attractive.” Bodies are distinct from the attractive medium in which they are because they are repulsive. As such they are *distinctions* in the continuum. In the law of gravity these “distinctions” are “immediately apprehended” (in Appearance) and “taken up into the Universal” (i.e. quantified as masses). The law of gravity expresses their relation as stable moments that are external and indifferent to one another. In any stable gravitational relation their distinctive character as *repulsive* is hidden.³²

The truth of perfect reciprocity is not explicit in purely gravitational phenomena. But the gravitational mass holds together because every part of it repels every other part exactly as much as it is attracted to every other part. It is this perfectly balanced quantum of attraction and repulsion that attracts everything else. The “distinction” in the continuum is a perfect unity of the opposite distinctions” of the pure concept. But only the positive Universal is displayed in the law (against which it is thus “turned”). The moments of universality (attraction) and particularity (repulsion) are separated and set against one another “indifferently.” This externality of the moments does not display the “pure concept” of law properly. The concept of universal attraction requires that the conceptual differences themselves (attraction and repulsion) should be “attracted” to one another. This is its “true significance,” because we have seen that Force is an identity of distinctions that sublate themselves and vanish back into a self-distinguishing identity. So it is in *polar* forces like magnetism and electricity that the pure concept of law (universal attraction) becomes *explicitly* the “inner necessity” of natural laws as the actuality of force.

- 21./152. Thus the law of force is present in two ways: as an identity of external moments, and an identity of internal moments. Gravity illustrates the first, electricity the second. But now the concept of law is turned against both in another way. That Force should take this or that shape is not seen to be necessary. There are many forces and they are discovered empirically. No conceptual necessity is apparent.

From the very fact that the concept of force *cannot* actualize itself perfectly in its immediate or universal form, it follows that there must be a multiplicity of forces. In the context of the universal force (in which the conceptual moments are dissoci-

ated, with the concept existing as the universal medium, the aether, and its specific differences as the many ones) there must be other specific forms of force in which the conceptual moments are explicitly internal to one another.

But as soon as the necessity for a multiplicity of laws is admitted, the pure concept of law is “turned against” law in a new way. Every particular law is external to the concept, and its necessity is just a contingent fact of experience. If electricity is a polar force then it must be both positive and negative. This makes it a model case of the concept of Force. Any statically electrified thing will both attract and repel other electrified poles. But that electricity should *be* polar is not a conceptual necessity. Or to put it from the other side, it is not necessary that there should *be* electrical force at all.³³

Hegel apparently injects the statement of the law of falling bodies into his discussion of electricity, in order to illustrate “simple” force in which the inward identity of opposites is not explicit. But, of course, the actual formula of the law had to be empirically discovered and cannot be conceptually derived in any way. It is just another empirical law among the great mass of scientific laws. Newton identified the *actual concept* of law when he united the theory of falling bodies with the theory of those that do not fall. But he also highlighted the existence of the gulf between the concept and its embodied shapes. (The next paragraph examines the externality of the moments in the gravitational theory of motion.)

- 22./153. Even the conceptual elements of the most general laws are separable by the intellectual imagination (*Vorstellung*): e.g. time without space and vice versa. In this conceptual atomism there is no necessity left. For there to be necessity, motion as a whole must be taken as primitive (or *gravity* as its potential). As mere Force gravity does not contain distinctions.

In paragraph 152 we moved on to “the experience that Understanding makes about this relationship of being syllogistically locked together” with the inwardness of being. That inwardness was revealed to our intellectual gaze as the concept of Necessity. We are beginning now to see that because of its one-sidedly objective consciousness, the Understanding is unable to establish the existence of any necessity.

The collocation of electricity and finite gravity (simple falling) in paragraph 152 was not accidental; for the basic weakness of the Understanding is now shown to arise from the fact that it portrays the universal force of gravity only as an external fact. Both the Newtonian conception of space and time as absolute dimensions of being, and the Kantian conception of them as “forms of intuition” for the employment of the understanding, leave space and time logically unrelated. The order of nature was apparent to us long ago as a great continuum of motion. This is the *Erscheinung* of Necessity. But the problem is that the elementary law of motion cannot be *understood* as a “necessary” existence. The terms that it relates (unlike the terms of a polarized concept like magnetism) are not logically inseparable. A polarized force like magnetism has to be thought of in accordance with the logical concept of force that Hegel has developed. It has to be conceived as a unity of opposites “in itself.” But as a phenomenal occurrence even static electricity is not

like that. Static charges are built up in one direction only, so that they are manifested separately and contingently. Even magnetism, in which the real inward essence of force is manifested, is a contingent phenomenon.

In all cases, and especially in the fundamental (universal) case of motion, the separate phenomena must be understood as one whole, if they are to be grasped as manifestations of Force. But the putting of the phenomena together into these finite wholes—even the interpretation of the motion of Newton’s famous apple and of the Moon as part of one theory—is an apparently arbitrary act of the observer. That is what makes finite “explanation” into a “tautology” (as we shall now see). The law is simply the shorthand record of a regularity that we have observed and that we can treat as a “necessary connection.” But we have no intellectual insight into why these equations hold.

This is how the Understanding sees the problem itself; and Kant’s theory of the synthetic *a priori* represents the result of an attempt by the Understanding to “understand” itself. Hegel’s enterprise is a revision of the theory of cognitive experience as an *a priori* synthesis, in which the method of intellectual *portrayal* (*Vorstellung*) is shown to be dialectical. We recognize that “concepts” are not portrayable, because they involve the identity of self-sublating opposite moments. If we start with the Hegelian concept of Force, the existence of the “aether” becomes a synthetic *a priori* truth.

The actual law of gravity is still an empirical discovery. But the project of a “unified field theory” of all forces becomes the methodological goal of Understanding; and we can see how the project of a higher science of experience follows logically as the reintegration of the concreteness that the Understanding is obliged to sacrifice in order to achieve its own unity. Moreover, because of the properly conceptual character of the foundation of our *a priori* synthesis, this higher project is legitimated instead of appearing to be necessarily out of our reach.

- 23./154. The Understanding does not recognize that it is itself the “inwardness of things.” Hence its *explanations* have only a definitional necessity. They are summary descriptions in which the explanation is a tautology.

This paragraph begins by summarizing the argument about the ways in which observed laws are external to their concept. I have explained this as well as I can already. So I have omitted it in my analysis of the paragraph, and I shall not comment upon it any further.

The “experience that Understanding makes” of its syllogistic connection with the inward nature of things, is an experience of the formal necessity that it imposes upon its own “ideas.” Its science is ultimately all a matter of what Hume called “the relations of ideas” (or of what Hegel calls *formal*, and sometimes “external,” necessity). There is no *reason* why the law of falling bodies should be what it is. The early modern apostles of the Understanding expressed this by saying that the “cause of gravity is occult,” and insisting that we must “feign no hypotheses” about these supersensible questions. But when we talk about gravity as a real force we are already feigning a hypothesis unless we take the theory (with all of its difficult

mathematics) to be just a shorthand *description* of a totality of “appearance” from which predictions can be made deductively (and retrodictions too, of course). The theory is just a *duplication* in the intellect of the real structure of the world-order. The construction of this theoretical duplicate is called “explanation.” So explanation is really tautologous. Physical reality and physical necessity are simply *identified* with the mathematical description and its resulting logical necessities. The syllogism of the Understanding is a *formal* syllogism.

Hegel’s claim that scientific explanation is *tautologous* should be seen in the context of all the attacks on Aristotelian logic as not providing any knowledge that we did not have before. To call this kind of formal explanation “tautology” is a rhetorical excess because, quite apart from all the imaginative effort that goes into the construction of the mathematical duplicate, everyone who has ever done any mathematics or logic knows how much difference there is between a simple tautology or an instantly self-evident equation, and a theorem that one has struggled for months or years to prove. But there is a metaphysical tautology involved, since the fundamental assumption is that the order of nature has to be a system of mechanical necessity, because the understanding operates in terms of formal logical necessity.³⁴ “Force is constituted in exactly the same way as law” translates as “the order of nature is necessarily a mathematical order.” This is a tautology because it is a simple analysis of what “order” means for the Understanding. The physical necessity of mechanics is simply a *projection* of the formal necessity of logic (or of mathematics). Hegel needs to bring out this simple tautology at the heart of scientific explanation because he now intends to show that this fatalistic tautology is an inadequate conception of how experience is rational. He intends to show *logically* that neither reality nor rational knowledge can be conceived in this way with complete success.

Hegel’s rhetorical excess is provoked by his conviction that both reality and rational cognition can be successfully conceived by a new logic which pays proper attention to what a “concept” is (as distinct from a *Vorstellung* which can be taken to pieces like a physical object). We should remember that he was a serious student both of mathematics and of the empirical sciences. So he probably had a more adequate conception than most of us of what an enormous *empirical* difference there is between “ $x + y = y + x$ ” and the “Propositions” of Newton’s *Principia*.

(d) *Experience (ii): Self-Repulsion and Inversion*

- 24./155. When we recognize that the realm of law is just a description of the real forces in the world, we have to recognize that all the movement of “explanation” is in the Understanding. But also this movement of Understanding shows that the principle of dialectical unrest is present in the inner world of supposedly eternal rest. The Understanding itself is moving there.

On this view of reality as a balance of forces that are absolutely lawful—the conception of the order of nature as mechanical, or of the inward nature of things as a formal logical necessity—the fundamental phenomenon of motion is not actual at

all. It is only the way in which the eternal equilibrium *appears* in time. The only actual movement is that of Parmenides' mind as he follows the instruction of the nameless Goddess. She instructs him that "It is," that the object of true knowledge is at rest; and Parmenides recognizes that Truth is the "tautology" of Being.³⁵

We have to recover this positive way of stating the standpoint of Understanding, and not be misled by the negative way in which Newton, Locke and Hume have formulated it as sceptical about absolute cognition—or as a doctrine that we are ignorant of the "real" nature of things. What we have to attend to is the necessity that we *can* grasp. We have seen that the necessity of "explanation" is tautologous because the Understanding simply *presupposes* that the order of nature is an order of lawful forces. The tautology is between "law" and "force"—or between "soliciting" and "solicited" force. This identity implies that there is no real movement in the understandable world. The standpoint of necessity is an eternal standpoint. The laws do not change and force is neither created nor destroyed. But let us see, now, whether this standpoint of "formal identity" can be consistently maintained.

What exactly *is* phenomenal motion on this view? It is a difference that cancels itself out, a swaying movement from plus to minus—a *Wechsel* or exchange that maintains a steady balance of equality or zero: "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction."

But our intellectual image of the eternal equilibrium is constructed by an intellectual movement of the Understanding away from the transience and contingency of perceptual experience. There is a long and difficult journey from the enjoyment of a sunset that will *not* come again tomorrow, to the marvellous mathematical architecture of Newton's celestial mechanics. Without this laborious movement the tautological duplicate of the intelligible order would never have come into being at all. Because Understanding is itself a *movement*—even though it is only a movement from the Eternal to the Eternal, a "flight of the Alone to the Alone"—the "change and alternation," which we have sublated in the *Sache selbst* by our journey, is necessarily present in the comprehensive consciousness of the noumenal world which we have now reached.³⁶ Everything that we *imagined* in our explanation of perception as a "play of forces" is repeated intellectually by the Understanding in its return to the One. We think of a difference between the Law and the Force; but then we assert their identity and cancel the difference again. The whole experience shows that the Understanding is a *duplication* of supersensible being. But that duplication takes place *in* the supersensible world. "*Our* consciousness has passed over from the inner as object to the other side, [i.e.] into the *Understanding*, and has the exchange (*Wechsel*) in it." (Hegel emphasized *Verstand*; I have emphasized *unser*.)

- 25./156. But the inner world of Understanding *is* itself the inwardness of things. So the Understanding learns that what it does (in explanation) is the basic Law of appearance. What it calls by the same name is necessarily self-repulsive; and what is named as different is self-attractive. Hence Appearance is not only a realm where difference is constant; but one where equals become unequal and unequals become equal (necessarily); and this structure of Appearance is the structure of the Thing that appears.

In this paragraph the “second supersensible world” is generated, by showing that the principle of “universal attraction” needs to be formulated in a more complex and dialectical way. The second supersensible world is the world constructed in the Understanding (as a tautologous image of the world of forces that the Understanding observes). So far, we have had a resting world of absolute being and a *movement back and forth* (a *Wechsel*) of Understanding explaining its experience in terms of this resting object that is known to it in natural law.

This motion from the eternal world of being to the eternal world of laws must now be understood. In order that there should *be* Understanding at all, it has to be the “law of appearance” that the one intelligible force utters itself as a manifold of distinctions. The structure of Force as the intelligible unity of perceptual experience is the same as the structure of Law as the unity of the intelligible experience of Understanding. Thus it is a law of the eternally self-same (the force that conserves itself absolutely) that it must repel itself. The self-sameness that is manifest as “universal attraction” must be “universally repulsive.”

That is how Hegel puts the pure logic of it in his *Logic*. Here, in the “science of experience,” he says that “what has the same name repels itself from itself”; and “what is not same named attracts itself.” We can see this perfectly exemplified in the magnet—the polarized form in which Force achieves its full Utterance as the immediate unity of distinctions. The north pole of the magnet repels north and attracts south. And since we have now passed over to the side of “Understanding” we can go back to the beginning and point out that when the Force of mind solicits its other to be appearance, we have a case of self-repulsion. Then what appears is “attracted” back into the conceived unity of “universal attraction”; this conceptual unity (having passed over from a physical necessity to a formal logical necessity by self-repulsion and self-attraction again) is now manifest to us as the *necessary* self-repulsion of the self-same (or the “*becoming unequal of the equal* and the *becoming equal of the unequal*.”

Since we have reached the *final* movement of Understanding, the movement in which it comprehends itself, the opposition that is now comprehended is that between Force and Understanding as such. In this opposition it is Understanding that bears with it the world of perceptual experience sublated into appearance. “Appearance” was the middle term through which Understanding achieved its first insight into the intelligible world. It is Appearance, therefore, that returns in the final identification of the Understanding with its intelligible world.

Let us try to paraphrase the very difficult dialectic of this paragraph in the light of this general interpretation: The exchanging of the explanatory law for the real force is no longer an alternation in the objective world. It displays itself as *pure* (i.e. conceptual) exchange precisely because the content of the explanation tautologically describes the objective world. The concept in the mind is the same as the concept in things; so this purely nominal exchange is the conceptual law of the inner reality for Understanding. Understanding discovers that it is the law of appearance itself that merely nominal distinctions are made. We find that what has the same name repels itself and the poles that are named as opposites are mutually

attractive. The poles of force *seem* to be distinct, but they are not. Thus we have a second law whose content is the opposite of that of stable constancy. (Even finite gravity reveals repulsion and ends in rest replacing motion. But within the Understanding itself we should think of possibility revealing itself as the context of necessity.) The equal becomes unequal and the unequal, equal (precisely in the equations of our physical laws). The Concept imposes the task of bringing these two laws (of “identity” and “difference”) together. The law of difference and repulsion is just as eternal as the law of restful attraction; but it is a law of *motion*, and of the permanence of instability. It was this law that emerged as absolute transition and alternation in the play of forces. Force as perceiving and force as thing perceived divided into two seemingly independent forces; but we found they were indistinguishable after all. Thus Force itself is the like-named that repels itself; and the repelled poles essentially attract one another, because it is the same force; we make the distinction and it sublates itself. Thus the distinction we make displays itself as the distinction of the Thing itself, or as absolute distinction; and this distinction in the real object is nothing but the Understanding’s concept of the like-named that has repelled itself and has only posited an antithesis that is not really there. (In other words the identity of the Understanding with the inwardness of things is itself the unifying of these two laws. The Understanding is the self-inversion by which the “second supersensible world” *envelops* the first. This anticipates the argument of the next paragraph, but it should make it easier for us to read on at this point.)

- 26./157. Thus, like the realm of *Erscheinung*, the supersensible realm has an opposite complement within it. Just as Appearance is inwardly Law, so Law is inwardly Appearance. Thus if it is the law of Understanding itself that what is self-same is self-repulsive (polarized) and what is repelled (opposite poles) is attractive, then the supersensible contains its own inversion.

This is a very simple paragraph, which makes a formal logical inference and draws a logical conclusion. But since we know that formal inferences of this kind belong to the Understanding and not to our science, we must look at it carefully; and we should not be surprised to find that after drawing it out and illustrating it formally Hegel tells us eventually that it does not really mean what he pretended initially at all.

Outwardly, what happens is that we are told that when we passed over (at the end of par. 155) from the motionless supersensible world behind the curtain of perceptual appearance to the self-comprehension of the Understanding which makes purely conceptual distinctions in order to understand the supersensible, we were passing from a world in which the laws were tranquil to one in which they are dialectical (on the model of the self-same that is self-repulsive, and the self-opposed that is attractive). In this new world, the world of Understanding is doubled into two worlds that are conceptually complementary.

Let us begin by asking what clues we already have to the meaning of this. First, the self-comprehension of our journey from the intellectual intuition of the perceptual world as a conceptual force to the discursive explanation of the intelligible

world as a system of eternal laws showed us that the Understanding is a principle of *motion* without which the eternal stillness of the world of law could not exist. Then, by grasping the concept of “actual appearance” properly, we saw that the motion of a real concept must be a motion of self-inversion or complementarity. Now we are told (in terms of par. 157) that the complement provided by the world of perceptual appearance for the tranquil realm of eternal laws is carried into the intelligible world by the moving principle of intelligence. Or (in terms of par. 158) we are told that since what the Understanding observes as perfect stillness is the stillness of an actual concept, it must contain its own inversion and display this by its own motion. It cannot lack the external complement of “appearance” through which the Understanding obtained access to it; it must comprehend it internally. Since it is the origin of appearance it must contain the moving principle, the principle of alternation, in itself. “Therewith the inner is completed as appearing.” We have to remember that this refers to the intelligible appearing of the eternal order to the observing intellect. The active Understanding itself takes over the role of the perceptual manifold that “solicited” it to posit the stillness in the first instance. The “inverted world” is the intellectual replacement for the perceptual world.

- 27./158. In determinate moments this will mean that the inner essence of sweet is sour etc.; just as all finite magnets have poles named from their relations to the Earth’s field, i.e. all finite N’s are really S. In moral experience this inversion is readily illustrated. The natural law of family feud becomes crime against self in the supersensible world of established law: but that self-destruction in turn becomes the supremely honorable thing in the inverted supersensible world of absolute spirit.

Magnetism is the phenomenal force that provides the clearest illustration of Hegel’s doctrine. The poles of all magnets have been identified as *North* and *South*, because the Earth is itself a magnet with a powerful magnetic field. So Hegel calls the Earth “the other supersensible *Ansich*” of the ordinary theory of magnetism. This shows that “the inverted supersensible world” does indeed replace the realm of perceptual appearance. The scientific concept of the Earth is the *context* of our theory of finite magnets.

The pole of a magnet which is attracted to the Earth’s northern magnetic pole is called “North.” But what points North because it is attracted is necessarily the complementary (hence properly the South) pole of the smaller magnet. In identifying *all* finite magnets by their relation to the poles of the Earth, the Understanding uses the “same-name” principle to name what is really the opposite of what it is called. No harm results because the names refer only to the poles of a relationship that forms a conceptual whole; the truth of the assertion that “the North pole is *really* South” (which is true about any rightly oriented magnet on Earth, except the Earth itself) is at a different level from the normal talk in which North and South (like Rudyard Kipling’s East and West) will never meet. It is only worth insisting on it as a way of helping students to grasp the principle of theoretical “complementarity.” Calling the pole that *points* North the “North” pole is a convention (which we could change). But we cannot change the fact that “North”

requires and presupposes “South” (and vice versa) whichever way they are conventionally identified.

“Attraction” is the bare Concept of Law. Gravity is a universal *law*—not just the Concept—because it involves the unity of attraction and repulsion. But in Gravity the unity is not “explicit.” For all we know *a priori*, two masses might stay glued together when they meet. It is only in Magnetism that the *essence* of Force as a Concept is revealed directly to the intellect.

As we shall see, this necessary complementarity of the poles of a proper concept is the important point about Hegel’s doctrine of “the inverted world.” But as a formal *inversion* of the tautologous world of “resting” laws, the “inverted world” would not deserve the name of a “second supersensible world.” For it would only be the same world with all the labels (or signs) reversed. Thus we could easily say about the “matters” of Perception, that what tastes sweet must really be a *complementary* (soliciting or solicited) force; and hence that it should more properly be called “not-sweet.” Sweetness is its being-for-us, not its being-for-itself. But this would not be an advance in understanding. Understanding progresses when we recognize that sweet, sour, and so on, belong to the same universal range, and that “not-sweet” is a determinate negation that refers to that range. Through this recognition we are able to define the whole that “sweet” belongs to (the range of tastes). We shall see in the next paragraph that this is the conceptual function of Hegel’s “inverted world.” What is born from our understanding experience of “the necessary” is the concept of what is “possible.” The first supersensible world was that in which change and motion is negated in favor of rest. The inverted supersensible world is the “negation of the negation” in the progressive Hegelian sense; i.e. it is the intellectual world that does not just negate the sensible world, but *envelops* (or overarches) the incessant variability of it intellectually. What comes forth when we comprehend the activity of understanding the “lawfulness” of change, is the self that is aware of its own *freedom*. (But we have still to put these “sides” together into a whole that preserves the determinately negated whole of natural law as Necessity.)

In order to illustrate this comprehensiveness of the advance (and also in order to show us how the supersensible world of the Understanding is eventually fulfilled in the real spiritual world of Reason) Hegel offers us not only the simple case of the magnet, but the equally clear but more complex case of revenge, justice, and pardon. This case has the added advantage of showing us how the phenomenological sequence of 1) appearance, 2) the world of resting laws, and 3) the inverted world, is a necessary one. we might think that the principle of inversion is just as natural as the principle of same-naming, so that which convention is adopted first is a matter of accident. Putting Hegel’s two examples into a parallel evolutionary context shows that this is not so.

Because of the importance of the stars for finding one’s direction in any primitive culture, it is safe to assume that the star now called Polaris or the North Star was identified and given some name indicative of its stability, long before there was any understanding of magnetism. That first identification took place in the “ven-

detta" world of "natural ethics." It was a world in which *Schein* was recognized as *Erscheinung*, and in which *Erscheinung* was regarded as the work of supersensible powers. This much is implicit in the institution of "revenge" as it operates (say) in the world of Greek Tragedy. "Revenge," as Bacon said, "is a kind of wild justice"—in other words it needs to be tamed and domesticated. It involves both the principle of reciprocity and the relation of open confrontation. For as a form of justice growing wild (or in a "state of nature") it can only be an "immediate law" if it appears openly as the restoration of the honor of the injured self. Typically therefore it is an unwritten law that regulates the relation between families or tribes. The family is a "natural individuality" that can be injured by death, but which survives to avenge its honor. The feuding of the Montagues and Capulets clearly illustrates the "wildness" of this form of justice. In principle, it is as endless as the cycle of night and day. There is a well understood "customary law" here; but the supersensible world of law has not emerged at all.

The first negation of this natural condition is a direct and simple inversion. Macbeth is faced in his own banquet hall by the ghost of Banquo—an individuality whose injury is a matter of public knowledge, but who is not present except as a moment of Macbeth's own consciousness. Macbeth condemns himself. Justice is actually executed in the old "wild" way by a champion of the injured royal family; but in principle, it is no longer wild. The fact that someone who is not a blood-relation executes it is one aspect of the emergence of the "concept" of Justice as such. If *anyone* can execute justice on behalf of the injured individuality, then the fact that she is executing *justice* must be generally recognized; otherwise, the natural world of feuding would degenerate into the quite intolerable Hobbesian world in which everyone has to be afraid of everyone else. But it is not Duncan's intervention that is crucial—for the world of natural ethical relations accepted the principles both of family-membership by adoption, and of "ethical obedience" or *loyal* championship. What makes the difference is Macbeth's confession of guilt, his self-condemnation.

When we institutionalize the execution of justice by a *neutral* authority, so as to make the resting principle that "each receives his due" replace the endless process of *paying the debt of honor*, it is implicitly entailed that each of the parties can recognize that she is receiving what is due. If someone insists on carrying on a feud now, she is in principle destroying, not her enemy, but herself. Instead of restoring honor, she becomes a criminal.

This advance corresponds to the discovery of magnetism, and the theoretical establishment of the principle of polarity. It is interesting to note that Heraclitus, who deserves the credit for this theoretical achievement more than anyone else, was an enthusiastic apologist for an absolutely stable law as the essential condition of human existence: "the people should fight for its law as for a wall," he said. This was only the reflection in his social philosophy of the unchanging unity of the theoretical *Logos*. The proclamation of the unity of opposites in appearance (which Hegel wrongly thought could only happen *after* Parmenides had proclaimed the simple unity of Being) leads directly to the "resting kingdom of law." Like the

establishment of justice in society, the scientific “kingdom of law” is already an inversion of the natural order of the world of appearance.

The “inverted world” proper—the inversion of this first world of inner unity—is the *second* inversion, or the “negation of the negation.” In the ethical realm, that second inversion—which corresponds to the recognition that what we call the North Pole of a magnet is really South—took place when Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of sins. For those who preached the good news of the Resurrection “to all nations,” the Cross on which Jesus died the death of a condemned criminal was the symbol of this forgiveness, and so of man’s highest glory. Here we transcend the sphere of *objective* Spirit, and enter the world of *absolute* spirit, the world of grace and immortality, the real inner world that belongs to Spirit alone.³⁷

This other world of *freedom*, the realm of grace and of salvation, is the reality of the inverted supersensible world. The first supersensible world, as Hegel will say in the next paragraph, is just an “inverted actuality.” That world, the world of law and justice, of recognized crime and accepted punishment, is an inversion that we can, and do, actually realize externally. But the truly supersensible world exists in the spirit only. We realize it only by living in it, that is, by recognizing that it is the embracing context of our real activity (in the way that the Earth’s magnetic field is the context of all magnets).³⁸

The realization of Justice requires that we learn to judge ourselves, to acknowledge our guilt, and to regard the desire for revenge as the “self-destruction” of our own rational personality. Similarly the realization of freedom requires the recognition that it is we who forgive ourselves, and we who must love one another as the proof that this forgiveness can be and has been achieved. This mutual forgiveness and charity is the freely placed foundation stone of a new, higher, life. In the effective administration of justice it is necessary to have an external judge; and similarly it is necessary to speak of (and for) God in the founding of freedom. But both functions are like the function of the resting object in the movement of Understanding: it causes “distinctions to arise which are no distinctions” (par. 156).

The goal of the movement of Understanding is ultimately to understand how the supersensible world embraces the sensible one. The “other supersensible *Ansich*,” the all-embracing inversion of the first noumenal world, is *explicitly* identified by Hegel in his paradigm case as “the Earth.” But the Earth—we can hardly fail to notice—is the one object of which we must all be perceptually aware if we are going to raise any *Schein* of sensible certainty to the level of an understandable appearance. In the same way, the judge and God are the objective representations of a real subjectivity that is just as unfailingly and reliably present.

“No one,” says the legal adage, “can be judge in his own cause.” But if we accept the court’s verdict as just, it is because we recognize in it the appropriate judgment of the community in which we live and move and have our being. Similarly, the adage of salvation is that “We have no power of ourselves to help ourselves.” But if in a spiritual crisis some of us, at least, can find the strength to stand firm against the judgment of the real community, and accept the status of criminals in the hope

of bringing salvation, then *so far as that hope is a rational one*, it does not rest on the commandment of God as a divine judge.

The judgment of God is just the fanatic's name for her own alienated (or projected) ego. Truly saving grace comes from the consciousness of membership in the universal community that embraces both the dead and the unborn. In the name of that community—or if you prefer religious language, in the name of the God who does not judge, but is a loving father of every member of the universal community—one can rationally stand against the actual community of which one is a member. Royce expressed the Hegelian doctrine of Spirit correctly when he claimed that “we are saved by the community.” To live, move and have one's self-consciously rational being in the Spirit is to be as reassuringly aware of that infinite community of Reason as we are of the Earth under our own feet. The examples in this paragraph carry us all the way from the first certainty of experience, the certainty of sense, to the last—which we shall learn to call “Spirit certain of itself.”

- 28./159. The pictorial view of the inversion is a superficial one only: Sweetness in the mouth arises from a sour potential in the thing, etc. We do not really have two actualities here, but only a circular conceptual motion. Otherwise we would fall back to the stage of perception. But the finite magnet does contain the complementary poles (ditto the Voltaic pile); and the crime expresses a freedom that could do otherwise.

As we have pointed out already, the simple inversion is not what is important about the “inverted supersensible world.” Indeed, except for certain paradigm cases, it is not even what is *true*. One can argue plausibly that the “matter” which tastes sweet to the tongue is in-itself “not-sweet”; but—to borrow a word from Findlay—it is *grotesque* to argue that it is “really sour.”³⁹ Hegel's point is that there cannot be sweet tastes without sour tastes (or at least contrasting tastes). The actual contrasts that we have tasted help to determine the concrete meaning of “sweet” for us. Hegel expresses this determinate negation of “sweet” in a Heracleitean fashion—as the opposite or warring taste of “sour.” This drives home the principle of *polarity* that is phenomenologically evident in magnetism, and in the attraction/repulsion of physical mass. But I believe I have correctly rendered the opposition logically (and in this case, the logical point is far more convincing than the phenomenological *Vorstellung*—at least until we begin trying to comprehend tasting as a biochemical reaction at the molecular level).

The magnet is important, because it makes the actual structure of the Concept visible in phenomenal experience. But it will mislead us, if it makes us think that the relation of the two conceptual worlds is like the external relations that exist in the world of appearance. “Antitheses like inner and outer, or appearance and the supersensible, are no longer present here as two kinds of actuality.” The second supersensible world is the *other half* of the Concept. We begin with the fact that the concept of “Attraction” is really the concept of the “attraction of attraction and repulsion”—the conceptual unity evident in the magnet. The “resting world of laws” rests on the Understanding's concept of Necessity. What the “second super-

sensible world” does is to make us aware that the *comprehension* of “necessity” by the Understanding brings to light the concept of “the necessary unity of necessity and possibility”—and the proper name of *that* concept is “freedom.”⁴⁰

In the ethical sphere Hegel has already presented his real meaning quite well. Now he contrasts it with what we may call a “vulgar Kantian” view of the noumenal world. Even his ethical examples become relatively trivial when we think of them as simply having opposite signs in the phenomenal and noumenal world. In place of Macbeth’s tragic consciousness that he has destroyed himself, and the great transition from the sphere of judgment to that of salvation, we are presented first with the milk and water reflection that what is legally a crime may be morally an act of the good will. This is the case of Robin Hood or Karl Moor (in Schiller’s *Robbers*) rather than of Jesus or Orestes. But Hegel does not have Kant himself in mind. It is not Kant himself, but rather a philosopher of feeling like Jacobi, who would be prepared to say that a crime in phenomenal appearance might be an “authentically good action in its inner being.” Kant would never allow the simple view that “a *bad* action might have a *good* intention”; but Jacobi is prepared to justify lying pretence, and even murder, in terms of the agent’s intention.⁴¹

The proper conceptual actuality of the action qualified intellectually as a crime, is “the *Absicht* as such.” Punishment realizes the whole concept of the “intention” by making the act the same for the agent as it was for the patient. A perfect balance of action and reaction is established by the reaction of the law. Thus the supersensible complement of crime—that which completes it as a concept—is a reaction that reduces it to nothing. Crime and punishment are the paradigm of the moral understanding as a motion that goes only from the identity of being to that of cognition. “Forgiveness” is a “nothingness” of quite a different sort. It involves the understanding recognition that we are all bound to do wrong. But it begins from the concept of Freedom; so it cannot be comprehended within the sphere of Understanding proper.

We have to understand the “inverted world” as a world of reactive law. The “resting law” can only be inverted into a dialectical unity of opposites. In this way the initial “pure thought” is developed into a concept by being united with its own complement or opposite. Thus, it is not a sour “thing” that is the cause of our sweet taste (or a not-sweet thing either for that matter). That is the sort of reasoning that creates the problem of the *Ding an sich*. To follow that route is simply to circle back from the standpoint of Understanding to that of Perception, and to portray the noumenal world to ourselves as if it were the object of a higher *perceptual* capacity. But thinking is not a higher mode of perceiving.

We should notice that insofar as polarity is a fact of *Erscheinung* Hegel allows just this sort of arching-back. But the point of the “magnet” example is that we must really make the circle back to the actual perceptual world in our thought: “the north pole which is the *Ansich* of the south pole is the north pole *present in the same magnet*; the oxygen pole . . . is the one present in the same voltaic pole.”⁴² These two simple assertions in the indicative come in the same sentence that contains the two contrary to fact conditionals about the causes of our perception (presumably of

sugar) as sweet and white. But the perceptually verifiable cases are contrasted sharply with the unverifiable theory of perception. They presage the successful closure of the Understanding upon Sense-Certainty (and so of Consciousness upon itself) as a self-standing and self-maintaining *Gestalt*: the Infinite.

- 29./160. Thus the inversion of the conceptual world is a new conceptual world, not a *separate* world. We have to comprehend the Concept as the contradictory identity of being and cognition. There are not two supersensible worlds. The dynamic inversion of the realm of resting law envelops and contains it. The result is the whole field of lawful appearance comprehended as a self-differentiating infinity.

Hegel's object in paragraph 159 was to *show* us what a concept is. Now he *tells* us what a real concept is in so many words; and the significance of the second inversion for the Understanding is revealed to be just that circling back which is fully explicit in the empirical cases of magnetism and the electric battery. As far as the completion of the supersensible world *in itself* is concerned, its inversion is just the step by which Understanding develops the thought of it into a *concept*. The naïve Understanding completes this step with respect to "universal attraction," and *we* complete it for the universal concept of Necessity (which the Understanding cannot find in the actual world). Necessity is properly the necessity of necessity and possibility as logical complements. Thus the second inversion is really the identification of the necessary inwardness of things with the free thought process about appearance in our minds. To think pure *Wechsel* is to think the world as producing our free thinking, and to comprehend our free thinking as producing the necessary knowledge of the world.

It is the whole intellectual world of natural necessity that is *übergriffen* (enveloped, overarched, or grasped back again) in the inversion of the supersensible world. The intellectual world of natural necessity has already enveloped the phenomenal world. (This is explicit for the Understanding in the paradigm case of magnetism, and is universalized by the reconstruction of "universal attraction" as an actual concept.) The *Übergreifen* here is a thinking act that grasps the whole process of thinking and perceiving the world as the manifestation of the purely intelligible force of necessity that *freely appears to itself* as intelligence. The duplication of the intelligible world, into itself as the opposite of perception, and itself as aware of its comprehension of perception, is just the distinction of two moments, or of two ways of being aware of the process: there is awareness from *inside* the process (necessity, resting stillness); and awareness from *above* it (possibility, free motion). They need to be distinguished as two "worlds," because one can have the first kind of awareness, without the second; and this is precisely because the Understanding *thinks* its concept as a "world" of necessary order.

It is for the sake of the self-completion of the Understanding in its own terms that Hegel speaks of the contradictory side of the Concept as a more comprehensive world. But he has to speak of this second world as the *inversion* of the first because the second kind of intellectual consciousness is a new consciousness *of* the first. When one grasps the whole from above, one is grasping one's own free

thinking as a moment of the whole; we comprehend the intelligent self understanding the world, as the world's own utterance of itself as Force. For if it did not logically involve this *spontaneous* force, the world could not properly be called the utterance of force at all, since the *essence* of the concept of Force is that it makes itself known in its Utterance. The intelligible world of natural necessity is the opposite of transient appearance; but it contains the understanding of itself as free possibility as its own inner opposite. This "pure *Wechsel*" is the Concept of necessary truth itself as Contradiction. It is not so hard to think, after all; and certainly it is not so paradoxical as Hegel makes it sound.⁴³

This experienced totality is the "Infinite" because it is the unconditioned Universal that has gone through its whole motion as a Concept, and has exhibited for us how it does indeed comprehend all of our conscious experience. We can now appreciate to the full the significance of the adjective "unconditioned." What is "unconditioned" is what is absolutely free. The *self-conscious* Understanding of necessity is free in the sense in which Spinoza's God is free; and this Understanding is our own, not God's. We have made a long journey from Sense-Certainty to get here, and we have had to surrender the possibility of the "intuitive intellect" on the way. Our Understanding—even when Hegel has shown us how our Science can have more than a subjective necessity—remains abstract in the extreme. So it will not be surprising to find that the freedom of which we have gained conscious possession has a very different significance for us than it does for Spinoza's God (or the God of Leibniz).⁴⁴

(e) *The Infinite as Result (Plato and Schelling)*

- 30./161. Infinity is the completion of Law in itself, the absorption of all the moments of appearance into the inner world. Law is the conceptual unity of identity and distinction. Force duplicates itself [into appearance and Understanding] and becomes infinite as the realm of law. The universal law relates space and time as dimensions that are external to each other. But when these dimensions are conceived as only conceptually distinct, their relatedness becomes internal (like positive and negative poles). Then they contain one another and the whole is a unity.

Hegel turns now to the closure of the Understanding as a *Gestalt*. The end of this chapter is different from that of any other in that here the closure of the *Gestalt* is more important than the genesis of the new one. By calling the result of Force and Understanding "the Infinite" Hegel indicates that there is something *absolute* about it; and he draws attention himself to the fact that when we advance to the next chapter there is a radical forgetting and a new beginning. *We* know everything that the Understanding has comprehended (that is a necessary implication of Hegel's method); but the "self-consciousness" we shall observe has only the self-moving freedom of the Understanding as Sense-Certainty. The closure of this chapter must now restore that certainty to *our* Understanding.

The Understanding that we are observing has come as close to destroying Sense-Certainty as consciousness can come; but our observation has shown us

where it got lost. Paragraph 161 summarizes the chapter, and concentrates on the moment of loss. The concept of Force actualizes itself necessarily as two forces (the perceptible world and the understanding mind) in order to complete its full motion of utterance into multiplicity and return into unity. This necessary unity of identity and distinction we now know to be the general structure of the Concept as such. The result of this first motion is the Concept of the order of Nature as a resting complex of law. But the *necessity* of this order (which ought to appear as the unity of it) seems to exist as a postulate of the Understanding only, and not in the world. The moments of the universal law—space and time, distance and velocity etc.—seem to be independent, and only externally related.

At this point we have to recollect the whole motion in which the concept of experience as Force spelled itself out. When we do that, and put the pure Concept at the foundation of the world of law, where it should be, we recognize that space and time, etc. are *not* accidentally, but necessarily, related. They are moments of Force, not realities in and for themselves.

Hegel's concept of "intelligible matter" is built upon the concept of Force, instead of having the concept imposed on it. Intelligible things are not *externally* related, like the things of perception. Positive and negative being both belong to Force; they are not passively external to each other like "thing" and "nothing" in the classical atomic theory. Space is the intelligible moment of force as medium in perceptual utterance; time is just the way in which the Concept itself *is*; and the atom is the immediate unity of attraction and repulsion, the movement inward and the movement outward.

From the point of view of the Concept we must say that the One is both "self-repulsive" and "self-attractive." For it is the essence of material quantities both to attract and to repel one another, and the concept of Force was born when we were obliged to recognize "that the thing is in-itself identical with what it is for the other."

The primitive "distinction" between space and time follows logically from the acceptance of *rest* as the proper ideal of the Understanding. Hegel, like Plato, follows Heraclitus and accepts the primacy of *motion*. The acceptance of "motion" in the supersensible realm mediates the comprehension of the world of perception as a "true Infinite" of conceptual self-distinction, for which what we call the Understanding is the return to unity; and the whole conceptual motion has the spontaneity that its very errancy into the shape of a system of external relations demonstrates. The free spontaneity of the motion of Force and Understanding is what Hegel calls "Life."

- 131./162 This dynamic concept is the simple essence of *Life*. It is the concept of understanding consciousness as such; of the whole that relates only to itself, but only as other (the changing world). The theological problem about how distinction issues from identity (or why God needs the world) is a mistake, because the concept of the self-identical is the concept of what sunders itself and sublates its own splitting. Life is a supersession that *preserves* opposition.

In the history of philosophy the self-sufficient and stable concept of reality as a *simple* Infinity has been familiar ever since Parmenides. He is the father of “the absolute *Begriff*” because we can see that this intelligible unity of What Is was what he was aiming to express; and his journey began from the world of Appearance.

When Hegel says that this Infinity “may be called the essence of Life,” he is using the language of the Identity Philosophy itself; and in particular he is directing us to the last triad of his own *Logic*.⁴⁵ The “soul of the world” comes from Plato’s *Timaeus*; and its revival as the basic concept of nature philosophy began with Schelling’s *Ideen* of 1798. The pulsing of the “universal blood” seems to be a metaphor of Hegel’s own; at least, no other writer has yet been identified as the source of this picturesque image.⁴⁶ It is a plausible way of representing the “ecological balance”; and this is *imaged* in Hegel’s theory of the Earth’s water-cycle (on which all climate, and hence all finite life, depends).

At the beginning of paragraph 160 we were told that we must put aside “the sensuous *Vorstellung* of the fixing of the distinctions in a distinct element of subsistence.” Even the systolic and diastolic “pulsing” of life involves the distinction of the heart-pump and the blood that it pumps; but the pulsing of the world as understanding is no more than the tautologous self-abolishing distinction of “explanation” (see par. 163). In its “self-identity” the One Being of the Understanding has to have this structure of “self-distinction.” Hegel is making an Aristotelian response to the attempt by Plotinus to interpret Plato’s Idea of the Good as a “One” that is “beyond Being in dignity and Power.”⁴⁷

In order to be a self-identical Idea at all, the One must become “other” for itself and identify itself with itself. There has to be the “opposition” of thought and being; and this opposition has to be like the poles of the magnet, in the sense that *what is is what is true for thought*; and what is true for thought is what is. Knowing is being, and being is being-known. This is the *logical* truth, even though in temporal experience ignorance and being-unknown are quite normal.

If we start from the “Idea” (or from Spinoza’s God) it seems to be a problem that any mode of being (or knowing) *less* than this absolute Being should exist. In the context of the Identity theory one could ask: “How does distinction, or being-otherwise, come forth from the One?” Hegel’s answer is simply that it does not. Instead, “distinction” is the necessary point of origin for the living Idea of the One, and within the fullness of the One is where distinctions stay.⁴⁸ If we do not try to start from the One, but ask instead how we can ever come to know the One in the Many, then we shall discover this (as we have done).

With the raising of this theological problem Hegel signals the fact that we have now arrived at the level of Absolute Consciousness—the level of Religion. When he refers back to the Infinite of Understanding at the beginning of the chapter on Religion (par. 673) he tells us that it is *selbstlos*. But the religion of “the Light-Essence,” with which the detailed development of chapter VII begins, is an intuitive version of this “selfless” Infinite (i.e. an imaginative presentation of it in the mode of sense-certainty). The sense-certain “self” is what emerges from it by “setting itself to one side and becoming a sundered moment.” The Infinite is

“selfless” because the observing Understanding forgets its own status as the observer.

The understanding consciousness overlooks the fact that its construction of the duplicative *theory* of the Infinite is essential to the being of the Infinite as Infinite. It is only through this forgetfulness that the theological problem about the emergence of “distinction” can arise. The sense-certain self, moving as an observer toward the comprehension of the Infinite, logically has to be there from the first. But the forgetfulness is easy (even inevitable) because the journey is a discipline of self-forgetfulness. The duplicated Infinite—i.e. the “order of Nature” as comprehended in the intellect—is a completely impersonal mode of consciousness; it is perfect self-loss in otherness. For the intellect, only the intelligible order is real. The fact that the Infinite has already *sundered* itself into Force and Law, Being and Thought, Supersensible World and Understanding, is overlooked. But the self that has “set itself to one side” is *both* the conceptual whole in which the infinity of being has become self-possessed, and the sundered moment, which, being the principle of motion that made the journey from the flux of Sense-Certainty to conceptual rest in the first place, can now go forth and move the world of appearance *really* (not just conceptually as it has done so far).

- 32./163. As a dialectical force this concept has been present from the beginning. But only in the process of explanation can we see it for what it is. Consciousness becomes self-consciousness when we recognize Understanding as tautologous *explanation*. The identity of Force and Law reveals the identity of world and self. The movement is unnoticed by the Understanding because it sees its theorizing as being about independent objects. But the identity is the reason why “explanation” is satisfying.

In paragraph 161 Hegel showed how the true Infinite presents itself to the Understanding as an object for contemplation. In paragraph 162 he argued that this objective view of it gives rise to the pseudo-problem of “how the Many emerges from the One?” and he dissolved this problem by showing that the contemplated unity of the One is the *result* of our finite consciousness of it. Our approach to this problem has shown that Unity and Multiplicity are logically internal to one another, that the real Infinite must embrace the finite because the Infinite is precisely the raising of finitude to Infinity. This is how we can express the significance of the “second inversion” in the speculative-theological terminology of finite and Infinite.

This is a good moment, therefore, for us, as the philosophical observers, to step into the place of the Concept again, and to point out that as the negative presence that drives the dialectic onwards, this real Infinite has been present with us from the beginning. It is present as the drive of finite experience to comprehend its own infinite significance, or of sense-experience to express its own intellectual meaning in a truly universal thought-context—that is to say, one that can and has demonstrated its own comprehensiveness. The human desire to *know*—to *understand* the situation we are in—is the most primitive way in which the Absolute is with us from the start (par. 73). The world of which the true Infinite really is the “soul” is

the world of *our* quest for the absolute truth. Our quest itself is the “spirit”—the self-consciousness—of that living soul; in and through that quest, the “world-soul” rises out of its natural objectivity as “living force” and *envelops* (or overgrasps) itself.⁴⁹

The structure of scientific explanation (fully comprehended) is just a description of what rational self-consciousness is. The understanding intelligence is the *self*-consciousness of the unconditioned Universal that it contemplates.

The Understanding remains naïve in its self-enjoyment; it keeps positive and negative, attraction and repulsion, all separate from one another, and from itself. It knows nothing of the “second inversion.” But the comprehension of the necessary relation *a priori* of the opposite moments of all of its concepts is what the Understanding *is*, because it moves continually from the organized appearance to its concepts, and back again. In so doing, it enjoys the supreme satisfaction of *knowing* because it is “conversing immediately with itself.”⁵⁰ But because of the two modes of significance (the “inwardness” of the world, and that of the mind), it seems to be “busy with something else.” (Thus the formulation of the law of falling bodies sublates the difference between time and distance—on which the law is founded. Then we posit the force of gravity, and sublate the difference between falling and not falling. The Force of gravity is just what is defined in the Law itself; but force and definition appear to be separate—and so on.)

- 33./164. At the stage where the Concept inverts itself, Infinity comes directly under the observation of Understanding. Recognition of the true situation is avoided here by allotting the sides to different elements or realms. We can see that the concept is unitary and that the elements or realms are simply its moments. The exposition of this Concept is the task of the System. Only for Self-Consciousness is Consciousness possible. But Self-Consciousness now appears as a new “shape” which sees all this experience as something different from itself. Its evolution begins with immediate self-repulsion and attraction. Immediate Self-Consciousness has not yet achieved the unity with consciousness in general that *we* have reached [i.e., it is not Reason].

Insofar as the Understanding has to deal with the phenomena of polarity it is actually face to face with the Infinite. But the poles of the magnet are physically separate; and the phenomena of gravity are easy to allot to the different elements of the relationship, just as Law as Force and Law as explanatory Concept are ascribed to different “worlds.” Our celestial mechanics says that the Sun is the attractive power, and the planets have a balancing centrifugal motion; the actual equilibrium between them results from the composition of their distinct gravities and motions in a “parallelogram of forces.” In the physical theory of matter we come upon the fact that the external parts of a mass that is held together by attraction, hold their own place by repulsion; but then we make the attraction “noumenal.” The motion in the phenomenal world is just a brute fact (which does not call for explanation). Being like and unlike for naming—e.g. being masses, but unequal masses—are just predicates of the “substrate” (extended matter). “Attraction” is propagated in the “aether” as a medium other than itself; but in the hypothesis of the “aether” we

come face to face with the dissociated unity of the Concept. The “sensible shell” has become almost transparent.

But the Understanding keeps everything in separate compartments. For it, there is an intelligible object—a balance of noumenal “forces”—in a “sensuous covering.” We have seen that this “covering” is itself a necessary moment of the real Concept that the “noumenal force” of the Understanding actually is. Now that we have comprehended the whole process as a “true Infinite”—i.e., a self-closing circle—we are theoretically ready to begin doing Logic. We have the tautological concept of the Understanding as the “identity of thinking and being.” But pure Logic is not yet our concern. Hegel’s project for a philosophical logic rested, from the first, on the insight that Logic, in itself, was absolutely neutral, that the true theory of categorical development could only be stated from the standpoint of this “absolute Identity.” The *Phenomenology* emerged as a separate project, from his parallel concern with the social function of philosophy. It is the presence of radical dichotomy (*Entzweiung*) in the social consciousness of the community, and the personal consciousness of its leaders, that creates the “need of philosophy.” A philosophy that is to meet this need must, of necessity, be a theory of “Consciousness”—i.e., of the ways in which the absolute Identity is “sundered.”

Hegel’s early attempts to overcome the “philosophy of subjectivity” in Kant and Fichte led him to recognize the primacy of the objective logic of Being; this meant that in order to meet the “need of philosophy” (which was the same problem of overcoming the “philosophy of subjectivity,” but this time *from within* or in its own terms) he was obliged to separate the theory of “consciousness” from the theory of “being as such.”⁵¹

Our present task is to understand what the next *Gestalt* in the theory of Consciousness is. This brief digression was helpful in *this* connection, because it prepares us for the discovery that the concept of self-consciousness which we now have to develop is precisely Fichte’s concept.⁵² Hegel showed in *Faith and Knowledge* that the “philosophy of subjectivity” achieves its most systematic form in Fichte’s work. Fichte has the whole philosophy of Understanding behind him, for Kant was its greatest master. But it is certainly true that he wilfully forgets it. Not being himself a student of science, there was much about it that he did not actually know; but in principle he puts it all behind him as unimportant. His free self advances into the “supersensible” world-order, as if the world of Appearance was of no interest.

Fichte’s Ego posits itself by freely distinguishing Ego from non-Ego. This is just the structure of Understanding as we have observed it. The theoretical Understanding has the whole world before it as an object. In the “second inversion” it becomes aware of itself as the positing activity for the whole cycle that moves from perception (the “play of forces”) to the natural order as “Law.” But now that “free self” (the “distinguishing of the undistinguished”) *actually* distinguishes itself and asserts its independence, without having any consciousness of the cycle from which it has logically emerged. It will discover *by experience* what the Fichtean philosophical Ego cannot help knowing from the first: “that this distinct [self] is not distinct.”

It will make this discovery many times, in different “shapes,” before it returns finally to the practical comprehension of its identity with the “Infinite” (the comprehension that *we* already have from our theoretical standpoint. Hegel makes his Fichtean starting-point very evident; and he recurs to it once more when he returns from the practical sphere that we are about to enter, back to the theoretical sphere (at the beginning of chapter V). But all of the intermediate stages in both spheres are alien to Fichte’s “formal idealism”; and the basic reason for this is that we need to recover everything that Fichte chooses to forget.

Naïve self-consciousness does not have an understanding attitude to the world (as Fichte does). It has the second inversion behind it, even though it does not recollect any experience of it. It has the “result” of Understanding—the Infinite—as its “object.” But, unlike us, it simply *finds* this object as its truth. We know the Infinite as the logical concept of free life. Naïve Self-Consciousness simply knows that it is alive in a sense-certain world that is *its own*. It is a self that is conscious of itself in and through its consciousness of the world. It knows that the world is *different* from it, but also, at the same time, that the world belongs to it (as it does to the world). What is there “for us” is the Fichtean self-positing Ego, without the confusing separation of the sensible from the supersensible; but what is there for itself is a self that knows nothing of its (rational) unity with “consciousness in general.”

Hegel calls the next chapter “The Truth of Self-certainty” because it is only the new truth-criterion that is carried forward in our “science of experience” from this stage. In the advance from Sense-Certainty to Understanding we carried forward the whole content of the experience in its inverted and doubly-inverted form. But then in Understanding, we stood in for the Concept; and it was we as the observers who were made aware of the significance of the inversion, and the double inversion. Now the object that we are observing will be a “natural” self-consciousness, described and interpreted in the context of the insight that we have gained, even though it does not itself have any of that insight. It has practical Understanding; but it does not have the scientific consciousness of the world that we call “understanding” in the theoretical sense. Properly speaking, it is a “sense-certainty” that has become “self-certain.”⁵³ But its possession of a radically inverted truth-criterion shows first of all in its complete *indifference* to the theoretical (or scientific) truth.

We, the observers, continue to stand in for the Concept while we discover what the relation of the new standpoint to the scientific truth is. For, in order to understand how self-consciousness can *naïvely* apply the standard according to which *it* is the truth of sense-certainty, perception, and understanding, we must grasp those elements of the philosophy of organism that define what the *naïve* situation is. After that, we as observers can *also* let go of everything that our observed subject does not know—that is to say, we can take up the practical attitude of the observed subject towards the world.

“Self-certainty” (like sense-certainty) is too basic ever to be forgotten. Outside the study or the lab, the scientific consciousness that we have been observing would never forget that it *is* really a self-consciousness of the practical kind that we are

going to observe. The difference, as Hegel will put it, is precisely that whereas Consciousness knows that its *science* is the truth, self-consciousness knows that its own *selfhood*, i.e. its *will*, is the truth. Theoretical science becomes only an instrument.

Like a body in the aether of universal attraction—which, of course, it *is*—this self posits itself by repelling its own necessary complement into otherness. In this way it begins to *realize* the inverted world of conceptual explanation as more than a tautology. We should note that this paragraph anticipates the *necessary inversion* of Fichte's concept of moral recognition as the road to the recovery of the unity of the infinite self-positing Ego. We shall need to stand in for the Concept for a few more theoretical pages, because our starting-point for the next movement of experience, is not the infinite Ego of speculation, but the finite ego of biological existence. The Infinite is now explicit (for us) as the moving force in that finite self (just as the theoretical desire for knowledge was the moving force in the coming to be of the Infinite as a concept). But the finite self that we are observing is aware of the Infinite only in the absolute assertion of its own will. We ought not to ascribe to it any consciousness of the Infinite as "the essence of life" or "the soul of the world" (any more than it is initially conscious of the "will of God," which is just what it will finally *discover*). *We* have arrived at the self-certainty of Reason; but the self we are observing, being natural, or naïve, or "immediate," is *pre-rational*. It has come to be "for itself"; and we must take this in the strongest sense: it is *what counts absolutely*. It is certain of what Sense-Certainty admits but sets aside: that "consciousness of an other, or of any object at all, is of course and necessarily *self-consciousness*." But it is "not yet unity with consciousness generally"—i.e. it is not "*Reason's* certainty," which is what *we* have already achieved.

- 34./165. In its own inner world, the Understanding experiences only itself as the intelligible process of *appearance*. We have seen how its activity as intellect coincides with the inwardness of things. In observing the order of nature, the self is gazing at itself. Consciousness has become *self-consciousness*. But the Understanding itself does not know that. Only the self-consciousness of *appearance* has emerged. The journey to the recognition of what *we* have observed is a long one.

The truth for us (as described in par. 164) is that the universal concept of Force (or Necessity) has become the universal concept of Life (or the "true Infinite" as living Freedom). But if we look at what has happened from the point of view of Understanding itself, two worlds have come into being. There is the world of Necessity which the Understanding wants to construct, but can never be sure that it has successfully duplicated; and the world of its own intellectual activity. In this second world it experiences *itself* as a free motion. It does not know that these two worlds are moments of one Concept, which is equally the objective world and itself as intelligence. But it does know, necessarily, that it is alive and free in the world of necessity that appears to it. It has still to discover that it *is* identically what appears. But it knows that it is what is appeared to. We know both of these truths, because we have observed the whole conceptual process by which the "curtain of appearance"

comes into being and draws itself aside. But the Understanding has only “set itself on one side” as a sundered moment (par. 162).

If it is ever to know itself as the whole that sunders itself to produce that result, it can only be by going out into the world of appearance and taking possession of it actively. Thus, a new journey starts here—the practical journey of the self-consciousness that has theoretically “set itself on one side.” And we shall find that *we*, who already possess the concept of the Infinite (and who seem therefore to be already at the goal), have still a great deal to learn from the practical activity of the self-certain consciousness. What we know is only that we have now entered “the realm where truth is at home” (par. 167). We can draw the boundary line of this kingdom. The identity of intellect and world, or of force and understanding, is the Concept within which the experience of truth is confined. But what the truth is that is to be found within that abstract universal we have still to discover. The appearing of the self as the communal totality of appearance is now at last ready to begin.

When the Understanding comes to recognize what we have observed—the fact that “the inner [being]” of Appearance is just the conceptual construction of the Understanding itself—we shall have the *happy* consciousness of Reason, the consciousness that knows its own identity as thought, with being itself. *We* can already see the identity of the two “inners.” For us, the syllogism of “true Being” and Understanding (par. 145) has closed upon itself. There *is* nothing but the circle from Appearance to thought and back again. But in order for that knowledge to be *experienced*, it must go through its own cycle of realization. The self that naïvely knows its own identity with its world, must come to the comprehension of the absolute opposition and contradiction that is internal to that identity. Before it can be the happy consciousness of Reason, it must be the Unhappy Consciousness. The “gazing of the inner [thought] into the inner [world of thought]” must become “the gazing of one self-consciousness into another, and itself *is* both” but only “as the doubled and only contradictory essence” (pars. 207, 206). The anticipatory verbal echo here is certainly deliberate and not accidental.

Notes

1. M. De Nys (1982) has provided a summary analysis of this chapter as the mediation of the one-many distinction into a unified Concept.

J. N. Findlay’s claim (1958, 95) that Hegel anticipated Russell’s scientific constructivism, seems to me to be quite sound. The “wilfully baroque exuberance” that Findlay ascribes to Hegel actually typifies Findlay’s own approach to Hegel. His conviction that the trees in the Hegelian forest of experience “*are* disposed in an arbitrary manner” has had a disastrous effect upon many who are not “exuberant” themselves. But sometimes he hits the right note; and from the middle of his page 92 to the middle of 94, I think he is playing in tune with Hegel. (P.A. Simpson [forthcoming, chap. 2, beginning] rightly insists that the position of Understanding is generally reflective and thoughtful, rather than technically “scientific.” Nevertheless, the standpoint of the Galilean and Newtonian scientist is, for the most part, the best paradigm—cf. M. Baur, 1991.)

2. For a clear account of how the “object” changes in the transition to Understanding see J. Stewart (forthcoming, chap. 5, III B). “What is” is the world of “things-in-relation.” M. Heidegger (1980, 150; 1988, 104) rightly drew attention to Hegel’s position in the *Jena Logic* (1804/5): “Force itself expresses the idea of Relation” (*G.W.* VII, 51–52; Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 54–55). The Jena logic of *Verhältnis* should be studied carefully in connection with this chapter.

3. Lauer’s citation of Aristotle (1976, 63–64) is in place here. Just as the proposition “the sensible in act is the sensing in act” expressed *our* position from the beginning of chapter II, so “the intelligible in act is also the intellect in act” (*De Anima* III, 5, 430a 20) expresses *our* situation from the beginning of chapter III. But the warning Hegel gives here that “it is essentially to distinguish the two” (i.e., our consciousness and the one we are observing) applied to the earlier chapter as much as it does to this one.

4. Aphorism 46, Rosenkranz, 546; *I.J.P.* III, 1979, 3, no. 5.

5. Eddington’s famous discussion of his “two tables” illustrates the situation of someone who can see that there has been a transition, but does not understand how it is to be accounted for (see *The Nature of the Physical World*, Everyman, 1935, 5–12). Russell’s theory of science as “construction” (see *The Problems of Philosophy*) is closer to the sort of “understanding of itself” that the Understanding is pictured as achieving in Hegel’s account here. (The fact that “what is” is a “universe of relations” also provides Hegel’s solution for the main difficulties of ancient scepticism—see K. R. Westphal, 1989, 162–163.)

6. Hyppolite (1948, 117; 1974, 120).

7. It is not, of course, identical with the one that we shall observe in chapter V A. But it “returns” to that.

8. The theory of “matters” is simply a conceptualization of Aristotle’s commonsense view that the proper object of sight is quite different from that of touch (or hearing, etc.). The theory of *Force* has to account for this; but it is completely *free* in doing so. Obviously if Hegel had Relativity and the Quantum theory to grapple with, his Philosophy of Nature would be affected. But he would not need to rewrite paragraph 135.

9. Although I have already referred to the “receptacle” in the *Timaeus* (and I believe Plato’s theory of matter, motion and of the elements is always an influential model for Hegel’s theory) I cannot help wondering whether his own reference to Anaxagoras is not the clue that we ought to follow. The theory of “matters” is a modern (1800) version of how “in the beginning all things were together.”

10. Hegel’s concept of Force, as expounded in this chapter, is distinctively his own; and since it expresses “the Infinite” for Understanding, we must agree with E. Fink (1977, 118) that it is a fundamental category. O. Pöggeler (1976), followed by G. Baptist (1990, 132–133) says that it is a rethinking of Kant’s triad of modal categories. But it is only a category of Understanding; and as such it cannot provide us with an *organized* cosmos. Hence Hegel was scornful of Herder’s “Spinozist” attempt to conceive God as “Force” (see *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 362–363; Cerf and Harris, 118–119). In the *Encyclopedia* (sec. 445, Anm.) he objects to the conceiving of Spirit as a collection of “forces”; there it is the ragbag multiplicity of “faculties” that is his butt. These extremes are conceptually unified (as well as they can be) in our concept—which is given its proper place in the *Logic* (*W.L.*, book II, sec. 2, chap. 3B; *Encyclopedia*, secs. 136–137). (We should remember that, in spite of his criticism of Herder’s theology, Hegel himself treats “Truth” as a “force” in his “Preface to Hinrichs”—see Miller’s translation in F. Weiss, ed., 1974, 230.)

H. Niel (1945, 121) remarks “We should realize that Hegel does not analyse the notion [*Begriff*] of force in itself, but the act by which consciousness thinks its object through this notion.” Apparently his “notion in itself” means what Hegel would call the “abstract concept.” Niel’s account of “force”—which begins with this comment—is in general quite good. He avoids reference to the “inverted world,” but manages to convey the upshot of it correctly.

11. In my opinion the coincidence of the language here with that which we find at the end of the *Logic* (both WL and EL) shows that the Idea’s “letting itself go” as Nature is simply the (initially unconscious) self-positing of Reason as Understanding. The search for the “right way” to characterize this “movement” inside the *Logic* is probably mistaken. Hegel has characterized it in the best way himself (and his language shows that logically the “letting go free” is *sui generis*).

12. My heading for this section has already made it clear that I believe the One Substance to be Spinoza’s. But to read “*thinking* unity and intelligible multiplicity” here would prejudice the “Truth of Enlightenment.” It is there made clear that the “Thing-in-itself” of the Understanding is indifferently “God” or “Matter.” So its “attributes” are simply the One Thought and the Many different forms of Being.

13. Baillie’s reading: “the differences *between* force proper . . . and force unfolded” could be right. But it is not clear what the “differences” (plural) *between* them can be. It is better to read “distinctions of [both together]” and assume that Hegel means to speak of the *parallel* “distinctions” *within* each of the terms (implicit on the one side and explicit in the other). Miller follows Baillie’s interpretation, but removes the difficulty by mistranslating as if *Unterschied* was singular. De Negri agrees with me.

14. J. Stewart (forthcoming, chap. 5, III C) agrees with me about the significance of this passage—which clearly indicates that the dialectic of solicitation takes place between an objective force and a perceiving mind.

15. *De anima* III, 5 (430a, 20). We can already anticipate the “inversion.” As Michael Baur puts it (1991, 151): “the very ‘objectivity’ of the Understanding depends upon a prior unity of knower and known, which Hegel calls ‘Life.’” Cf. also K. R. Westphal (1989, 160–161).

16. We must never lose sight of the fact that the body (with all of its sensory apparatus) is a perception of the mind. The whole world of Appearance has to be interpreted as the *manifestation* of force.

17. There is no formal way of deciding whether *desselben* in “als Reflexion desselben in sich selbst” (*G.W.* IX, 88, lines 19–20) refers to “das Innere” or “das Spiel.” But it seems to me that logic decides the issue clearly. *Das Innere* is already “reflected into itself” by definition. We get to it by understanding *das Spiel*, i.e., by reflecting *that* into itself. So Miller is at fault here.

18. Hyppolite (1946, I, 124; 1974, 127) pointed out that Maimon’s interpretation of Kant may have been the stimulus for Hegel’s theory of how we “look through the play of forces into the inwardness of things.” Maimon wrote: “the knowledge of things-in-themselves is nothing but the *complete* knowledge of phenomena” (*Werke* V, 176).

19. Not, as Miller has it, “the Things.” The scientific Understanding is aware of the dialectical character of perceiving, because it has the concept of the unconditioned universal. The whole scientific tradition from Anaximander to Kant has built upon the fundamental distinction between perceptible “appearance” and intellectual “reality.”

20. This is the first speculative syllogism in the course of the *Phenomenology*. The others are identified, and briefly discussed in H. Schmitz (1957, 138–146).

21. The critical editors agree that there is a reference to Von Haller's poem "The Falsity of Human Virtues" (lines 100–101 in the sixth edition of 1751) at IX, 89, 19 (Miller, sec. 146, line 6). They also refer here to *K.R.V.B.*, 333–334; but the most explicit reference to Kant in the paragraph is at IX, 89, lines 22–23 (Miller, par. 146, lines 9–10)—compare *K.R.V.B.* XXIV–XXV.

22. Any reader who goes back to the commentary on paragraphs 14–16 above will be able to recognize the echoes of Jean-Paul and Schelling—as well as the glancing blow at Eschenmayer—in paragraph 146.

23. See especially *Von der Weltseele* (1798), *Werke* II, 379–569.

24. This verdict accords well with the reports of his lectures from October 1804 onwards. (Hegel's first critical discussion of his own relation to Schelling can be dated to October 1804 with some confidence—see *Night Thoughts*, 397n.) At this point, the reader should return to the discussion of "formalism" in the Preface (pars. 14–16, 50–53) and to the commentary upon those passages. See also H.S. Harris (1988, 1989).

25. Kant's own philosophy of nature was a target of criticism here—see K. R. Westphal (1993). Bonsiepen and Heede give the relevant quotation (from *Der Eremit und der Fremdling* (Erlangen, 1805, 25) in their note on 48, 12–17). But see also their note to 36, 13–16 where Eschenmayer's conviction that we have *Ahnungen* of what lies beyond is testified. (In this same note they give a quotation from Görres which illustrates what Hegel objected to in Schelling's "Divine light" doctrine. Thus, par. 146 confirms my interpretation of the "formalism" polemic in the Preface, and shows us how it is connected with the polemic against edification and pious dreaming.)

26. Failure to recognize the difference between the necessary passivity of "observation" in the case of Understanding and the self-conscious activity of "observing Reason" led M. Westphal to think that much of Hegel's chapter V A is a "repetition of [chapter III], or rather the application of the same insights to new illustrative material" (M. Westphal, 1979, 97). But the concept of Life comes between them. Of course, there is a lot of experimenting with "forces"; and for that matter the whole of "Life" can be "understood" better than it can be "observed by Reason." That is precisely because Understanding "observes" from outside of "Life" altogether. Flay's note (1984, 294, n. 24) on Westphal's mistake is worth studying.

27. "Still picture" is an appropriate rendering for *Stilles Abbild*. Our *Abbild* may be "inert," but the *real* "realm of laws" is not. It contains all the *energy* of the perceptual world as a "play of forces." So Miller's adjectives ("inert" and "tranquil," pars. 90–91) should minimally be *transposed*. (Pythagoras—who mathematized the pentatonic scale, postulated the harmony of the spheres (perhaps!), and certainly claimed that "things are numbers"—is the presiding genius of the "ruhiges Reich von Gesetzen.")

28. Robert Zimmerman (1982, 360) gives a similar interpretation of this passage. Michael Baur (1991, 154, n. 16) points out that there is a prophetic intimation of the Unhappy Consciousness in the comment that "appearance retains for itself an aspect which is not in the inner world." When "appearance" becomes self-conscious as "the Changeable Consciousness" it finds that it cannot identify with the Unchangeable as Lawgiver. (At the present stage the "imperfection" is in the "realm of Laws." But neither the Understanding nor the Unhappy Consciousness can ever be "perfect." As Baur says [153], "the Hegelian argument implies the claim that there can be no final paradigm in science.")

29. For this, see Petry's note (*Philosophy of Nature*, 1970, I, 363).

30. Findlay (1958, 93) interprets Hegel as asserting that the law of gravitation has “no empirical content whatsoever.” This “absurdity” (as he rightly calls it) arises from *his* concept of a “bare concept” not from Hegel’s. Solomon’s mistake—that “Boscovich’s single law—just because it was all-encompassing, explained nothing at all” (1983, 375, note) is subtler; and this supposed position of Hegel’s is at least related to his position here, and plausibly supported by his (genuinely paradoxical) views about “explanation.” But Hegel was not so stupid as not to realize how important the linking of the non-falling Moon with the falling apple was. To explain that “antithesis” involved achieving a true “concept”—and it was *not* the “explanation of nothing at all.” (It is a pity that James Ogilvy’s discussion of Boscovich, to which Solomon alludes, has not been published—or at least I have not found it.)

31. Hegel’s *darin* (*G.W.* IX, 92, line 18) refers to “universal attraction” and not to “that law” (as Miller translates it). Hegel is just on the point of saying that the Understanding *means* (*meint*) to have found a law, but that it finds the concept of law instead. If the pure Concept were realized, there would be no need of “laws” at all. As Hegel put it in the *Encyclopedia* (sec. 262), “If matter attained what it seeks in gravity, it would melt into a single point.”

32. For Miller’s “indifferent and [merely] implicit essentialities” (par. 151, line 15) we should read “indifferent essentialities that have being in themselves.” The German is “gleichgültiger und an sich seiender Wesenheiten” (*G.W.* IX, 92, line 39–93, line 1).

33. Kainz (1976, 77 and 142, n. 13) has completely misunderstood the argument here. He connects the specific case of electricity—where the Understanding is actually on the right track—with the universal case of gravity—where Newton’s mathematical approach illegitimately breaks one force into two.

34. On the logical structure of “explanation” see J. W. Burbidge (1992, chapter 4 and forthcoming, chap. 18). The definition of Understanding that Lauer (1976, 70) quotes from Mueller contains a perverted truth. How far it is from being simply true that “‘Verstand’ in Hegel is *always* ‘reason’ as defined by formal logic” we have seen. But it is true that “*Verstand* takes Reason to *be* formal logic.” Unfortunately, as we saw above (note 26) there is another form of Reason that makes that assumption about itself. So we still do not have a proper definition of Understanding when we reformulate Mueller’s claim as an assertion that is true.

35. It is ironic that Hegel’s metaphysics was regarded by some of his English admirers (notably McTaggart) as the demonstration of a Parmenidean position from which “Time is unreal.” For it is evident in paragraph 155 that Hegel’s own contempt is directed not at the Understanding itself, but at philosophers who adopt this view as their “absolute knowledge.” There are two complementary echoes here that show why he was contemptuous, and why he demanded that philosophy should comprehend human experience in its temporality (in a positive not a negative sense).

First the claim that Understanding “says nothing, but only repeats the same thing” is a hit at the “reduction of philosophy to logic” by Reinhold and Bardili—see further the commentary on paragraphs 15–16 above. Secondly, the complaint that Understanding is “an explaining that explains nothing” echoes the dissatisfaction of Socrates with the physics of Anaxagoras (*Phaedo*, 97b–98c). Socrates wanted to be told what the goal of the cosmic *Nous* was; and that remains the proper object of philosophy in Hegel’s view.

36. J. Stewart (forthcoming, chap. 5, III C(3)) seems to have grasped the logical movement in this section correctly. H.-G. Gadamer (1971, tr. 1976) followed by Greene (1970, 171) and Zimmerman (1982, 360), thinks that Hegel’s “inversion” of the stable world of law, was

inspired by Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Theory of Ideas. The analogy is certainly valid, and Hegel probably saw himself as a modern Aristotle. But the modern Aristotle is concerned with Galileo, Newton and Spinoza rather than with Plato and the Pythagorean numbers. "Galilean Science constitutes the first supersensible world," says V. A. Zviglianich (1991, 206). That is correct, but what is offered as its "inversion" remains hopelessly vague (or loosely impressionistic).

37. Miller translates *Begnädigung* quite correctly as "pardon"; in criminal law the word is used for a *reprieve*. But in the natural order of justice even a pardon that goes to the limit of setting the criminal free and exacting *no* penalty does not properly "restore him to honor." For implicit in the fact of pardon, is the fact of crime—*aufgehoben*, but by no means washed out. Therefore, the way "pardon" exists in any mature system of justice does not adequately complete the second inversion. Only the religious reference to salvation by grace into another world is adequate for that. This time, therefore, Miller *ought* to have followed Baillie who acknowledged the root presence of *Gnade* by writing "the pardoning grace."

38. W. H. Brossart (1982, 336) uses the ethical examples to interpret the "Inverted World." But he does not offer any physical parallels, and I find his direct exposition (335) opaque. It is proper to recall the "magnet" paradigm here because it is here on Earth that we live in the supersensible world of the Spirit. (Much of the literature about the "Inverted World" deals with this "spiritual" dimension. See especially Donald Verene (1985) who makes an interesting case for the influence of Ludwig Tieck's play *Die Verkehrte Welt*.)

39. Findlay (1958, 94). His reading of "the fable" is too trivial to be right. R. C. Solomon first took Hegel's argument here as a criticism of "coherence theories of Truth" (1974/1975, 704). M. J. Inwood (1977, 274–275) rightly argued that this is a mistake.

40. Flay's view of the "absurdity" of the Inverted World is far more defensible than Findlay's. He puts it in the right (Kantian) context so that the serious point is visible. Nevertheless he is wrong to call it "an absurd position" (1970, 662). It is not true that its "importance and intelligibility lay in its very absurdity" or that it is "a misunderstanding and perversion of the conclusion to which we should have been brought at this point" (1970, 662–663). There is an interpretation of it that becomes "absurd" when pressed back into the realm of perception by an Understanding that has not reached the point that we are at. But the right interpretation is precisely what imposes itself as the proper comprehension of Understanding itself in relation to its intelligible world. (I suppose that Flay himself *means* this, and agrees with me, because he holds that, in the end, the absurdity "evaporates" (1970, 677). But I do not find his explanation of this "evaporation" very clear.)

In 1983, R. C. Solomon (377–385) united the view that there is a *reductio ad absurdum* of Kant's *Ding-an-sich* with the thesis that the world of Understanding is itself shown to be contradictory (which he reports from an unpublished work of J. Ogilvy). But he admitted that he was reading this into Hegel's text (see 384). More recently we find him claiming that "The inverted-world passage is essentially an argument by ridicule" (against Kant's notion of the noumenon) (1993, 200).

41. Compare the cases cited in *Faith and Knowledge* (G.W. IV, 580–581; Cerf and Harris, 143–144). Hegel quotes from "An Fichte" (1794), Jacobi, *Werke* III, 37–38. Jacobi's climactic case is the violation of the Sabbath by the hungry disciples in the cornfield. I am not sure whether it is correct to call this a legal transgression in Kant's terms; and its status as an act of pure good will is also uncertain. But it is the only case that might be given opposite values in a Kantian judgment. (Jacobi was here deliberately defying "the pure letter of the absolutely universal law of Reason.")

42. The right interpretation of this example is pointed out by K. R. Westphal (1993, 271). Just as N implies S in the magnet, and the “oxygen pole” implies the “hydrogen pole” in the battery, so “sweet” implies “sour” as present in *this actual world* of sense perception rightly understood.

43. The process of “comprehensive inversion” is the same process of “determinate negation” by which the *Phenomenology* advances. Murray Greene (1970) has provided a useful survey of some of the important recurrences of this theme.

44. I agree with several previous interpreters (Andler, Hyppolite, Bruaire, Fink, Flay and Solomon, for example) that the concept of Force in this chapter is essentially Leibnizian. I think it is a mistake, however, to suppose that Hegel means to criticize either Leibniz or Spinoza for failing to comprehend the Infinite as Contradiction. It is clear that God is *causa sui* for both of them—and that is the “contradiction.” What they fail to do is to see how the contradiction arises; and consequently they cannot resolve it. The two worlds (of eternity and time) fall apart and remain separate in them both. See further Hyppolite (1946, I, 118–119; 1974, 121), Bruaire (1971), Fink (1970) and Flay (1970, 666–670).

45. We can show from the surviving manuscripts that “Life” was the first moment of the final section of Hegel’s *Logic* (the “theory of the Idea”) from 1808 onwards; and although we have no direct manuscript evidence, it is plausible to assume that this was true already from the time that the *Phenomenology* was first conceived in 1805. (See the versions of the *Logic* [and *Encyclopedia*] in the *Nürnberger Schriften*, *T.W.-A.* IV, 29ff., 157ff.; and the *Wissenschaft der Logik* of 1816, *G.W.* XII, 173ff.—esp. 179ff. [Miller, 755ff.—esp. 761ff.].) The *Phenomenology* itself provides all the substantial grounds that we have for believing that the structure of the climactic “Ideenlehre” was established in 1805. The climactic structure of the 1804 “Metaphysics” is *phenomenological*.)

46. That “the life is the blood” is Mosaic teaching (Genesis 9:4 etc.); Empedocles taught that “we think with our blood,” but he made no use of this dogma (that we know of) in his theory of the Cosmic Cycle. Nor (as far as my knowledge goes) did the Stoics make any use of it in their theory of the cosmic *Spirit*. Like the Moses of Genesis 2, the Stoics were *breath-theorists* of the life-principle. I am sure that *Hegel’s* metaphor is not older than Harvey’s treatise *On the motion of the heart and the blood* (1628).

47. *Republic* VI, 508; *Enneads* VI, 9, 1–9 (for example).

48. Hölderlin’s theory of the divine “Union” was where this problem began for Hegel. C. Jamme (1986, 371) gives a valuable bird’s eye view of the speculative theory in its Frankfurt phase. At Jena, Schelling offered his own version in the *Bruno* (cf. *Werke* IV, 257–260; Vater, 158–160) and in “Philosophie und Religion” (1804). The critical editors (*G.W.* IX, 497, note to 100, 6–8) supply references to Eschenmayer, Köppen, and Wagner. Hegel first announced the solution offered here in the *Logic* of 1804 (and he specifically criticized Schelling for generating a pseudo-problem in the lectures of this period). See *G.W.* VII, 34 (Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 36); and Rosenkranz, 188 (Harris and Knox, 262). In his essay on *Freedom* (1809), Schelling commented rather bitterly that “the beginning made in *Philosophy and Religion* . . . remained obscure” (*Werke* 7, 334). Hegel’s reaction was almost certainly one reason for his disappointment. (The theological problem should be understood in terms of the contrast set up by A. O. Lovejoy between the “time-transcending and eternally complete Absolute of neo-Platonism” and the “gradually self-realizing World-Spirit or Life-Force” (1936, 317).

For the “fall” in Schelling see for instance “Philosophy and Religion,” 1804 (*Werke* VI, 38). A Bowie (1993, 87) misrepresents Hegel’s view when he says “The finite is therefore

actually the infinite without any transition.” This is an “identity” arrived at by a common-sensical inference. It can equally well be put as “The infinite is what differentiates itself into the finite.” The properly actual identity is the circular *motion* both ways. D. Henrich (1982, 159–160) puts the Hegelian position in a way that makes Hegel’s fondness for the language of self-negation easy to understand.

49. When the explaining self tries to explain its own finite life in the tautologous way that is appropriate for the infinite whole, it becomes ridiculous. So the faculty psychology of Observing Reason is absurd, whereas mechanics and physics are not. But the childish certainty with which we assign “faculties” as the explanatory ground of whatever happens reliably—for instance, the *dormitive* faculty of opium—is one of the ways in which the Infinite shows how close it is. No matter how much organized appearance we “overgrasp” in our supersensible understanding, the absolute context of our knowledge will still exhibit the character of *circularity*, that is so naïvely patent here. We laugh with Molière at the “formalism” that makes it possible for someone to pass himself off as a physician. But there is an important philosophical truth to be learned from the very fact that the imposture is possible.

50. *Selbstgespräche mit sich* (G.W. IX, 101, lines 14–15), which Miller and Baillie translate as “communing with itself,” is a clear echo of Plato’s definition of thought as “the dialogue of the soul with itself”—*Sophist* 263e–264a and *Theaetetus* 189e–190a. J. Stewart (forthcoming, chap. 5, III D) expounds the transformation of “explanation” very well. But then he confuses what is implicit (or “for us”) with what is explicit (or “for the natural consciousness”).

51. The whole story is told as fully as I can manage it in *Night Thoughts*. But see further the second section of the introduction to this volume. (The importance of “Fichte’s contribution” is brought out better there.)

52. This is a point which Kainz has grasped more definitely than most commentators; but he does not understand how Hegel has “purified” the Concept (see H. Kainz, 1976, 80, 143–144).

53. Of course, Hegel’s peasant-wife (who served as our model of Sense-Certainty) is actually a *self-certain* sense-certainty. The *Sachen* in her world are *hers*: “my best cow, my Ursel, my Martin.” But she lives already in the rational world that a genuinely primitive “Self-Certainty” still has to create.

Chapter 7

The Concept of Self-Consciousness

IV: The Truth of the Certainty of Its Self

The chapter begins with a review of where we now are and of how we got here. Our truth-criterion is now the “certainty of itself” that consciousness has achieved in principle.¹ We have seen how and why the Understanding is so impregnably stable in its scientific realism; but, for us, the comprehensive context of that realism is an objective idealism, which focuses our attention on the active self who does not fit into the ideal order of natural “necessity” and provides the conceptual context for our observation of the evolution of the “finite spirit” (which begins here).

In Consciousness our certainty of the object as something other than our awareness of it “disappeared in the experience” and “got lost in the truth” three times. The immediate consciousness of Being (as an infinite Sache in time and finite Sachen in space) gave way to the concept of a world of “things” known to us by their immediate (but also universal) “properties”; and that world of finite things collapsed back into the infinite Sache, conceptualized finally as the unconditioned universal. Then the same identity of the thing-in-itself with the thing-for-another, which broke down the world of finite things and gave us the “unconditioned universal,” finally proved fatal to the simple otherness of the unconditioned universal also.

The identity in opposition, of the thing as concept with the perceiving other for which it actually is, is first comprehended as the motion of a Concept (“Force”) which necessarily doubles itself into two forces that seem to be distinct but are not; then we are obliged to recognize that the tautological stillness of the universal order of intelligible being is not unconditioned after all. It necessarily involves the movement of the Understanding from the natural order as Force to the very same order as Law. The eternal stillness of this identity is only a result achieved by the Understanding. The real totality is the motion of the unconditioned universal from itself as being to itself as thought (and back again comprehensively). What comprehends that motion as a circular return of the universal to itself is the Understanding as self-consciously aware of making that motion. This self-consciousness of the universal order of being is what is truly unconditioned. This therefore is what “truly is.”

(a) *Retrospect and Prospect*

- 1./166. Consciousness seeks truth in an object outside itself. But the *truth* of this object turns out to be its being-for-another. Now the certainty that “Truth is there” gives place to the certainty that “Truth is here.” We can still distinguish the movement from the goal, and we can call either of them the “concept” and the other one “object” because “being in itself” and “for another” are known to be identical (cf. par. 84). Our object now is the “overarching” experience of paragraph 160.

The consciousness of the Infinite is a certainty that cannot be opposed to its truth, because it is the self-comprehension of its object. We can still make a distinction between the cognitive movement and the result. There is an enormous difference between knowing what Parmenides knew, and knowing the World-Soul as Schelling knows it; and the difference between knowing the World-Soul and knowing the World-Spirit will be even greater. The tautological circle of conceptual “explanation”—which begins at the level of sense-certainty with “the ground is wet because it rained”²—becomes ever larger as the sphere of self-conscious Understanding expands. But the circle of self-certain truth is there now; and it will never again be broken. We now have the concept of the unconditioned totality as “experience.” We have entered the “realm where truth is at home.”

As Hegel said in the Introduction (par. 84) we can distribute the names “Concept” and “Object” to the moments of this totality any way we like. For us, it is a self-comprehending result. We are the consciousness for which “the in-itself of the object and the being of the object for another are one and the same”; and the consciousness that we are now observing begins with an implicit awareness of the identity. It does not say “This is *the* world,” it says “This is *my* world.” It will find that the object has a being-in-itself that is experienced as *other*; and the sublation of the otherness leads it to a new concept of what self-consciousness is in-itself.

The movement of Force—which begins with the perceiving self as its receptive medium—is now reversed. The Self is now the force that expresses itself in the Other as a receptive medium. But the result is, of course, the same. The whole movement of “soliciting and being solicited” has to be comprehended as the *actuality* of one Force.

The conscious activity now knows *itself* to be what truly is “in-itself.” The object “in-itself” is whatever it is for the active consciousness. For consciousness the experience of interaction is an experience of its own evolution. The *self* is the “in-itself” of the whole process; it envelops (or overarches, *übergreift*) the other, which is its object.

This is what *we* saw, when we recognized the understanding consciousness as a “duplication” of what is. Since this duplication is *necessary* to the being of what-is as Force, it is true that “what is” is properly “what is *for* the Understanding.” But the self that first says “This is *my* world” does not have a theoretical understanding of what it is saying. It is not asserting the universal proposition of Utilitarianism: “Everything is what it is for the self.” It is not even saying “Everything is what it is

for me.” Properly speaking, it does not *say* anything. It just knows that it is in the world that belongs to it. This is the consciousness of being *alive*.³

- 2./167. With Self-Consciousness we enter the homeland of truth. How does it come on stage? The moments of consciousness: being, singularity/Universality, conceptual void, belong to it as vanishing moments; and the simple self-standing subsistence that belonged to them as objects now belongs to it as returned to itself. It distinguishes the sensible and perceptible world from itself, but this distinction is immediately sublated. The world is a not-self in the first moment; then it is an apparently distinct unity with self in the second moment. Self-Consciousness exists as the *movement* from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness; or the primitive shape of Self-Consciousness is Desire. The object of Consciousness is there only to be negated—changed into what the Self wants.

Self-Consciousness knows that it is in its own world; and this world, where the self is at home, is the world where truth is at home also.⁴ But the two certainties, ours and that of the observed self, are widely different. We know that truth is at home here, first because we have studied the methodological problem of truth in the Introduction; and secondly because we have understood how the truth of the Understanding can only exist as the total process of understanding the world. It is only as the tautologous moment in that process that “truth” makes sense at all; so the “absolute” truth can only be the truth *about* that process.

But as the consciousness that must distinguish itself as “true,” from the being that is truly known, in order to sublate the distinction and assert the identity of the two terms, the Understanding is a *living* consciousness of truth. This *logical* life is just the “freedom” of the consciousness that makes the circle from Force postulated to Force comprehended. The making of the distinction only in order to abolish it is the *life* of the Understanding. In living this “life,” we have gone in a circle. But from the conscious certainty that the Understanding has of its *eternal* truth, we have thus come back to the certainty of the peasant-wife that this farmyard and these cows are hers. We know now, why she would not come with us on our theoretical odyssey. She was the self at home in its world; and that meant that she already knew something that we were ignoring. Truth, we thought, is an absolute object. It cannot *belong* to anyone. Frau Bauer, on the other hand, realized that in order to know *anything* one must be alive. Knowledge belongs to life; and to be consciously alive is to exist in the world that one knows to belong to oneself. Alienation from one’s world is not a natural (or naïve) condition of consciousness.

Thus the transition that we are making here, is one that only theorists like ourselves can make. For the natural consciousness the transition is always *already made*. The self that is at home in its own world has made a transition only from the dark blankness of the time of which it remembers nothing, the time before it was there at all. We cannot say that it has *forgotten* what we have so far experienced, since it has not yet had the opportunity to learn all of that. In our next three chapters we shall follow its progress up to the point where all of our theoretical experience becomes necessary to it. It does not yet know that “truth belongs to no one,

and cannot belong to anyone." It must learn that side of the truth (which comes to us so spontaneously) in great affliction and bitterness of spirit. For the moment, we must concentrate on how and why we have been forced to *remember* what the natural self spontaneously knows.

At the end of Understanding, self and other, Inner and Outer coincided. Thus the experience from which Self-Consciousness has to begin is that coincidence as a *certainty*. But *certainty*, also, has a necessary structure which we have experienced. Its destiny is to be mediated into the antithesis between the universal thing and the singular perception; and finally to become the unconditioned Universal which is empty of all *apparent* content whether as Force or as Understanding, as Being or as Law. All of this structure goes forward with us; but it is carried forward as a concept, not as an object. It is a structure made up of conceptual moments not of objective realities—of "vanishing essences" rather than "essential beings."⁵ The conscious world of the Self that truly *is* itself is only "appearance," not a "simple, self-standing *Bestehen*." "Independent self-standing subsistence" has passed over into the self. Its world *belongs* to it: "the distinction, as an otherness is *immediately sublated*." Force, which was out there in the object of consciousness, has now become free intelligence, the energy that is conscious of itself. This free intelligence, restored to its naïve certainty, is the natural self.

Self-Consciousness "is essentially the return out of *otherness*." This makes fairly simple good sense to ordinary nonphilosophical consciousness. But Hegel is insisting that what has "returned" is the Concept that defines truth for the self. The focus point from which the world has to be interpreted has shifted from a force that we are intellectually aware of, to a free consciousness that is aware of itself.

The world is still there; nothing in the sphere of "consciousness as such" has changed. It *cannot* change any more, because it has completed itself as the unconditioned universal. But when we grasped what the adjective "unconditioned" really meant, the significance of everything in the sphere of Consciousness changed. From being the object of my *cognition*, the world became the object of my *desire*. "Being at home" is the state of fulfilled desire; and homes have to be maintained. So *how things are* in my home remains an object of my earnest inquiry. But I know now that the only point of finding out how the world is, is to discover how it can be brought closer to what I want it to be. I must still distinguish the real world from any active awareness of it (in the familiar dialectic of the "two forces"); for that is the necessary condition for any *changing* of how the world is. Natural self-consciousness is primitively Baconian: "Human knowledge and human power meet in one." Theoretical knowledge is only the first moment, the "condition" that must be comprehended in the self-realization of freedom as "unconditioned."⁶

In this "realm where truth is at home," the tautology of Understanding must be expressed as the *Fichtean* tautology of self-consciousness: "I am I." But how can this identity be known to the self? For we saw at the very beginning that the certainty of the subject was mediated by that of the object (and vice versa; see par. 92). So the *motionless* tautology is a *reductio ad absurdum*.⁷ The distinction of self as subject (agent) from self as object (world) must have "the shape of being as well," for

otherwise the self would not *be* self-conscious. "Self-Consciousness," as the truth of "what is," has to be the *motion* from the moment of distinction to the moment of identification. Self-Consciousness is the *motion* from simple consciousness (of the world) to mediated consciousness of the self.

Being at home in the world is a matter of *making* a home in it. The world *appears* to be something other than myself. It must appear so, in order for me to be certain of myself at all. But if that certainty of self is what is absolutely *true*, then the "otherness" has to be an appearance only; and *that* must be made apparent by changing what appears so that it expresses the self. This moving structure is what Hegel calls *Begierde*. The word seems to represent Aristotle's *orexis* (generally called in English "appetite"); but since we shall discover that it has several levels, it is natural to think of the Platonic *eros*.⁸ *Begierde* is the spontaneous activity of removing an *apparent* dissonance between the self and the world that belongs to it.⁹ Self-Consciousness has a *double* object, because the self can only be aware of itself, through the mediation of something in the ordinary world of perceptual consciousness. This is what makes it necessarily an appetitive motion away from simple consciousness. The self moves from implicit identity to explicit identity with itself *through* the dissolution of difference.

The motion of explicitation, i.e. the whole essence of the self, is in the "super-sensible" realm. What appears in the sensible world is only a movement (or change) of appearances. The world of consciousness is just as permanently necessary as the activity of the self (cf. par. 137 where the proposition "force has *already* uttered itself" was shown to be necessary). When we say that "self-consciousness is what *truly is*" (rather than the objective world of consciousness) we mean that the motion of the world in consciousness is the utterance of a force that is *free*. Perception itself is not to be understood as a causal reaction (as the interaction of things in the perceptual world is understood when we pass over to the "order of nature" in the Understanding). But, beyond that, the whole world of Understanding *belongs* to the free Understanding; the proposition "This is *my* world" is the *fundamental* truth. The correct (self-validating) interpretation of that proposition is what remains to be seen.

- 3./168. For us, this objective world has also returned into itself and become Life. So the *object* of immediate desire is a living being. The distinction now, therefore, is between Self-Consciousness and Life (as the Concept-for-itself and in-itself). Self-Consciousness has to learn that its object is self-standing.

The object of "consciousness" (as it evolves in chapters I–III) is the not-self. The self is observing it, upon the hypothesis that it is "what truly is." That hypothesis is now *negated*. Precisely because that *immediate object* is the *not-self*, it is not what truly is. It is only an "appearance," while "what truly is" is a supersensible being (the self). But, of course, the not-self is still there; and it is *necessary*. "What truly is" manifests itself as an urge or appetite, through the active transformation of the not-self. Freedom has replaced understandable necessity as what is truly real. But the consciousness that we are observing, does not know that this has happened

(or even that it *can* happen). We need to know this, because it enables us to put the experiences of the free self into a logical order. We know that the natural confidence of the self that the world belongs to it, and it to the world, the confidence that they are the two sides of a free identity, arises logically from the discovery of Understanding that its object is *alive*, and that it is the self-awareness of an infinite living whole. This living whole is the real “object” of consciousness. The Infinite of Understanding is the free selfhood that does not know itself. The only “difference” introduced by Self-Consciousness is that knowledge.¹⁰

Knowledge (or to speak more plainly, consciousness in general) is the self-repulsion of the self-same (subject and object); and Appetite (or self-consciousness in general) is the attraction of the opposites. With Appetite, we have a new experience, beginning from the old result. The “living being” that is the immediate object of Appetite is the *human body* existing in the environment constituted by the Infinite of Understanding.¹¹ In this “middle term” the identity is realized, and Life displays its proper nature as a Concept. “Life” is the dialectical unity of life and death; in its “Infinity” it is the human *species* at home in its world. The pulsing of the “universal blood” (see par. 162) is the cycling of the mortal generations. The emergent free self will learn that its “negative” object, the not-self that is supposed to receive the impress of its desire like a perfectly plastic medium, is already a living, self-maintaining organism. As a free motion, the Understanding arises in a living thing; and when it asserts its absolute freedom, the first thing that the free self-consciousness learns is that at the level of conscious perception it is *not* independent of the living order that it comprehends. “Life,” on the contrary, is precisely the way in which the order from which it has sundered itself comprehends it.

Those who raised the theological problem “How out of this pure essence, how, from it, does distinction or otherness come *forth*” (par. 162) were asking an ill-formed question. For there could be no One at all, without the self-repulsion of Force into many perceivers and the return into the unity of Law understood. There must be many lives, just as there must be many things; and the lives must be living “things” (self-*perceiving* things). It is the completeness of this circle that makes the absurdity of the theological problem apparent. We shall not reach this answer explicitly until we come to the experience of Religion. The religion of “Life” that Hegel formulated in Frankfurt is there comprehended as *necessary*; and that experience of universal Self-Consciousness will repeat the pattern of hostility to the universality of Life, and all that follows.¹² But Hegel will now spell out the concept of Life as the unconditioned universal required for the resolution of the theological difficulty.

(b) *The Shape of Rational Life in Nature (the Family)*

- 4./169. Life is the moving Infinity in which *all* distinctions are sublated. It involves first a self-contained physical cycle [the Earth]; secondly, finite careers in time, embodied in self-moving volumes; thirdly it must be a community of these mortal organisms with a surrounding environment. For its members must *subsist* even in the motion in which they are sublated; and they must be sensible perceivers with Understanding.

Hegel's astronomy was, of course, Newtonian—or, as he would prefer me to say, Keplerian. But the conception of “the Infinite” as a living organism which we reached at the end of chapter III is best understood as a revival of Plato's doctrine of the “divine Living Thing” in the *Timaeus* (30b–31b). As a physical Force, the Infinite of paragraphs 161–165 is the Solar System, which establishes the Earth as a stage for “life.” The grasping of the “second inverted world” involves a physical inversion of our standpoint. In order to make the transition from the conscious (or object-oriented) view that is natural and necessary for the theoretical Understanding, to the subject-oriented view of Self-Consciousness, we have to recognize that it is not the Sun, but the physically subordinate planet Earth (rotating stably on its axis as it moves restlessly on its elliptical course around the Sun) that is the true centre of cognitive interest. Of course, the full significance of the “second inversion” is much more radical, since it involves the recognition that the objective world of the Understanding is the realization of the human Understanding itself. It is the significance of that second inversion that is spelled out (in its barest outline) here. The first step in the transition from Understanding to Life is the move from the infinite stability of the solar-centred world of motion to the equally infinite instability of the Earth-based world of mortal life.

Hegel inherited his concept of the living Earth from Plato. All finite (or mortal) life has the cyclic process of the Earth's immortality (or infinity) as its essential environment (or as its “inorganic nature” to use the expression that Hegel adopts in the Real Philosophy of 1805/6).¹³ He says that in his definition of Life at this point he is merely spelling out the meaning of the Concept arrived at in the chapter on Understanding. What was involved there, was the enveloping of the order of nature (or the world as comprehended by Understanding) in the consciousness of spontaneous freedom. The statement of the “concept of Life” that Hegel now gives us, involves a *consciousness* of the “inverted world” that is not yet *self-conscious*. The real Infinity that we reached in paragraph 162 is objectively displayed in the motion of the Earth, which spins on its axis to create the clock for all life upon its surface. This diurnal motion sublates all distinctions in the annual cycle of its seasons. This is “*Selbständigkeit selbst*, the simple essence of time which in this self-equivalence has the solid shape of space.”

The language is so specific that no other interpretation seems possible. It is only in the diurnal and annual motions of the Earth that time can be said to have (for us) the shape of space. And it is clearly the diurnal motion of the Earth that is of primary importance, because this “resting” motion (the spinning of the spherical surface round an unmoving axial line) is an image of the endless cycle of the generations of mortal life. These generations of mortal (self-conscious) life are the “distinctions” that are present in this simple universal medium of real time. Without the rational mortals the “universal fluidity” created by the Earth's annual climatic cycle could not exhibit its “negative nature.” It is the succession of mortal generations that constitutes the pulsation of the “universal blood” in paragraph 162. For the understanding of the order of Nature (with its inexorable laws) this is the most important of the “differences that make no difference.”

These living human generations must last for a certain length of time, and they must succeed one another reliably. This is the *Bestehen* that is logically necessary if the different generations are to be distinguishable when *aufgehoben*. Each singular life lasts for a certain number of the Earth's years. As identical measures of the "universal fluidity," the years—seventy or eighty of them as the Psalmist says—are our finite *Bestehen*. If we did not stably subsist through a number of repetitions of this kind we could never come to measure time at all.

But Hegel's text presents a difficulty for this interpretation of the *Bestehen* of the "distincts." Hegel says: "As the self-equivalent self-standingness, this very fluidity is itself the permanence [*Bestehen*], or the *Substance*, of the distincts in which they are (therefore) as distinct members, and parts *subsisting on their own account* [*fürsichseiende Theile*]." In its spatial aspect this statement is transparent enough. The finite *Bestehen* of our bodies is sustained by the Earth, and our bodies go to their graves in the Earth. But if we are right in taking the "fluidity" to be the flow of time, then we have to interpret time as having substantial stability also. That Hegel means something of the sort is confirmed in the next sentence, when he spells out the change in the significance of *Sein* as it is used with respect to "life." "Being no longer has the significance of the abstraction of Being . . . but their Being is precisely that simple fluid substance of pure motion within itself." In the "Infinite" of the self-inverted Understanding, the flux of sense-certain time is sublated into the "Bacchic revel" of conscious life. Its "substance" is experienced as our mortal awareness of the eternity of Antigone's "unwritten and unshakeable law" whose origin is "unknown."¹⁴

Outwardly expressed, the "fluid substance of pure movement within itself" is the four dimensional permanence established by the periodical motions of the Solar System (and primitively by the axial rotation of the Earth). This sense of substance becomes the foundation for the concept of the "ethical substance." Hegel could not call the Greek city-world a substance (as he does) if he were not prepared to call the Solar System—Plato's "City in the Heavens"¹⁵—a substance in the first place. It is this natural order through which "time has the solid shape of space." Plato's "moving image of eternity"¹⁶ forms the bridge to Hegel's concept of the communally conscious Substance that can become a Subject. We have to be members of a community that has stabilized (or substantiated) its existence upon Earth in time, if we are to have a distinct being on our own account.

In the still unselfconscious context of the present discussion, the "members" who are "parts subsisting on their own account" are just the mortal links in a family lifeline. The "self-equivalent self-standingness" that achieves permanence (*Bestehen*) through its pure motion is the actual form of the *Gattung*—the human *Kind* in its terrestrial environment—or as it is normally translated in Hegel's *Logic*, the "Genus." This is the "*Bestehen* of living differences that make no difference." Each generation is a pulse of Life (or of "the universal blood") as a distinct element in the living population.¹⁷

The last sentence of the paragraph seems to be intended as an explanation of the way the "pure essentiality" of the Inverted World differs from that of the simple

(or inorganic) world. In the previous sentence Hegel said that both *Sein* and *reine Wesenheit* have a new significance; and he explains that instead of referring to the *abstract Being* (of sense certainty) "Being" now refers to the "fluid substance of pure motion within itself." This "fluid substance" is humanity living on the Earth as a natural Kind. He does not explain at that point how "pure essentiality" has changed its significance. But the comment that the "distinction" of the members is nothing else but "the determinacy of the moments of Infinity or of pure motion" means that life is essentially a *polarity*. There is first the polarity of life and death, and secondly the polarity of sex through which the cycle of life and death is maintained. In place of the *abstract* essentiality of Force we now have the *concrete* essentiality of reciprocal "caring" between the generations, and biological attraction between the sexes. The "pure motion" of the Kind is a reproductive process which necessarily involves an attraction of unlikes. This is the topic of the next paragraph.

- 5./170. The members (of the natural living unity) are on their own account. But this actually means that they are attracted to their opposites, and that the unity is one of opposites. What maintains itself is the natural genus as a particular lifeline. Inside the unity the differences appear as a dichotomy, but the unity is a reproductive unit because it has superseded that. The dichotomy is essential to the cyclic stability of the genus itself.

The motion of the Kind is based on the mutual attraction of two independent "members" who are on their own account. The sexes are just as permanent in their independence as the species is in its cyclic Infinity. But their sexual determinacy is their "immediate reflection into the unity" just as the unity of the Kind is immediately the split into the two sexes by which its substantiating motion is generated. Only the unity is self-maintaining. It polarizes itself in order to maintain itself. The Kind is an "absolutely negative" infinity (like the motions in the heavens). It goes through its cycle only to go through it again. At the level of life, this involves the explicit sublation of the visible "being for self" of each cycle. Human generations succeed one another, as the old people die. It is precisely the sex-distinction that is the permanence (*Bestehen*) of this perpetual sublation. The Kind appears as two independent "shapes" (the two sexes) because the total shape, the shape that is the appearance of the substance, is polarized. The *Aufhebung* of the polarity is mating, the coming together of each sex with the other. But, as in the magnetic poles, the complementarity is implicit in each of the separate sexes: what it means to be a male, involves the being of the female (and vice versa). The sexes are opposite aspects of a "fluidity" that is their substance; they are not substances since neither could survive without the other. Each *Gestalt* needs the other, and its own permanence involves the sublation of its being on its own account.

We should notice that there is (as yet) no hint of the inward self-repulsion of the "like" poles of the magnet. Hegel is only interested in the unity of the life process as a "substance" analogous to the solid bar between the poles. Attraction is the only relation that he considers. The repulsion of like poles will enter the picture later (in the life-and-death struggle).

The substantiality of life depends on the polarized attraction of *opposite* sexes. Hegel's insistence that the sexes cannot subsist by themselves, and that each is implicitly the *Aufhebung* of itself, should probably be seen as a criticism of the "universal gravitational" view of Plato's Aristophanes who argues that desire is not sexually polarized, and that "the desire and pursuit of the whole is called Love" in *three kinds*.¹⁸ Plato held that the union of like with like was apt to generate higher (spiritual) offspring. In spite of examples like Sappho and Plato himself, that view probably appeared to Hegel to be just a superstition of the natural consciousness.

But the logic is more important than Hegel's socially conditioned beliefs. Sexual attraction must achieve its magnetic or polarized form (rather than that of undifferentiated gravitational universality) if life is to be substantiated; and the fact that the logic of "natural law" puts the repulsion of like sexual poles at the next stage of conscious evolution (Recognition) is significant. Hegel's thought cleaves strictly to the path of observable necessity; so Freud's reinstatement of Aristophanes does not pose any problem for the post-Hegelian logician of appearance.

- 6./171. The moments of the life-cycle are first, the self-maintenance of the two sexual forms; and second the subordination of each form to its sexual function. The organism *grows*, by feeding on other living things. Its food becomes its inorganic nature, when it is dissolved in the process of the organism. At maturity we have the second moment of this process: the sexual movement of the shapes in which Life is other than itself. The Kind (as what is in-itself) now becomes the "other" for these shapes; it consumes them. This inversion of the previous relation is invertedness with respect to itself; for what is consumed [both ways] is the Essence. The individual organism gives itself the sense of unity through the fluidity of dissolution into the universal [i.e. the orgasm]; and conversely this sublation of individual permanence is the conception of a new organism that is sexually differentiated. So the second moment of the life process [copulation] leads back to the first. Each moment is both articulation and dissolution of sexual shape. Life is actual only as shapes. It is a cycle of the development and dissolution of shapes, in which dissolution restarts the cycle.

According to Hegel's theory of the organism the living thing is the unity of two processes: that by which it maintains itself at the expense of its environment; and that by which it reproduces itself. These are the two moments which he distinguishes "more closely" here. What he calls the "permanence (*Bestehen*) of the self-standing shapes" is the self-preservative drive of the sexually determinate organism. This self-preservative urge is naturally doomed. That it is not a real permanence is explicitly admitted when it is called "the suppressing of what distinguishing is in itself." The organism sets itself against the fluid continuity of life, making the living environment into the "inorganic nature" that it feeds upon; and by doing that, it maintains itself as a "shape" that is not fluid and homogenous. Hegel thought of this maintenance of the organism as a function of several different homogenous "fluidities" (notably the blood, and the chyle produced in the digestive process). Life depended on the organs being able to maintain control of their various fluid secretions; and one form of natural death was the "self-diges-

tion" of the organs into "fluidity." (This final triumph of "fluidity" occurs after organic death in any case—in the putrefaction of the corpse.)

What is biologically important in this first moment (the *growth* of the organism) is the maturing of the sexes as brother and sister "side by side in peace" (*ruhiges auseinanderlegen*).¹⁹ The contrast implicit in the emphasized *ruhig* and the use of *auseinander* is made explicit by the Biblical meaning of "lying *with*." As they grow, the children may lie beside one another, but they do not yet lie *with* one another.

The formation and maturing of the sexual organs is itself a living motion that is directly continuous with the two shapes taking charge of their own lives as they begin to make their own choices. In this second phase, life is no longer a fluidity (inside and outside) dominated by the organism, but one that dominates the organism: "for [this fluidity] is now life as *living* for the *distinction* which is in and for itself, and hence it is the infinite motion by which that peaceful medium is consumed."²⁰ The fluidity of the Kind is now present to the sexually mature organism in the shape of the *other* living being that is its mate. Mating, not self-maintenance, becomes its more comprehensive goal; and this is the second inversion of the relation between the singular organism and the Kind. By achieving its climactic satisfaction, by achieving this supreme feeling of unity with itself, the sexually distinct organism sublates its sexual antithesis with the other, which is what made it thus far something distinct on its own account. In the orgasm at the climax of copulation the differences dissolve into the more comprehensive fluidity of the Kind.

The second inversion comprehends the first; it completes a circle and starts the process of a new sexually determinate organism. At the moment of its comprehensive uniting of the differences, the universal fluidity "sublates its simplicity, or its essence, by positing its other [i.e. the distinction of shape] within it." The sublation of distinction in copulation is the positing of distinction again in the conception and birth of a new sexually distinct individual.

This "identity" between orgasm and conception is contingent; but what is important for the advance of Hegel's argument, is that because of it, the two moments of the life-process, that of self-maintenance and that of subordination to the infinite motion, collapse into one system of *reciprocal* maintenance. Living individuals must survive in order to serve the purpose of their kind; but that purpose is precisely the unfailing reproduction of individuals.

The "fluidity" of life is only an *abstract* essence; in its fluid aspect, life is also (and equally) death. What is actual is the shapes. But the articulation of shape is a motion towards the dissolution of shape once more; and the dissolution is a new beginning of articulation. Neither growth to maturity, nor sexual activity, nor the simple combination of these is Life. For death itself is an essential moment of life. Life as a whole is a cycle of self-development and self-dissolution that maintains itself in this motion.

It is important to Hegel's argument that this "simplicity" of life, its "abstract essence," the fluidity in which all distinctions are dissolved, is natural death. The step to the self-possessed awareness of the whole cycle, which Hegel is about to make in the next paragraph, depends on the fact that a heterosexual pair which has

mated and produced a child must no longer live just “for themselves” but rather for the child. The transition from mating to the raising of children signals the conscious beginning of a losing battle with the universal fluidity. We can say therefore that the colloquial characterization of the orgasm as “dying” is an “instinct of Reason.”

The triumph of the mating urge and the consciousness of the inevitability of natural death, is a moment where life becomes dominant in its negative shape, or as “mortality.” But Hegel treats the whole process in a very Hobbesian way as the pursuit of “felicity”—the “feeling of unity with the self” which is perfect satisfaction. So if I have understood him rightly, his response to those who point to the fact that sexual congress does not reliably result in pregnancy (and need not result in it at all) would be that sterility is primitively felt to be a curse, and that those who try to keep control of the Kind-process in pursuit of simple enjoyment are liable to find themselves wishing for children when it is too late, because the process has become simply negative. But he does agree that it is pleasure, not the child, that is the immediate object of sexual desire as such. It is not just the wise man, but the naïve one too, who “thinks of nothing less than of death”—or of the new life that holds death at bay. Pregnancy comes as a surprise that changes everything.²¹ That is when the “fluidity” becomes “the other.”

The dominance of self-satisfaction in the whole cycle of life is a striking feature of this discussion. In Hegel’s early work, the experience of love was treated as the fundamental form of recognized identity with the other. Thus (in his Frankfurt philosophy of religion) the natural dichotomy of sex, and the consequent need of the *other* half of *oneself*, became the model for the unity of “self-consciousness.”²² Here, on the other hand, self-consciousness is set against natural life; and the mutual attraction of the sexes is treated as a natural appetite, i.e. a drive for simple satisfaction. Thus, although I have sought to justify the transition from this paragraph to the next by pointing out how responsibility for children changes the felt consciousness of what life is; and although this can be supported by appeal to the 1804 Philosophy of Spirit, where Hegel says that as they educate the child the parents “generate their own death”;²³ still, as far as the doctrine of this present paragraph is concerned, Hegel does not need to make *any* comment about the controlling of biological consequences for the sake of sexual enjoyment. Anyone who takes simple enjoyment as the goal is only following the impulse of nature. The inversion of this attitude when the baby comes marks the birth of Self-Consciousness in the proper sense.

- 7./172. Starting from the baby growing, we have come round to the baby new born to its parents. Thus we now have the *family* which is a community (“universal unity”) in which all the phases are present. As the simple Kind the family points to the consciousness *for which* it exists.

In this analytic account of the life-process of the single organism, Hegel treats it as a self-absorbed ball of egoism. It is the “I = I.” It has no goal except the satisfaction of its immediately felt “desire.” Even when its life-function, its sexual urge,

takes control of it, its aim is simply to “give unity to itself.” It is possible for life to be lived as a “simple grasping-together of these moments” (self-satisfaction and sexual self-realization).²⁴ But that is not the “simply self-maintaining whole” of life. This paragraph shows why.

At the moment of self-completion (in the orgasm), the triumphant fluidity of life “posits the *other* [i.e. a sexual shape or shapes] within itself.” A new baby comes—and now *it* is the egoistic centre of the universe.²⁵ Thus a change of attitude is required on the part of the two self-absorbed centres who were giving themselves “unity with self” in the act of becoming its parents. This necessary change of attitude is the move from life as simple self-absorption to proper self-consciousness. When our Adam and Eve become parents, they must leave Eden behind and *labor* for their family. Practical consciousness is primitively the “reflected unity” of all the moments of life that is necessary if the needs of the new self-absorbed ego are to be successfully met. But the dawning of this new awareness is also, necessarily, the occasion for a *choice*.

The tragedy of Gretchen takes place at a higher level of self-conscious development than the one we are considering here. She lives in a rational community in which the institution of marriage is the form of communal recognition for the responsibility that now exists. She kills her baby, not because she cannot look after it, but because she cannot face her world with it. But the natural problem is still visible in her situation, because Faust has caused her to poison her mother, and has killed her brother. She “got into trouble” without any reflective consciousness of what she was doing; and her “rational” consciousness (i.e., her strictly conventional expectation regarding what must happen in the sudden emergency of nature) was disappointed. But so was the requirement of nature itself. Faust failed, not just to become a husband in the socially recognized sense, but to act as a father in the natural sense. This failure directly underlines the fact that the “*simple Gattung* does not exist on its own account AS this *simple* [being].”²⁶ If we abstract from his “Doctorate,” Faust can be seen as the ego emerging from nature. He identifies self-consciously (or “by choice”) with the organism’s primitive urge to achieve “unity with self.” It is not just a matter of his having abjured Gretchen’s social consciousness (which is not relevant here). He rejects the totality of natural “life.” He is the pure principle of self-consciousness that has only *itself* as object.

(c) *The Shape of Self-Conscious Desire (the Platonic Soul)*

- 8./173. Self-Consciousness which knows what the cycle of life is, and knows itself as *that*, has initially only pure Ego (i.e. “unity with self”) as its object. It will unfold like the concept of Life.

When the completion of the cycle of life refers us (*verweist*) to the “consciousness” for which it exists as *Gattung*, we pass into the sphere of Self-Consciousness, the “realm where truth is at home.” Here the dialectic of Sense-Certainty is repeated in a higher (and a necessarily *inverted*) form. In place of the certainty of

the *being* of the object, we have first the certainty of the *freedom*, the actual negativity (or non-being) of the self; and where the certainty of the object's immediate being passed over into the Protagorean certainty of my impression, the self-certainty of freedom moves in the other direction, and becomes the awareness of the bondage of life as the cycle of finite desires (hunger, thirst and sex) through which the *Gattung* of life maintains itself.

The transformation of the third moment of Sense-Certainty (*das Zeigen*, or the pointing out of the object) is more directly similar (so that the inversion of the truth criterion itself becomes fully explicit). I can point out the Now, but I can only point to it as "then"; and I can point out the Here, but only as "there" (or else I point it out *from* "there"). Similarly I can point out the Self that I *desire*, but only as another self that I want to be. The self I point to may be either "then" (somewhere in the past) or "there" (in some other living self); but as "mine" it can only be "not yet." It must be in the future, because as my *true* object, it is my "objective." The attempt of the Self to point to itself in the here and now comes to grief in the life and death struggle as the "first experience" of consciousness. That is the beginning of the *perceptual* experience of the Self; in that "experience" the Self becomes a "thing," but a thing that is *made*, not one that is (or can be) "truly taken."

Faust provides a perfect poetic *Vorstellung* of immediately emergent Self-Certainty. But Goethe used him to represent the birth of a new culture, and Hegel follows suit in due course. At this stage we have to abstract from that social dimension, but the example is worth studying. Goethe's Faust comes before us in full maturity, certainly not much under forty (in view of all that rejected booklearning, which represents the old culture that we have to ignore). The *Gattung* is an object of which he is fully conscious; he knows the normal course of life, and he proclaims that he is now going to live it. He goes forth, seduces Gretchen, and so becomes the *Gattung für sich*. He has *lived* it. But what matters to him is just what Hegel calls "pure ego." Faust is the "pure Ego" of Reason, but not the moral Ego of Kant and Fichte; all that he has in common with the moral self is negativity. He is a destroyer; seeking satisfaction, he is satisfied with nothing. He is, in fact, the pure ego of Hobbes (the fate of which is spelled out in the next paragraph). But Faust has the whole range of human knowledge and experience in his memory. The self we are observing has none of that. It has only a "natural order" of Life behind it.²⁷

- 9./174. The Ego is the Kind only as *negative essence*; i.e., it is restless desire that consumes everything. Wiping out the independence of the object gives it the certainty of its own truth in an *objective* way.

We might be tempted to think that the proper model of self-consciousness as simple *ego*-assertion is the self-consciousness of the living organism as it actually evolves. Freud certainly saw the nascent human being in this light. But the lesson that the infant ego learns immediately is the Hobbesian lesson of necessary dependence, and acceptance of authority. We have to start with an adult consciousness that knows what the cycle of life is, and identifies with its own satisfaction in life,

while retaining a perfect certainty of its power to achieve it. Children exhibit the imperiousness of desire clearly enough; but they continually experience frustration (and there is no sign of that in Hegel's text).

Hegel begins with the consciousness of the Hobbesian natural man. This consciousness knows that it has the power to satisfy its wants, and is absolutely secure in its confidence that getting what it wants is all that matters. This is the self-consciousness that is "Desire in general." It was first mentioned in paragraph 167; and we meet it now as the self-conscious counterpart of the first phase in the evolution of the living organism (growth by consumption).

In paragraph 167 Hegel characterized the first appearance of self-consciousness as "Desire in general"; he remarked there that Self-Consciousness must always continue to have the structure of Desire, because it will always have a "doubled object." On the one hand, there is the object of sense-certainty and perception; and on the other hand, there is the mediated certainty of *itself*.²⁸ This second object, *sich selbst*, its own "self," is the essence, the standard of "what is," or rather (and this is exactly why Self-Consciousness will always have the aspect of desire) the "self" is the standard of what truly *ought* to be. The objects of sense-certainty and perception are for self-consciousness merely negative—just as the objects of sense-certainty are for the animals who do not stand in awe of them but eat them up without ceremony (par. 109). Self-Conscious desire consumes them, too; and being rational, it *uses* the perceptible types of things as tools for its ends. Voluntary labor, and the deployment of practical understanding in a Lockean (cooperative) "state of Nature" is all comprehensible within the sphere of natural Desire.²⁹

There is a puzzle about the *objectivity* of the certainty of self in this purely negative stance. The certainty of self can only come to be in an objective fashion, because the independence of the "sensible other" is nullified (but not the sensible being itself). What comes to be objectively, is the certainty of control, the certainty of absolute *power* over one's objective world. If we interpret the present stage as the establishment of a kind of property relation that does not presuppose recognition, we can see why the first "experience" of this self-consciousness is the discovery that the living body cannot be sacrificed (as the "nothingness of the other" requires); and the next is the establishment of absolute power over someone else's body.³⁰

But, as Hegel said in paragraph 168, *we* know that this simple opposition between the Self that is an end, and the objects of sense and perception that are merely means, is mistaken. *We* have passed through the whole dialectic of Understanding, and hence we are aware that the world process itself is organic. So we know that the inorganic environment which Self-Consciousness as emergent Desire regards as the not-self (or as having a merely *negative* significance) is its own self-potential as food for thought, not just as fuel for the bodily appetites.

Returning from this brief recall of the argument of paragraphs 167 and 168 to our discussion of paragraph 174, we can say, if we like, that a baby whose parents have made it the centre of the world, and now devote all of their grown up powers to satisfying its wants, will have the imperiously self-assertive kind of consciousness that knows, as yet, no boundaries. But in the first place it is only a reflective

guess on our part that this is so. We only know what kind of consciousness the baby has (if any) so far as it succeeds in *communicating* its wants, and *exhibiting* its satisfaction. And, in the second place, it is not true of the baby that “the *Gattung* is for it.” If we are willing to call a blindly imperious ego *infantile*, we must recognize, therefore, that this “infantile ego” is a very different thing from the infant *organism*. There may be some very bright (and badly spoiled) children who have egos of this kind. But on the whole this “self” belongs necessarily to adults; and generally it is under a mask. It takes the eye of a Hobbes (or of Thrasymachus and Callicles) to unmask it.

- 10./175. Satisfying desire involves dependence on the not-self. I eat, but only to get hungry again. The primitive object of desire is some need of Life. So the object of self-conscious desire is a *tool* that satisfies need by itself. Another *consciousness* must stand between the Ego as Ego, and the Ego as Life. Desire has three forms: material dependence, sexual dependence, and dependence upon another self-consciousness. This last is the essential condition of self-conscious *freedom*.

This paragraph has been generally misinterpreted. It shows us how self-consciousness *cannot* find its own satisfaction in the sphere of natural desires, and where the only object that can satisfy it (as the desire for selfhood) is to be sought. The self-consciousness that adopts Hobbesian felicity as its goal is forced to recognize that (as Hobbes himself says) “there is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind, while we live here; because life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire.”³¹ Hobbesian “felicity” logically depends both upon the recurrence of desire, and upon the continued presence of a natural object that is the means to its satisfaction. Thus the satisfaction of natural desire is not the realization of the self. Rather it is the service of something else. It is a bondage of self-consciousness to the organic body’s cycle of physical need and satisfaction. This criticism of the Hobbesian view is much older than Hobbes. Hegel is simply repeating (and recalling) the argument between Socrates and Callicles in Plato’s *Gorgias*. The *concept* of Desire is simple self-assertion. The self knows with absolute certainty that it *ought* to be, and it ought to enjoy its own being. But the self’s experience of Desire is to find itself serving the needs of the not-self, the needs of the living body which thus demonstrates its objective independence. For Hobbes this servitude is absolute, and Reason is born when we recognize and accept it. But for Plato this was not so; and Hegel follows Plato’s lead.

Self-Consciousness knows *itself* to be the truth. The desire of the *self* must be satisfied. No matter what Hobbes may say, “Self-Consciousness” is the certainty that “tranquillity of mind” *can* be achieved. The endless struggle to satisfy the living body, with its relentless cycle of filling and emptying, cannot provide this satisfaction. But the employment of another self-consciousness can provide satisfaction for the desire of self-consciousness as such. Hence the maturing of self-consciousness requires just what the maturing of the infant organism requires: another self-consciousness must become its instrument, and be available for consumption as its inorganic universal nature.³² To achieve the satisfaction of itself as Desire self-

consciousness needs, first, a lot of material resources to satisfy its bodily wants; secondly, a mate to make it a naturally whole life; and thirdly, another self-consciousness to *educate* it (not in the disciplinary, but in the dispositional sense). What self-consciousness needs for its *own* satisfaction is knowledge. Only another self-consciousness can supply that; and if Desire is to be satisfied spontaneously (without being transformed into the self-assertive *demand* for recognition) then the other self-consciousness must negate itself voluntarily, it must make itself willingly into an instrument or a resource, and offer its own experience as raw material for appropriation and consumption by the consciousness that desires it.

This whole conception of the three levels of desire comes from Plato. The “necessary” desires that are finally identified in Book VIII of the *Republic* (558d–559a) form the two complementary moments of the cycle of organic life.³³ The urge to be “oneself” is the “spirited part”; and the “dispositional” conception of education as the offering of whatever knowledge or experience is seen by the observer as likely to please the emerging self-consciousness is clearly defined in *Republic* VII (536d–537a). Soon, of course, the desire for “the food of the soul” (*Protagoras* 313a–314b) is consciously aroused; and then the desiring consciousness willingly follows a leader. But the primitively self-negative relation of the object-consciousness to the desiring consciousness is quite clearly evident in the earliest stage of Platonic education (the helpful observation of children at play); and in the context of “the life that is the object of desire” at its three logical levels, the italicized claim (at the end of the paragraph) that “Self-Consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness” can only mean what I have said: that the desiring self must take over, assimilate, preoccupy, and ultimately *consume* the conceptualized content of, another self-consciousness. On the other side the instrumental self-consciousness knows that it must pass on its “experience” before it dies.

At the *singular* level (where no one else can stand in for me) I consume objects (e.g. eat or drink them); at the *particular* level (where I am one “part” of the Kind) I do not consume anything, but the object of my desire is someone of the other sex, the determinacy that has the other shape. That other shape is not naturally subservient to my desire, but is “indifferent” to it because it is driven by its own desire. But at the *universal* level it is cognitive self-consciousness itself (“the Kind as such”) upon which the nascent self feeds “as its inorganic nature”; and for this a willing subservience is necessary.

In the natural order of conscious development, it is the child’s parents who pass on their experience to the child in the certain awareness that their own death is coming, and that their children must inherit what they have learned (as well as the material fruits of what they have done).

Hegel treats domestic education in this purely positive way (as the satisfaction of the distinctively human “desire to know”) in both of his early attempts at a systematic “philosophy of spirit.”³⁴ But this parental relation has two opposite sides. Parents do not just feed children upon their own spiritual substance (as a mother suckles an infant). There is also a disciplinary aspect to the relationship, which is not perceived as desirable, and is not desired. This compulsive enforcement of self-

conscious *authority* belongs to the next phase of our phenomenological progress; and just as the evolution of authority is there examined as a relationship of free selves that are physically mature, so here the proper paradigm of the self-conscious Ego as human desire is neither the Platonic playground, nor the child at mother's knee, but the moment of *Bildung* which *equalizes* the parental relationship in the *System of Ethical Life*.³⁵

- 11./176. [summary of 173–175:] The self as self-assertion becomes a desiring process. But in this process it discovers that its *own* satisfaction as a self depends on another self. Thus the truth of self-certainty is recognition by another who voluntarily submits to be its object. [New step:] This submission is different from natural death, because unlike the living shape it does not cease to be a living self-consciousness in accepting the teaching role.

This paragraph is, in the main, a review. Self-Consciousness is essentially the self-assertive urge that Plato called *thumos* (which his English translators, by a happy accident, generally render as “spirit”). But this self emerges from a subconscious organic process. It exists in a world of objects, and therefore it exists as a *desire* to maintain itself. This structure of self-finding in a threatening or problem-posing world arises from the fact that “in-itself” (or as immediate self-consciousness) the ego is self-identity as the negation of negation. (We have to go back to par. 174 to recover this connecting link between points (a) and (b) in Hegel's summary here.)

As Desire the self achieves satisfaction by showing that the object only exists as its instrument, its raw material. The essence into which its activity is “reflected”—i.e. the goal of its self-assertion—is “itself” as the true significance of all its efforts to stay alive. But its certainty of this can achieve truth only when another self makes itself into an object, and posits its own otherness as insignificant from the beginning, by devoting itself to teaching the first self what that self actively desires to learn.

At this point the summary becomes a development of what has already been said, not just a repetition in slightly different words. In this voluntary self-subjection, says Hegel, the teaching consciousness retains its independent being. This was already stated in paragraph 175. But in the repetition here, we find the first explicit reference to natural death. The merely “living” shape sublates its self-standing status even in the natural course of life. But with this sublation of its difference it simply shows what it naturally is (the necessarily *mortal* pole of a natural Kind) by dying. In the teaching relation it is the whole *Gattung* (the logical Genus of the self-conscious desire for knowledge, rather than one half of a natural Kind) that sublates itself (by taking on the “inorganic” status in an organic/inorganic or desire/object relation). So the teaching consciousness remains self-possessed. It is “the universal fluidity,” which is to say that it remains active even in its seeming passivity.

One clear implication of this is that the sex of teacher and learner is unimportant. But that cannot become conscious at the level of natural Desire. Through his reference to the fact of natural death, Hegel is implicitly recognizing that it is parents who teach children, or more generally, that the older generation teaches the

younger. What perishes by sublating itself in death is a *distinct shape* (i.e., a man or a woman). But the fact that the self-consciousness that makes itself into a teaching resource “remains independent in this negativity of itself” is offered by Hegel as the proof that it is the whole *Gattung* (i.e. the higher genus of self-consciousness) that is here active. This higher genus *comprehends* the naturally divided one (the one that I call the “Kind,” although Hegel uses the same word for it). But the teacher is here said to be “the universal fluidity in the *Eigenheit seiner Absonderung*”; and since this is the last step of an argument which concludes that the object of self-conscious desire is “living self-consciousness,” this “characteristic quality of its segregation” must be the naturally given sexual determinacy of the sundered living organism. Whatever is “food of the soul” can be taught by anyone to anyone without distinction of sex. But in the natural order of Desire fathers teach boys how to be men, and mothers teach girls how to be women. So Hegel’s Platonic heritage here assumes its Aristotelian form.³⁶

- 12./177. *There is a self-consciousness for a self-consciousness; only in self-recognition does it exist.* What self-consciousness desires is independent because it is substantial. But in the consciousness of Self-Consciousness as an object the concept of spirit is before us. The rest of our journey is the *experience* of the substance that is the unity of the independent self-consciousnesses. This is the I that is We and We that is I. Here we leave both sensible show and the night of the *supersensible* Beyond behind us, and enter the spiritual daylight of the present.

The object of every natural desire except the desire for “another self” is something other than the self. Desire normally depends (negatively) on something in the *world*. Worldly objects are “only independent” because all such real things are elements in “the universal indestructible substance, the fluid self-identical essence.” When we proceed to the *experience* of this concept of the Self as Desire, we shall find out how fundamental the “independence” of the object is, in spite of its subjugation, its reduction to nothingness in appearance.

That experience will be an interaction between selves. We already know that another self is the only satisfactory object of Desire; and that is because another self is not *only* an object, but “just as much self as object.” This makes it an object in which we can recognize the self that we desire, an object of *imitation*.

It is only because we teach and learn from one another that we are “selves” at all; and only because we teach and learn something appropriate to a self-conscious being (*Wesen*). Many mammals and birds can be observed actively teaching their young; and the ones that can do this can typically learn by observation even when there is no intent to teach. How important this learning is can be established negatively when the opportunity for it is removed; thus female gorillas born in captivity (and hence not in a proper gorilla community) simply do not *know* how to be mothers. Mothering does not all come by instinct.

This example from the sphere of unselfconscious “life” shows how true it is that the self as the goal of its own desire is not just an “object.” Only another self can provide a “role-model,” as we say nowadays; but the human self has no naturally

given role like that of “motherhood” in the gorilla example. The model is freely chosen even when it appears to be given and accepted automatically in the regular course of life. “Wherever a self-consciousness is the object, it is just as much ego as object.—Herewith the concept of *Spirit* is already present for us.”³⁷

It follows that in the evolution of social life, the concept of spirit is first present in the setting up of *heroes*. It is crucial to remember that *Gegenstand* here means the objective of desire. A self-consciousness can only be my *Gegenstand* because she is what I want to be. No doubt Hegel was as tradition-bound as most of his contemporaries; when he says in paragraph 176 that the object of self-consciousness is living self-consciousness “in the characteristic quality of its segregation” he is thinking of girls choosing female models, and boys male ones. But the logic of his argument does not require this. Now that the community has appeared on the scene, as “the absolute substance, which in the complete freedom and independence of *its* antithesis, namely of distinct self-consciousnesses subsisting on their own account, is their unity,” this is transparently clear. Even the community that Socrates calls “the true city” after Glaucon has described it as “a city of pigs”—the most primitive community of families, or the minimal social form of that “something other than it is to which life points” (in par. 172)—must preserve the memory of its dead in stories; and it can bring to birth a Faust of either sex.³⁸ Antigone does not *want* to be Faust, but through the cunning of Reason—operating upon her own imperious wilfulness—she finds that she has acted that part willy-nilly. Hence she is a feminist heroine, even though she was emphatically *not* a feminist.

Self-Consciousness is the *antithesis* of this substantial essence. Just as “life” as the physical environment of the Earth is the passive medium for all the human organisms that live upon it, so the ethical substance of our community tradition is the passive medium for all our self-positing efforts in the spiritual sphere. We are aware of our parents, teachers, and heroes, as other selves (even if they are dead). But this heritage of tradition upon which we all feed, and by which we are all sustained, does not have for any of us the immediate aspect of another self-consciousness. That it is a *substance* we can understand. That we could not be what we are, still less what we want to be, without it, even the case of the gorillas already illustrates. But that, as our unity, it is a greater *self* is not yet obvious. That we must recognize it as the “I that is We” (the greater *self*) and as the “We that is I” (the community that is *my* self) will only become apparent in the sequel. But this is the “concept of Self-Consciousness” as such; it is the reconciliation of the living self and the infinite living object in an overarching inversion. As the implications of my identification with another self-consciousness which exemplifies what I want to be are unpacked, we shall discover that the supposedly “supersensible” world is the real present world that we live in; or that “the spirit” is the real substantiality of our sense-experience.³⁹ But that, of course, is the topic of the book as a whole, not of the next section. Our first step on the road deals only with the dialectic of the need to put another self between the Ego as “Ego” and the Ego as “Life” (in its first moment as organic self-maintenance).

This paragraph takes us beyond the “experiences” of the rest of chapter IV. The chapter’s two marked sections will take us back first to the colorful show of the sensible world of appearance (*Diesseits*—the world of Lordship and Serfdom); and then to “the empty night of the supersensible beyond (*Jenseits*—the intelligible world of Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness). We shall only come back to the “*spiritual* daylight of the present” at the beginning of chapter V. The world of naïve Life and Desire is the world of the Ethical Substance, unshadowed as yet by Tragedy. Tragedy has its root in the *independence* of the self’s living object. So far, the independence of that object has only served to direct us towards the true object of Desire, and the right attitude towards it. But now that the *concept* of the free self has been brought to light, its *experience* can begin.

It is not easy to grasp the logic of what follows because *mortality* is a fundamental fact of Life. Everyone knows when they are putting life itself at risk. But the ideal self of choice in the sphere of Desire is the one who *ignores* this knowledge, because for the natural self-consciousness, its own *freedom* is the fundamental truth. We all know that we must die at some time; so it becomes the test of “freedom” to demonstrate indifference towards that natural necessity. Only after the experience of two free selves making a successful demonstration of this indifference to one another, does it become apparent that the freedom of Self-Consciousness requires both choices (the choice of Life, and the choice of Self-Consciousness) together. For only when the dependence, as well as the independence, of the self is admitted, does effective *freedom* become possible.

Notes

1. For a good account of the importance of Hegel’s fourth chapter see O. Pöggeler (1973, 231–298). (On the structure and logical movement of the chapter see J. Stewart, forthcoming, chap. 6, I A.)

2. This is how the “tautological” example in the *Jena Logic* fits into the phenomenology of Understanding (see *G.W.VII*, 49; Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 52).

3. A self-conscious life is implicitly an *infinite* knower. It is the *world’s* self-knowledge. R. C. Solomon (1983, 394) quotes Camus’ *Myth of Sisyphus* very aptly on the difference between the new standpoint, and that of Galileo.

4. W. Bonsiepen (1974) argued that it is only from chapter IV onwards that a proper “experience of consciousness” becomes possible. In the commonsense perspective this is not plausible. The sense of perpetual transience is just as primitively natural as the sense of “life.” But, of course, D. J. Schmidt (1988, 57) is right when he says that Hegel’s concept of *time* must be comprehended in the context of “this central notion of Desire”—his inspiration comes from A. Kojève (1969, 134–135). (The alternative ways of viewing this transition are well summarized by W. R. Schroeder [1984, 61–65]. He prefers to regard both “Life” and “Recognition” as “meta-comments.” His analysis proceeds as far as the end of chapter IV A [1984, 65–74].)

5. Hegel writes “nicht mehr als Wesen, sondern als Momente . . . und rein verschwindende Wesen sind.” The intended distinction is between “essences” that are real beings, and essences that have only an outer “show” as vanishing appearances.

6. This is the right way to translate the transition from Understanding to Self-Consciousness in the perspective of Anglo-Saxon “epistemology.” Writers educated in that tradition have said astounding things about this transition. Thus Loewenberg’s “Meredy” calls *desire* “a self-conscious posture below the cognitive level” (1965, 79); and Lauer comments that “there is no reason to quibble about” his use of “below” (1975, 93n.). I shall not quibble therefore, but roundly assert that both of them are completely mistaken. If Hegel’s science means anything, then there are highly sophisticated forms of “cognition” that are “below” Self-Consciousness; and on *any* intelligible view—not just Hegel’s—it is impossible for a state that deserves the name “Self-Consciousness” to be “below the cognitive level.”

Solomon, on the other hand, opines that Hegel “does not distinguish theory from practice” (1970, in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 145)—in spite of the fact that Hegel puts “desire” at the beginning of a new chapter, and insists that the “object” of Self-Consciousness has *two* senses. At this distance of time we can all grasp Bacon’s point that an unlettered mechanic may understand what real knowledge is, better than a learned Aristotelian. But even a self-proclaimed “existentialist” finds it hard to credit that a medieval serf *knew* what “knowledge” is better than the professors of “epistemology” who are misguided enough to wrestle with “Hume’s problem” (instead of admitting that Hume has the “answer” to *that* “problem,” and hence that we must begin again).

One student who got the “new beginning” right was Marcuse. His claim that “the first three sections of the *Phenomenology* are a critique of positivism” is a one-sided oversimplification (as we have seen). But Hegel’s remark about being now in the “homeland of truth” implies his agreement that

there is, in the last analysis, no truth that does not *essentially* concern the living subject and that is not the subject’s truth. The world is an estranged and untrue world so long as man does not destroy its dead objectivity and recognize himself and his own life “behind” the fixed form of things and laws. When he finally wins this *self-consciousness*, he is on his way not only to the truth of himself but also of his world. And with the recognition goes the doing. He will try to put this truth into action and *make* the world what it *essentially* is, namely, the fulfillment of man’s self-consciousness. (1954, 113).

Paul Redding, in criticizing Kojève (1991, 187) puts the truth even more radically (and correctly). Hegel rejects “the idea of any primary theoretical consciousness of the world.” *Begierde* does (as Judith Butler says) “undermine the postures of indifference and dispassion” (1987, 1). Hence, the posture of the Hegelian scientist is one that accepts and absolves desire.

7. It is a mistake to say—as Lauer does (1985, 186)—that the motionless tautology is “solipsism”. This “motionless tautology” is satisfied self-awareness: “it is empty, and as such covers, or is manifested in, all the various activities of the body in which it inheres. As an empty thought-construct which subsumes particulars under it, the ego is in Hegelian parlance a ‘universal’” (J. McCumber, 1989, 35). But Self-Consciousness cannot *be* motionless—except as the comprehension of a circling motion that continues to circle. So a “motionless tautology” could not be a self at all. The reflective position of simple self-identity is actually impossible, as Hegel points out in *Enz.*, section 424. The chapter shows how the simple *desire* to remain a “motionless tautology” involves self-contradiction. When the “other self” of self-conscious desire is recognized as “the Unchangeable” consciousness becomes *necessarily* “unhappy.”

I do not think that D. Berthold-Bond's view of the tautology as Freud's "primary narcissism" is very helpful *generally* either (1990, 371); but it fits into its *particular* place in the commentary on paragraph 172 below. The remarks in his book about "desire" in the metaphysical tradition (1989, 68–71) have a greater range of useful relevance.

By far the best attempt to relate Hegel's concept of "Desire" to the theories of Freud that I have read is that of P. Ricoeur (1970, esp. 459–493). He has grasped and stated clearly both the basic contrast in their concerns (the contrast between "archaeology" and "teleology") and the common ground that makes the contrast interesting and fruitful. This common ground is constituted by the Freudian concepts of "identification" and "sublimation." (Any reader who ponders my own—hopefully commonsensical—use of the concept of "identification" in expounding Hegel's ethics, will easily understand the grounds of my judgment on this question.)

8. Aristotle said that all three parts of the Platonic soul were orectic (*De Anima* III, 432b, 6–8). We shall find that this is the best clue to Hegel's theory of *Begierde*; and since *Begierde* is only the first rung of a ladder with many rungs, the parallel between the *Phenomenology* and Diotima's ladder of *eros* (in the *Symposium*) becomes too obvious to be ignored (cf. Shklar, 1976, 23–28).

9. There is a good short discussion of *Begierde* in W. Marx (1986) 27–29; for a detailed discussion see K. Kozu (1988). Hegel used it originally for the *animal* level of our nature (see *G.W.* VI, 207–208, 241–244; and *G.W.* VIII, 164–166). But in the *Phenomenology* it appears in association with "labor"—which indicates its essentially spiritual status. I think my Platonic analogy explains the transition. P. Preuss (1982) thinks there is an *obvious* breakdown of methodic continuity here. Desiring babies don't have physical science behind them. But see the response of P.A. Simpson (forthcoming, 1993 thesis, 87–88).

G.J. Hayim (1990) treats "Consciousness" as the state of "Need" that leads logically to "Desire." This is surely a mistake. Consciousness "needs" nothing (except "to understand"). It is certainly as much male as female (and in Hegel's personal view, perhaps more so). The proper consciousness of "need" is the birth of the *separate* self.

10. The crucial point is that "Life" is a conscious but not a *self*-conscious state. To read it (as Marcuse did in 1932; see 1987, 228–248) as the all-inclusive concept, is to turn the truth upside down (in the commonsense way that is natural to Marxists). It is "Self-Consciousness" that is the all-inclusive concept of experience—"the homeland of truth," as Hegel says.

Flay's distinction of three *senses* is valuable (1984, 83). But we must look in the opposite direction from the one he chooses. Only his second sense (the universal immortal organism of Understanding and the singular mortal "consciousness" of it) belongs to Hegel's concept here. Flay's first sense ("That's Life!" or "Life is full of surprises") is synonymous with "Experience in general"—i.e., it is the concept not of "Life" but of the "Self-Consciousness" that has just come to itself as the "homeland of truth." In other words, it is the concept of "Experience" in the Introduction. Flay's third sense ("life as the actual activity of living") is the immediate *self*-consciousness of the mortal living organism.

The error that Marcuse bequeaths to Flay arose from Hegel's use of the concept of "Life" as the name for the comprehensive totality at Frankfurt. Hyppolite drew attention to this (1946, 144–145; 1974, 149–150). He avoided Marcuse's mistake himself, and rejected Marcuse's view; others were less careful (because of the *Mittag des Lebens* in the *Difference* essay, and other similar uses of the Schellingian rhetoric of the Identity Philosophy—for which see I. Görland, 1966, 54–56). But he failed to point out that even as early as 1798 Hegel made the crucial substitution of "Self-Consciousness" for "Life" in his revision of the "Spirit of Christianity" (Nohl, 302; Knox, 253). This is the usage of the *Phenomenology*.

There is, of course, both unconscious (plant) life, and an animate life with “self-feeling.” But they do not concern us until we reach chapter V. H. Brockard—who is concerned with the *Logic*, not the *Phenomenology*—is quite good on the “models” of “Life” in Hegel (1970, 159–167). J. Loewenberg (1965, 77–83) is on the right track (but “analogy” is not the relation between “Self-Consciousness” and “Life”). E. Fink (1977, 100) is eloquent but (to me) unintelligible.

It is important to remember that in the *Science of Logic* “Life” is the initial category of the Absolute. Those who can discover in M. Greene’s (1980) discussion of this category the conceptual significance that R. Ahlers (1980) found in it may disagree with my argument here. (As is evident from my comment on Greene’s essay, I did not see what Ahlers saw; and I still cannot. At the time, I dodged the whole problem.)

11. In my essay on “The Concept of Recognition” (1981, 240) I tried to read the assertion that “the object of immediate desire is a living thing” in a sexual sense. That was a mistake. The object of “immediate desire” is the living whole upon which we must depend for the satisfaction of all of our desires—and especially for the self-preservation which is the most primitive of them. Sexual desire is the *second* phase of that primitive need. (My mistake has been pointed by K. Koza—1988, 175n.)

12. This “absolute” dimension is only *implicit* at present. *Religion* is a mode of *Self-Consciousness*, which is exactly what “Life” (as the ultimate *object* of Understanding) does not have. But it will be apparent to all students of the Frankfurt manuscripts that the religion of Life as the infinite harmony of Nature is Greek religion. Its Self-Consciousness is Art. Antigone is the figure of the breach that the singular self-consciousness makes in that harmony. The Athena of the *Eumenides* is the figure of the universal self that makes the infinite motion which maintains the living harmony of the natural order inverted into aesthetic freedom.

13. See especially *G.W.* VIII, 120, lines 21–22; for a more detailed account of Hegel’s doctrine of organic life at this time, see *Night Thoughts*, 446–466. The life-principle is the *Seele*. For the relation between *Seele* and *Bewusstsein* both in the *Phenomenology* and in Hegel’s Berlin writings, the best discussion is certainly that of R. Wiehl (1976). For an account of the emergence of “consciousness” in the *systematic* perspective see M. Greene (1979).

14. Antigone expresses the inversion in its immediate shape perfectly when she speaks of “the unwritten and unshakeable edicts of the gods which mortal proclamations cannot transgress. For they live not today and yesterday but forever and no one knows whence they appeared” (Sophocles, *Antigone*, lines 454–457). When this one-in-many law (the Greek neuter plural takes a singular verb) is called the “edicts of the Gods” it takes on the form of self-consciousness. But this self-consciousness is self-sublating. Antigone’s fundamental stance is that of an observer acknowledging the quite impersonal “law of nature.”

15. *Republic*, 592b. This is the completely objectified form of Hegel’s “self-equivalent self-standingness” here.

16. *Timaeus*, 37d–39e.

17. “Membership in the substance” cannot yet refer to the constitution of a voluntary community since the struggle for recognition is essential to the “being for self” of the individual self-consciousness that is a free member of the ethical community. But the remark that “the fluidity cannot sublimate the *unterschiednen* if they do not have a *Bestehen*” might be taken to imply that Hegel is speaking of a *tribal* community made up of separately subsisting families. This reading is ruled out by the way that the argument develops. What has to have “permanence” is a *polarity*. Hence the *Unterschiede* are the two sexes, and the *unterschiednen* are sexed mortals. The natural community that Hegel is thinking of is a breeding group of

families. This “state of Nature” is an artificial logical construction like the City of Pigs in Plato’s *Republic* (II, 369b–372d). (For some interesting insights into the relation between the phenomenology of Desire, and the evolution of objective Spirit in the *Philosophy of Right* see K. D. Forbes, 1992.)

18. *Symposium*, 189d–193a.

19. Miller’s “passive separating out of the shapes” is more literal (and hence more forgivable) than Baillie’s “quietly, silently shaping and moulding and distributing the forms in all their manifold detail.” But it is just as disastrously mistaken.

20. We must construe the clause in this way (“denn sie ist itzt für den *Unterschied* . . . das Leben als *Legendiges*”) in order for it to serve as a justification or explanation of the first clause.

21. Since Hegel certainly did not *mean* to have a child by Johanna Fischer, this is one “experience of consciousness” that he lived through himself. This seems to me to be a convincing argument in favor of his holding the view that I ascribe to him.

22. See especially the fragment on “Love” (Knox, 302–308, Nohl, 378–382).

23. *G.W.* VI, 303, lines 12–13; Harris and Knox, 233. The same doctrine is present though not quite so explicit in the “Real Philosophy” of 1805—which is part of the system that the *Phenomenology* is designed to introduce. (See *G.W.* VIII, 212–213; Rauch, 109–110.)

24. The simple pursuit of sexual enjoyment is, in fact, the “pure process of the shapes.” This is still not enough to constitute the “whole” of life, when it is “simply grasped together” with the moment of their being-for-self. (This is shown by the summary of the whole cycle in par. 172.) On this view, the simple *Zusammenfassen* of the moments is the *Gestalt* of “Pleasure” in Pleasure and Necessity (pars. 360–366).

25. This is where *Begierde* is “primary narcissism” (cf. note 7 above). But this is a “natural” (or “animal”) impulse rather than a properly *human* experience. The whole development of “egoistic hedonism” is the primitive phase of “instinctive Reason.” It is not properly “Reason” at all, until it begins (in familial identification) to be “other-regarding”—cf. Hegel’s chapter V B(a). This point about “natural” *Begierde* was clearly grasped by Di Giovanni (1984, 202–203).

26. It seems to me that Hegel shows in this first section of chapter IV that primitive “self-certainty” *cannot* be of the Cartesian kind. (The Cartesian interpretation of self-certainty emerges and comes to grief in chapter V). Therefore the critique of W. Becker (1970, 28–78) rests on a misunderstanding.

On the other hand, it is clear that we ought not to use the word *existieren* about subhuman life (because “existing” entails reflective consciousness). But in point of fact the *Gattung* “is there” as a “simple being” in many mammalian and avian species. Pairs mate for life, and care for the young together. In the *rational Gattung*, however, this “simplicity” is sundered; and Hegel’s argument seeks to show why the sundering is *necessary* for the existence of Reason.

27. We have to remember that this time *Faust* existed for the public only as the “Fragment” of 1790. (Part I of the Tragedy appeared in 1808.) Hegel rightly treats Faust as the *Gestalt* of cultural rebirth (in “Pleasure and Necessity”). A repetition of the stage of simple Appetite is involved, because it is only the fate of the selfish Ego that is explicit in the fragment. But the difference between the emergence from Nature and the emergence from Culture can be seen in the very passage that Hegel quotes (par. 360). The Ego we are dealing with here has had no opportunity to discover that “*Verstand* and *Wissenschaft* are the supreme gifts of man.”

28. For a discussion of this transition as Hegel presented it in the *Encyclopedia* see M. Greene (1987) and John McCumber (1987). We should notice that self-consciousness on its first emergence from nature does not, like Faust, have any theoretical Understanding, although *we* as philosophical observers and as students of Hegel's text must certainly have it. The natural self is aggressively oriented toward consumption in order to demonstrate its own truth to itself. Faust is a consuming force and an aggressor, but destructive consumption is not his *object*. He regrets it, but finds it to be the unavoidable means to his end.

29. Only the establishment of a life-threatening authority transforms labor into something *undesirable* but *inevitable*. As long as I am working for the satisfaction of my own natural desires, I am in the sphere of simple *Begierde*.

30. The comment about "the sublation of this other which displays itself to it as independent life" could be taken as an anticipatory reference to that impending *second* experience. But if we take it in that specific sense, the "experiences" get out of order. What the free self experiences "in this satisfaction" (described in par. 174) is "the independence of its object" (par. 175); and that is the result of the *first* experience. What is described in paragraph 174 is the general relation of self-consciousness to "life" before any experience in which its "truth" is tested. It is not even "natural slavery" that is meant (though that *would* be comprehended here) but the *lordly* attitude to "life in general."

31. *Leviathan*, chapter VI. The (immediately preceding) definition of *felicity* reads: "Continual success in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continual prospering, is what men call FELICITY." (The influence of Hobbes upon Hegel's conception of Desire as a purely *self-seeking* urge is unmistakable. But he reads Hobbes with the eye of Plato's Socrates.)

32. We should recall at this point the discussion of *Bildung* in the *Preface* (par. 28). There is no legitimate way in which the self-referential form of desire (*désir du désir d'un autre*), which both Kojève and Hyppolite tried to read in here, can be extracted from Hegel's text either here or anywhere else in this section. This is the Gallic equivalent of Findlay's Henry Jamesian fantasy. Desire is "immediate" (and correspondingly straightforward). The contrast Hegel makes between "desire" and "recognition" in paragraph 182 shows that desire as such is quite indifferent to the fact that its object may have desires of its own. The "desire for another self" is the desire *to have* another self than the self that one has. Indeed, Desire can only be seen as the initial shape of Self-Consciousness (for which the truth criterion is "I = I") because the "desire for another self" is the comprehensive "shape" of "desire" (i.e. it absorbs and conceptually cares for the more primitive cases of hunger, thirst and sex).

Gadamer pointed out the error in the French interpretation (1976, 62n.); and he provides the references; cf. also M. Roth (1988, 97, n. 10). But the error has infected even P. Ricoeur (1970, 466); and Gadamer's own reference to *Faust* (Smith, 60, Part I, line 3250: "in pleasure I thirst for desire") is out of order for the same reason. (Compare also E. Fackenheim, 1967, 41n.) My own comments about the Faust model must be read with this restriction in mind; the primitive natural self is as insatiable as *Faust*, but it would not *say* what Faust says. Faust's "thirsting for desire" belongs to "Active Reason," where Hegel himself appeals to the *Faust* model. Even the *désir du désir d'un autre* is in place there; Faust and Gretchen both experience it.

33. The three levels of Desire (integrated as a circle) give us the basic structure of the "natural consciousness." Cf. P. A. Simpson (forthcoming, chapter 2, sec. 2(c)). Plato's discussion of the "desirous part of the soul" also provides an important distinction which Hegel's discussion depends on (although he makes no explicit reference to it). In Book IV

of the *Republic* Plato insists on the distinction between simple thirst as the desire for drink, and the reflective desire for *good* drink (437d–439d). Hegel's distinction between the unconscious processes (or instinctive drives) of the living organism, and "desire" as the primitive mode of *self*-consciousness, shows that he realized how important Plato's point was. Kant and Fichte distinguished sharply between "nature" and "freedom"; and because they identify Reason with "duty" they often write as if "inclination" were "irrational." Hegel's *Begierde*, on the other hand, being properly the self-conscious urge towards health and happiness, is a form of Reason. This will be confirmed when we come back to it as the *social Gestalt* of Pleasure and Necessity in chapter V.

34. See the references in note 23 above.

35. Lasson 426; Harris and Knox, 111. Seen in this way, the image of one Ego offering itself freely to another as its soul-food here, is the proper complement of the rigorously disciplinary and unequal *Gestalt* of *Bildung* as it appears in chapter VI of the *Phenomenology* itself. (Kojève's thesis that Desire becomes "human" when it addresses itself to a non-natural object is a generalized form of this reading. In this form it has become widely influential—especially, for instance, in the work of J. Lacan. See for instance M. Borch-Jacobsen, 1991 and J. P. Butler, 1987, 186–204.)

36. This "characteristic segregation" was still valid for the comprehension of Hegel's own time. But the movement from his time to ours has shown that it is the Platonic shape of the Genus that belongs to "Science as such."

37. R. Valls Plana (1971) has attempted to interpret the *Phenomenology* as a social theory of knowledge from the beginning. It seems clear both from the Introduction, and from paragraph 167, that this is not what Hegel himself intended; but the results, though only a reflective *extension* of Hegel's approach, are certainly interesting.

38. *Republic* 392d–e (the whole page is worth studying). Heidegger's view (in *Sein und Zeit*, 1957, 428–436, esp. 433) that Hegel's concept of time is reflective, and that "Spirit" must be understood as an abstract relation between the I and the Not-I, flies in the face of Hegel's clear declaration that Spirit is "an I that is We." His mistake has been examined several times in the Anglophone literature—see for instance, H. Trivers (1943) and J. Surber (1979)—but I do not remember anyone making this point.

39. The arising of the *Concept* of Spirit is the crucial turning point *for us*. But there is a great circle to make before the significance of it will be clear to the observed consciousness. That must be borne in mind when we are considering the thesis of O. Pöggeler (1973, 243) about paragraph 177. (This view is further supported with some sound arguments by S. Dellavalle [1992, 22–24.]

Spiritual recognition is essentially linguistic—cf. J. Burbidge (1982). But we "step into the spiritual daylight of the present"; so we do not leave sense-experience itself behind. Rather, it changes its status because we stop thinking in the two-worldly way that degrades it. Instead of being a "colorful show" it resumes its commonsense status as the real world of *Sachen*. There are "more *Sachen*" in the philosopher's world than in the peasant-woman's. But they both live in "the daylight of the present."

Chapter 8

The Judgment of Self-Consciousness

IV A: Independence and Dependence of Consciousness: Lordship and Servitude

Life and Desire (like Sense-Certainty) are embodied concepts. At this primitive level of experience, we cannot distinguish between the Concept and the Gestalt.

Life is necessarily embodied. The experience of Life is the discovery of what the evolution of the natural Gestalt involves. Desire on the other hand is the freedom of this physical embodiment. We shall soon see that there is no freedom from it. The evolution of Desire is the discovery of what we want to be, if we can. But what we want is (first of all) what nature needs. When the question of what we want to be arises, then we discover our freedom within nature. But we become aware of this freedom through our relations with others; we recognize the "other self" that we desire in some other actual or remembered self.

Thus the concept of Self-recognition is born. This is the "Concept of Spirit" proper. At this point the "phenomenology of Spirit" (its logically organized appearing) can begin. This is the experience of our freedom; and our freedom is founded on the "distinction that is no distinction," the distinction between being and thought, or between force and law. The Concept can now be distinguished from its Gestalt. "Tautology" has emerged as the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness, or between the self that I am, and the one that I want to be. But the fact that the other self in whom I recognize what I want is just as free as I am, poses a new problem. The freedom of both sides means that their tautologous "identity" contains a polar "contradiction."

We have reached the stage where immediate self-consciousness (as the rational Concept of Desire) divides into a Judgment. The self primitively wants just to be itself. But the experience of naturally conditioned wanting teaches it that it can only achieve the free selfhood that it truly wants, by setting the self of another as its goal. That is the only goal that it can freely desire and choose. To have this "other self" as one's objective is to recognize the other as one's true self; and this recognizing is free (that is why this object is seen to be my true objective as distinct from other objects).

(a) The Concept of Recognition (Platonic Education)

- 1./178. Self-consciousness exists in and for itself in as much as it exists so for another, i.e. it is recognized to be in and for itself. Recognition, however, is a conceptual unity of oppo-

sites, and because it is the essence of self-consciousness to be the opposite of the way it is posited, the moments of this Infinity have to be kept strictly distinct while always signifying the opposite too.

This section is headed A because it deals with the initial Concept of Self-Consciousness proper, and with its first “experience” as “Spirit.”¹ But it is the *second* phase of Hegel’s chapter. It is what Hegel distinguishes in his logical theory as the phase of *Urteil*—the “original division.” Recognition is a “concept”; but it is explicitly *divided*, i.e., it is a relational concept involving two opposite sides (a Judgment, or an original parting in two). The more primitive Concept, for which this two-sided relation “recognizing/being-recognized” is the judgment, is that of Self-Identity, the formal principle of Self-Consciousness, or the abstract certainty that “I am I.”

The question “what then am I?” leads to the discovery that I am *not* this living cycle of natural needs and satisfaction. My primitive self-certainty springs from the transcendence of that; so I must recognize my true self (my concrete freedom) in what some other self has known and done. But now the problem is “what is really I, and what is other, in this recognition?” In this way my self-concept becomes a “self-judgment,” just because it *has* to appear to me as an “objective.” No matter how free and spontaneous my relation with the other may empirically be, I am properly my own judge all the time. I have to decide, to choose what is to count as *me*, and what is to be rejected. The Concept (my self-concept) is in motion as soon as “self-recognition” emerges as the resolution of the problem of the self as Desire. All of the complex interactions of selves in society must now be studied as aspects of, or contributions to, the selfhood in which I shall finally be able to recognize myself absolutely.

When someone else actually wants to teach me just what I want to know, the freedom of both selves is explicit. This is the *simple* shape of the concept of recognition—the identity or “tautology” of Concept and *Gestalt*. If I do not have this relation with someone, I can be a blindly free (Faustian) ego, floundering from one desire to another, determined only to prove that none of these goals is really what I want; but I cannot know what freedom is. Hence it will be the Serf who presents us with the first *Gestalt* of Recognition. He recognizes the self that he desires to be; and the *contradiction* between his desire and the discipline he is subjected to, is the beginning of the resolution of the ambiguity in the “resting” concept.

This ambiguity is easy to see. We have only to ask: How is the harmony of two desiring selves established and maintained? Who is really *at the disposal* of whom in this teaching and learning? Is the other really negating herself, and am I really affirming myself? How can either of us be sure? These concepts of negation and affirmation are dialectically inseparable. They are a unity of opposites. In other words recognizing and being recognized is an actual infinity. “Recognition” is the Concept of Spirit as such.² We are going to observe the motion of this Concept which is a “many-sided and multi-significant complexity.” And while we must keep the opposite moments clearly separated, we must always be conscious that what

appears (or is posited) as one side of the concept is inwardly identical with the other side; every disharmony, every difference, *must* produce a contradiction, because the opposed selves will not recognize themselves in what they observe.

The first step on our way will be the “struggle for recognition.” My insistence that the other must recognize me springs from my regarding myself as (or from my being certain that I am) the Faustian ego that aims to determine itself and not to be determined. This struggle goes to the death, and it is traditionally thought of (i.e. “substantially recognized”) as a masculine affair. When we come to it, I shall use masculine pronouns for it, because the project of a “phenomenology”—a science of how the spirit has actually appeared—requires the acceptance of this historical standpoint. But we should remember that Plato, the first philosopher who examined this Homeric criterion of “excellence” critically, insisted that it ought to be universalized, and not accepted in its natural (or sexually determinate) form; and Hegel’s own insistence on the “infinity” of recognition, in all of its variegated social forms, shows that—whatever his personal opinion may have been, as a Württemberg notable who later married into the old German commercial nobility, and occupied a high position in the Prussian civil service—he is logically compelled to agree with Plato. The doctrine that what we *are* is proved, in the *last* judgment, by what we are ready to die for, is not sexually limited (just as the class of those who are excluded even from Dante’s *Hell* because they cannot make any such ultimate decision is not limited either!).

- 2./179. Self-consciousness sees itself in another. The double meaning of this is: *First* “I have lost myself in this other” and *secondly* “I have sublated him because I see only myself in him.”

Hegel develops the ambiguity of recognition from within the dialectic of self-judgment. When I recognize what I want to be in someone else, then I have “come out of myself.” The attraction (which is all that was attended to in the desiring posture) reveals itself first to be “self-repulsion.” The self that I presently am, I do not want. My true self is “out there.” I have *lost* myself. Empirically I could be in despair. Those who recognize their ideal self in another sometimes are in despair. But logically the other side of the truth is more dangerous. As the object of my *desire*, what I see out there is not another independent *self*, but only a passive essence waiting for me to take possession of it. Actually, however, my relationship with that other self is more complicated. The self I want to emulate is not simply an object. she has to make herself into an object for my sake. If I am to know how to achieve what I want, she must help me. she must negate herself willingly and be at my disposal. But she may not see herself as the self that I see; or she may not want to be that. Above all, she may not want to help *me* to become that self.

Again I am anticipating—Hegel does not begin to consider the independence of the other until paragraph 182. All that is strictly relevant at this stage is that what appears as the loss of myself, *is* necessarily the real loss of the other one. I have to treat the other as an object, not as a self. The fact that the self I see in her may not

really be her self (in several different senses) is only the empirical manifestation of the logical fact that what I am seeing is not her but *myself*. I am seeing only a universal essence in her (whatever her own active attitude to that essence, and to me, may be); and I am seeing it as “mine” in principle. That essence is my goal, the object of *my* desire. All that is positively new in this paragraph is that I am now aware of the self-repulsive aspect of this attraction. In this finding of myself, I feel that I have lost myself. What is negatively new is the recognition that I can have this experience of finding myself in another without any regard to the other’s attitude to me and my selfhood at all.

In the *simple* concept of the self as Desire, the identity of Desire and satisfaction is taken for granted. The other self that I desire is precisely the one that willingly negates herself to satisfy me. she wants to help me learn what I want to know. But there is *no* logical reason why she has to want that. That (not my despair) is what is dangerous.³

- 3./180. Self-consciousness must turn self-loss into self-possession. It must take over that other self, and it must transform its own self.

In paragraph 180 the danger begins to become apparent, even though all that Hegel does is to spell out the movement of self-conscious desire, seen from both sides, instead of simply. The “other” is a self-standing essence; when I want to take over her form, and to make use of it as material, she can resist. Even in the evolution of natural desire, the object resists as soon as we get past mother’s milk. But now we shall encounter resistance of a new kind.

This is only one side of the problem posed by my truth-imperative. I set myself to reduce the other’s independent essence to my “inorganic nature” without regard for whether she is willing or not. The new perspective that is brought out in this paragraph is my recognition that if I am to become a new self, I must make over the old one. This is the aspect of desire in motion that was not explicitly recognized when self-conscious desire found its adequate object, and ceased to be perpetual motion. We are still only seeing the self-concept as a pure concept, i.e. as an infinite unity of opposite moments. In the moment when it is in motion, what is crucial is that it must sublimate the self-standing status of its object, just as if the other self were only an apple on a tree. The other self will not literally be consumed like an apple, but it is treated as a mere tool. On the other hand, even if it submits to be a tool, it is not used like one, for I use it not to change the world but to change *me*. The sublation of the other self for use as a tool is equally the sublation of myself into usable raw material to be worked on.

- 4./181. This ambiguous sublation is an ambiguous self-possession: I recover myself when I give the other back to himself, let him go free again.

All the dangers implicit in one self recognizing itself in another can be resolved if the self can achieve its desire. But even to know when the desire is achieved requires attention to the two-sidedness of the process. If I can make myself into

what I saw objectively in the other, then I shall not regret my old self that has been repelled, and has really been lost; for the self that I wanted, because I could see it out there, is now mine. And in realizing my new self I have not taken anything away from the other; I can afford to let her go.⁴ I must do so, in fact, since she is still the measure and confirmation of my satisfactory self-identity. If I cannot still see in her the mirror image of the essence that I have actively become, then (no matter how much I may be like what she was when I began) the whole process was a mistake, because no infinity has been achieved.⁵

What I supposed that I was seeing objectively in the other was a wholeness, a self-equality that I desired. If it was there to be achieved, then it cannot have been destroyed or damaged by its proper duplication. But the ambiguities implicit in the fulfilment of this process are legion. Even in the “Faust Fragment” of 1790 Goethe already puts the problem plainly. The Earth-Spirit, the infinite whole of the life-process, tells Faust that he must seek the spirit he can comprehend—and Faust collapses in shock muttering “whom then? I, image of the Godhead!” The rest of Hegel’s book can be regarded (in terms of the problem posed by his logical ideal) as an attempt to show what it means to be *Ebenbild der Gottheit*.⁶ But whatever disappointments there may be in the search for the other in whom we can truly comprehend ourselves, the logical validity of the criterion is unassailable. When we successfully comprehend ourselves as free, the other goes free automatically.

- 5./182. All of this ambiguous activity is just as much “his” as it is “mine.” Recognition is not like simple desire, for nothing can be done to the other that he does not do to himself. Thus each *sees* the other do the same as he does. Each does what it asks of the other.
- 6./183. So which is patient, and which is agent, is ambiguous.

The whole process proceeds as a mirror image in the object-consciousness. This is why the mutual release at the end is crucial, for without it the process could never come to a successful termination at all. The simplest way to illuminate the two paragraphs in which Hegel insists on the complete reciprocity of all the ambiguities present in the simple self-judgment of consciousness, is to take the desire that developed into this judgment and show how the ambiguity is present (and is bound to show itself) on both sides.

This case to which we are returning is more complex than the simplest and most extreme case of judgment with which the real evolution of Recognition begins in what follows. There the concept is presented to us as a simple identity of opposites, a direct contradiction. The opposition is fixed, and so the reciprocity is strictly inverted; what shows on one side is what is hidden on the other and vice versa.⁷ But Hegel himself directs our attention backwards when he contrasts the way that the object is present for self-consciousness here, with the way that it was present *zunächst* (i.e. in the first instance) for desire. Anyone who reflects will realize that the way the object is present for free desire (when the object is another self-consciousness) only differs from the way it is present here, because free desire simply does not concern itself with the point of view of the other, but takes the other’s compliance for granted. As soon as we realize that the other need not comply (or

may have a different view of what she is doing in her apparent compliance) we have reached the level of recognition. So if we look at the whole relationship between “wanting to know” and “wanting to teach” we shall see how fluid the ambiguities are in the *unfixed* concept that has not come to judgment.

“The act of the one is just as much the act of the other.” This was explicitly stated in the concept of the self-conscious object of Desire. The requirement there was that the object should negate itself while retaining its independent status. Only another self-consciousness willing to make itself into a resource for the desirous self-consciousness can satisfy this condition. But whatever this self-consciousness does must arise independently from its own desire. Perhaps she does just desire to please me. But this can only continue to be so while what I am doing pleases her. There may be a simple failure of understanding on either side. Or my demand for an answer to one question may meet with the response that first I must attend to something else. As soon as there is a breakdown of the first involuntary kind, I am forced to recognize that the other is independent, and that she must see what I want clearly in order to harmonize her activity with my desire. But as soon as there is a voluntary interruption of the second kind, I have to recognize further that the other has desires of her own, and that she can just as easily insist on those desires being satisfied, as I can insist on mine. The desire of the learner is not, in itself, *authoritative* (as Desire primitively takes itself to be). Instead of being at *my* disposal, the other can insist on my being at hers.

As long as we are both satisfying our desire, we may be in perfect harmony, while neither of us is conscious that the other is using her. Each can feel that she is fulfilling her own desire, and the other is willingly cooperating. It is only when what she wants to teach is not what I want to learn that the question of who is really “in charge” arises clearly. Then we have a problem of *recognition*: and the first question to be settled is whose desire is paramount? We cannot get back to the unconscious harmony of different desires. We must share one desire, and we must each see the other as doing what is required to satisfy that common desire. We are not engaged in two separate activities, in which each can have her own way. There is only one action happening and it belongs to both of us together.⁸

In the educational practice of Plato, for example, the teacher begins as a helpful observer of the student’s spontaneous activities. This is the level of desire recognized by a consciousness that resembles our own except that it is passively acquiescent. But when the disciplinary (and ultimately military) aspect of the Platonic educational process begins, the student finds the situation is quite the opposite of what she believed. Now “obedience” is the primary requirement. We have moved from the simple concept of self-realization (which was harmonious, only because the appearances were completely ambiguous) to the stage of judgment where the apparent situation is as clear as crystal. The ambiguity is removed, because one-half of each desire is driven inward.

This is exactly the “experience” we shall observe now when our Concept of “Recognition” is complete. It will arise through the encounter of two consciousnesses that are equally naïve, and equally resolute in the pursuit of their spontane-

ous desire. The encounter enforces recognition of the absolute contrariety of the identical object that they want. They are necessarily enemies, and their situation is outwardly Hobbesian; but inwardly their situation is only half Hobbesian. Each is driven by the urge for power; but they are not reflectively fearful or suspicious of each other; and although their encounter must produce the consciousness of “the danger of violent death” this is not necessarily or constantly accompanied by *fear*. The encounter is not the occasion for the birth of Reason, but rather the occasion for the birth of conscious *choice*.⁹ But now we are anticipating. In order to complete his account of the “pure concept of Recognition” Hegel needs to go back to the “play of forces” at this point; and we must go back with him before we can rightfully go forward.

- 7./184. The *play* of forces is thus repeated self-consciously. Self-consciousness is now the middle ground (instead of *Erscheinung*)—the self-consciousness *of the other*. The two selves *recognize themselves as mutually recognizing each other*.

When the desiring consciousnesses recognize one another we have a repetition of the play of forces. Forces both solicit and are solicited; the manifest appearance is a result of the activity and passivity of both equally. This equality is completely explicit in the poles of a magnet; but in the Inverted World (or the *infinitely* comprehensive perspective of Life) each of the “forces” must be aware of the interaction with the other as its own “play.” The Platonic education process shows us the concept of Recognition *at rest* (i.e. cycling undisturbed upon the axis of what we shall learn in chapter VI to call True Spirit).

When the pupil knows that she is being taught, and has come to trust her teacher, and hence to obey willingly, there is a harmony of activity and passivity on both sides that is evident to both of them as Self-Consciousness. Each is fully aware of doing what she wants in complying with the desire of the other. There is thus a *common* self-consciousness made up for each side by the presence of the other in its consciousness, not as an object, but as a self. This presence of the other is objective. Even at the level of Desire proper the Platonic educator, who has a desire and a goal not yet revealed to the naively desirous self whose playful self-enjoyment she is playing *with*, must play collaboratively (as well as playing manipulatively or from the standpoint of a more comprehensive consciousness). The educator has to do what the playing child (who does not yet even know that she is a “student”) desires. Otherwise the teacher’s soliciting activity will not be solicited, but resisted. This would create a new situation of recognition in which (for the period of the open resistance at least) the relation would be as equal as that between the poles of the magnet. The play relation exists because and for as long as they both know that they are playing together, and that they each want to enjoy themselves by giving enjoyment to the other. This is the sense in which even their play involves recognition. In the other sense (where the child is being *played with* by a teacher who already wants her to learn without her realizing what is happening) we have one desire using a self-conscious object that has a different desire.

But this is an interesting case because part of the object of the higher desire is to *avoid* conflict—to maintain the spontaneous harmony, while gradually abolishing the difference. Literally, the teacher aims to move the child from the enjoyment of playing to the enjoyment of learning. That latter enjoyment (as we have already seen) is the highest maturity of which spontaneous desire is capable.

Hegel makes no reference to Plato's doctrine of the "noble lie." But I have just shown how it can be regarded as a statement of the way in which the philosophical consciousness that is already at the level of explicit recognition has to operate in order to preserve the harmony and naïve integrity of desire in its development to maturity. Unless Hegel saw how the preservation of this integrity was possible, it would not be phenomenologically legitimate for him to treat such different desires as hunger, sex and learning (or self-modelling upon another) as the phases of a single evolving whole, whose dialectic does not already involve hostile recognition.

The Hobbesian individual *learns* from experience that she has desires that can be satisfied in a cumulative rather than a recurring way. This learning involves "recognition" of a kind. she recognizes her own mistakes. But just as the development of the body leads to the desire for a mate and not just the desire for a consumable good, so the development of the thinking capacity leads to the need for a model self. This other model need not be recognized as a self with its own desires. But only a self who has arrived at the higher level of recognition can negate herself *reliably* in the way that is required for this final fulfilment of desire.

In the happy family, both the husband-wife, and the parent-child relation involve spontaneous recognition. But at the level of Life Hegel treats mating as being a *merging* of consciousness. Each partner knows that his or her enjoyment involves the other's enjoyment. Each party both is and is not the other, and the identity mediates the otherness. This is the *conscious* "play of forces" as an absolutely spontaneous and equal exchange of functions and roles. As soon as this harmonious reciprocity fails—for instance in sexual violence, or sexual enjoyment that is indifferent to the enjoyment of the other—a *new* relation of recognition, a relation between self-consciousnesses *as such*, not between conscious living wholes, arises.

The further evolution of the sundered concept does not involve any Platonic influence. Plato did indeed advocate the use of the battlefield as a schoolroom, so the life and death struggle is an essential moment in his theory of the harmonious development of self-recognition as a resting concept. But he condemned the reduction of a vanquished Greek foe to serfdom; and by implication that is a condemnation of slavery *as such*, since it is clear that Plato's ideal city cannot contain any aliens who do not recognize themselves as children of the Greek Earth Mother. Everyone in Plato's City is meant to take the "noble lies" as the foundation-stone of their self-certainty. The *Republic* exhibits the still harmonious concept of Recognition (which Hegel has here analysed for us) as the conceptual foundation of "True Spirit." But now it is the bare concept (which has sundered itself both from "life" and from "desire," and has thereby become the "judgment" of the conceptual integrity of life as desire), whose evolution we are to follow. Plato's harmonized concept has a long

experience behind it. The self that we are observing has only just “stepped forth from the Earth.” It is alone in the world with no experience at all.

(b) *The Experience of Recognition (Eteocles and Polyneices)*

- 8./185. The *Erscheinung* of this pure concept of recognition, or of the doubling of self-consciousness within its unity, now begins. It displays first the side of inequality, where one moment is self-consciously recognized, and the other provides the recognition [cf. 179].

When Hegel says that the judgment will display first the side of “inequality,” he is telling us that although there is a moment of equality present in the struggle for recognition, this does not display the doubling of self-consciousness effectively. The actual struggle is the outward sign of the mediating unity. A judgment of *equality* can only be rendered in the struggle, through the death of both parties; and that does not display the doubling of self-consciousness in its oneness, but only abolishes self-consciousness altogether, and displays the finitude of life. Any judgment that effectively displays the doubling within the unity (as a conscious “play of forces” which both of the parties, and any outside observers, can *see*) must be a verdict of settled inequality. That inequality, moreover, must be the logical inequality implicit in naïve desire. One party must voluntarily recognize that it is an object for the other’s use. At the level of appearance the reciprocal interaction must be clearly divided: one side becomes the controlling desire, the other the willing instrument.

- 9./186. Self-consciousness is, to begin with, simple exclusive free agency. Everything excluded is object-for-use. But it encounters the other only as a living being. Each is certain of himself as free self but not of the other. Hence the certainty of self has no truth because it has not recognized itself in the other self. This recognition must be reciprocal.

“In their *immediate* confrontation [the two individuals] are for one another in the mode of ordinary objects.” This immediate confrontation can occur in many social contexts. But we are meant to take it *rigorously* (with *no* social context). The *immediacy* here refers to confrontation “in a state of Nature.”¹⁰ Just as Hegel presented the evolution of desire logically rather than empirically, so he now presents the evolution of recognition logically, beginning from the same moment of physical maturity where life and self-consciousness *can* separate into the simple polar opposition of judgment. This involves the setting up of an extreme situation. For just as a Hobbesian “natural man,” or a Faustian resolution, is an empirical rarity, so a struggle for recognition that involves a deliberate and recognized will to kill the opponent is an extreme that does not often occur.

Such a situation does not occur at all in ordinary life, because it violates our conception of social order.¹¹ Every one of us has to be taught to subordinate her wishes and desires to those of another; but a threat to kill the disobedient one occurs only as a rhetorical flourish that releases the violence of feeling so that the

necessary adjustment of behaviour can be secured by more rational—or at least more moderate—means.

If we begin with the self-consciousness that first opposes itself to natural life, and consider what relation it *can* have with another self-consciousness that is absolutely like it, it is clear that, *ex hypothesi*, the play of forces must begin with each of them regarding the other as no more than the living organism that he has sundered himself from. Neither is conscious of the other as having made the move to self-affirmation; but it is plain to each of them that the other is a living organism of the same sex and species as himself. How can they display to one another the move that they have both made subjectively beyond that manifest objective status? How can each objectify selfhood for the recognition of the other? Their freedom is just an “abstraction” in their respective minds; and *saying* things cannot make it objective.

We should note that this both is and is not a problem that occurs in the context of the natural community within which a desiring self-consciousness matures. No one experiences the other merely as a living object in that sort of community, and every mature member has found models upon which to mould itself. Yet such communities typically have rites of passage in which the adult consciousness proves *to itself* (sometimes alone, and sometimes before the eyes of the community) that it is now a mature self. The form of the proving ordeal varies; but if the community is a warrior culture, one that lives in a hostile relation with others like itself, then the ordeal of entry into manhood is bound to suggest a life and death struggle, because in that culture the readiness to risk one's life is an essential component of the recognized estate of adult manhood.

This reflection shows us how we must model the Hegelian encounter of one “pure self-certainty” with another. Pure self-certainty does not occur in the natural evolution of desire. The maxim “Spare the rod and spoil the child” tells us how its emergence is most efficiently prevented. But if any other community at one day's remove from one's own is an enemy that will steal one's goods, or a victim whose crops and herds are the natural means of subsistence for one's own community, then any *stranger* one meets is a living object against whom “pure self-certainty” must establish itself. How much Hegel knew about comparative anthropology is uncertain (though we do know that he was interested). But he understood why Plato's educational system involved military ordeals as the test to be passed for graduation from the lower educational level to the higher one. The Greek cities did indeed live in a Hobbesian state of war; and the real significance of that, for insight into the nature of human Reason and free citizenship, was quite different from the moral that Hobbes drew for the modern bourgeois state.¹²

- 10./187. Self-consciousness displays its independent essence, as freedom from all the ties of life. The two-sided action is first, it is apparent that he is going to kill me. Therefore I must kill him; so it is I who put my life at risk. That is how my certainty of freedom becomes “truth.” I can be recognized without proving my certainty, but then I do not possess the truth of this recognition. I must put his life at risk equally, since all life is equally worthless, and none can be respected.

It is a matter of logic that pure abstractions become actual *as abstractions* only in extreme situations. In normal life to live by abstractions is unhealthy. "Healthy human understanding" is always ready with abstract principles to justify a course of action; but its philosophical weakness consists precisely in the fact that the same principles are available to justify quite other courses, and opposite principles can be appealed to in the same situation, without anyone feeling that an absolute choice has to be made between them. "Cases of conscience" are the closest approximation to the concretion of an abstract principle in ordinary experience. When Luther said at the Diet of Worms "Here I stand. I can do nothing else," he appeared to his opponents to be a clear case of the "pure abstraction of self-consciousness," because in their eyes all that made a different choice impossible for him was his own self-will, the pride that was the original sin of our first father. But Luther added "May God help me"—which shows that in his eyes (i.e., in his devout faith and hope) what was concretely realized in his stance was the "Will of God," the abstraction that *ought* to stand as authoritative against the whole of the creation.

If we are to see "pure self-consciousness" in its abstract simplicity, we must strip away all the particular circumstances that make it possible to assess its assertion as virtuous or vicious, as sinful or as obedient. We must realize that we are concerned with the pure self-will that has been communally designated as "original sin," and that will typically designate itself as absolute virtue or duty (because it cannot have any other social justification). And we must remember the older natural community that did not dissent from this self-evaluation of pure selfhood. The society of Aeschylus and Sophocles took the view that the self-assertion, which for the sake of its own "honor" and nothing else (without regard for any communal ends that might be served by it) was prepared to face the extinction of life without flinching, was indeed "manliness" (*andreia*, *virtus*), the peculiar excellence of humanity as such. But equally we must remember the occurrence of that raw or natural self-assertion (without any self-conscious justification) which all communities have classified without controversy as one of the forms of violent crime. What we are presently seeking to isolate is a self-assertion that knows nothing of right and wrong, good and evil, sin and duty; and it does not seek honor in the sight of a community. It seeks only Hobbesian "glory"—the certainty that its own will is supreme.

This "pure abstraction" can be found, Hegel thinks, only when the object that fills consciousness is death itself. When we stand in the presence of death, all finite or reflective considerations are wiped out. In the *System of Ethical Life* Hegel treated this wiping out of all finite considerations as the principle of "honor" (in its positive manifestation as opposed to the fear of death). But a death-struggle for "honor" involves a conscious identification with an ideal self—and implicitly it involves the recognition of that identification by one's community. That identification with an other self is the *maturity* of Desire, so we must not mistake it for the simple principle of Faustian self-assertion from which the logical evolution of Desire begins. The struggle for "honor" *presupposes* a recognizing community. The "pure abstraction" that we are looking for is a will that has no goal except itself even in the face of death.

That such a will does occur in experience is not to be doubted. But what makes it indubitable is interesting. We can say with certainty that there is a self-will which is indifferent to death without being in any way other-conscious or other-regarding, because we can point to a self-absorbed determination that passes over into a blind drive—a drive that is as blind as the opposite drive of life to preserve itself can become in the condition generally called “panic.” All of the warrior cultures that cultivate the quest for “honor” recognize the special status of a warrior who has “gone out of himself” literally, and not in any Hegelian sense. He no longer knows what risks he faces or even what deeds he is accomplishing. The Norsemen called such a one a “berserker”; and from them we get the expression “going berserk” which is our normal expression for the experience. Hegel read widely both in history and in epic literature; so he probably knew of this condition.¹³ What it illustrates is two *logical* points in his argument. First the coincidence of opposites: the absolute abstraction of self-assertive will coincides with the unconscious drive of life itself; and secondly the paradox of pointing. Hegel uses the imminence of violent death to *point* at the “pure abstraction” of self-consciousness: and behold, that pure abstraction turns out to be the *vanishing* point of self-consciousness.

The protagonists of Hegel’s life and death struggle do not “go out of themselves” in this literal way; but this perfectly self-certain will is their standard of true being. The object of each party in the struggle is to establish for the other that he is a “self” whose will is more certain for him than the truth of any finite being. This is the certainty of being “free” (in the sense of not being bound to or dependent upon anything). Specifically the self is not bound to the needs and desires of its body, or even to the primitive urge of the organism to preserve itself.

We should realize that this experience can have a *positive* outcome. The trial can be suspended in a situation of *equal* recognition, as long as each combatant knows that the other really risked his life and did not flinch at the knowledge that the other intended his death. This is the knowledge upon which the free community of “True Spirit” is founded. Hegel wants us to see the difference between this knowledge and the ordinary recognized status of being a free agent. Recognition as a “person” by one’s community is the essential condition of moral life and action in Fichte’s *System der Sittenlehre*. But only in those boundary situations where one may be put to death for one’s action (like Antigone) can one’s recognized status in a system of this kind ever be converted into self-certainty.

Antigone is self-certain; but she is not trying to affirm herself. That is only what Creon believes. Antigone *displays* self-certainty (and it is part of Sophocles’ aim to show this, by contrasting her with her sister Ismene). But what she wants to affirm is the sacredness of a family status system in which her action costs her her own proper place. She differs from Luther, or from any Christian martyr, in that this result destroys for her the significance of her action. This brings us to the next step in our argument: Dying affirms nothing.

11./188. Making the certainty true through death sublates it altogether; for natural death leaves no one to be recognized.¹⁴ In killing one another the opponents only set one

another free to rot, as corpses. But what is to be consciously sublated (life and its ties) must be *preserved* in its supersession.

Going berserk would not make sense, it would only be a form of madness (as in the case of the ill-starred Ajax), if it did not occur in a social context in which the activity of the berserker is valued. Eteocles and Polyneices are probably Hegel's own paradigm for the struggle to the death. They kill one another in personal combat fighting over their shared right to the kingship of Thebes. Polyneices is like Macbeth in that Oedipus has prophesied the outcome to him; but unlike Macbeth he has a choice, for he could withdraw from the fight at that point.¹⁵ He does not do so, because the army that he has already raised depends on him for leadership. The psychology of a shame culture is thus perfectly exemplified. But what is proved by this death is not manifest to those who stood the test, and died.¹⁶ All that is manifest is failure. The attempt to affirm the independence of the self from the body only shows that at the natural level they are *not* independent.

A self-consciousness that has reached the maturity of desire can achieve a relationship of respect and trust with the opponent after a fight in which "honor" is satisfied, but both have survived. That was how Hegel envisaged the achievement of Theseus in welding together the tribes of Attica.¹⁷ The warriors who accepted his settlement all knew they were free men. They recognized one another as brothers. But this possibility of "satisfying honor" implies that one can achieve self-certainty through the *danger* of death; and that will never be sufficient as long as we are dealing with the immediate self-consciousness (which identifies itself simply as "freedom"), or the one that wants to emulate Achilles. For any breaking off of the battle by agreement is phenomenologically indistinguishable from cowardice; and even victory through the death of the opponent is not final. It only leaves the victor waiting for the next test. Self-realization through the struggle is a bad infinite; and when one becomes too old to fight one is left with "the shame of not being dead."¹⁸ The life and death struggle dramatizes the contradictory character of negative freedom as absolute knowledge.

This bad infinity may be accidentally overcome, because of the possibility of a finite shift that illustrates (incidentally but vividly) the difference between Hegel's concept of the struggle for recognition, and the "will to power" in Thrasymachus and Hobbes. As we have seen, the struggle involves the bad infinite which Plato stigmatized as "overreaching" just as much as the Hobbesian quest for the "felicity" (or the satisfying of finite desires) does; like the Hobbesian quest for "power after power" it "endeth only in death." But it can end in death without either defeat or the shame of having to give up the struggle. This is possible because one may die at the hand of an opponent whose goal is finite. Those who either cannot enter the struggle at all, or have already had to admit defeat in it, can still desire the *fruits* of victory; and if one's object is not absolute self-certainty but simply the death of the opponent, one can compass that by cunning. Achilles is shot by Paris from an ambush; he dies undefeated in the flower of his manhood, and becomes the eternal image of the pursuit of honor: "always to be the best and stand out above

others.”¹⁹ This is the “Fate” of *tragedy*. It is not really “accidental” because it is only those who cannot be defeated in open battle who are ambushed in this way. This death sets an appropriate seal on what the hero lived for.

But now, with the ideal hero dead unvanquished and unshamed, the “result” of the experience can be put into his own mouth by a poet. What appears in the experience is the logical absurdity of wanting to be free from the conditions of living existence. “Freedom” in this sense is wanting to be dead; and Homer’s Achilles, called up from Hades by Odysseus, gives the authoritative judgment upon natural death: “Rather would I be serf to another, bound to the soil, or even to a man with no property, and with not much to live on, than be sovereign lord of all the corpses that have perished.”²⁰ Hegel’s whole paragraph aims to show that self-consciousness cannot successfully exist at all except in the context of a social continuum. All that self-assertion can do by itself, in breaking free from the bondage of life, is to destroy the living organism, and thus destroy itself.

It is because this suicidal relation of self-consciousness to its own embodiment is the necessary first moment in the discovery of selfhood that Hegel can regard death as “the absolute concept.” Only when self-consciousness advances (in the mature phase of desire) to the recognition of its social ground, can the mortal struggle end without death, in the reconciliation of mutual respect. This produces a warrior caste for whom the shared ideal self of desire is Achilles. To them it does not matter what Achilles may say to Odysseus when he is called up from Hades; their life is the “pursuit of death” as “life in the *Volk*.”²¹ Death is no longer “an abstract negation” but “the negation coming from consciousness.” And without this advance, no equal recognition is possible for the will that is conscious of its natural freedom. The certainty of being for self can be raised to truth, only through the identification of the self with the other in death.

(c) *Lordship and Bondage (Classical Freedom Realized)*²²

- 12./189. Thus self-consciousness learns that life is as essential to it as selfhood. Free self-consciousness, which is self-mediating and “pure,” is tied to natural consciousness (thinghood). But the moments are initially unequal, and their reflection into unity has not yet resulted; so they exist immediately as two shapes of consciousness: lord and bondsman.

All that *can* be learned in the struggle itself is that life is essential to self-consciousness; what Achilles tells Odysseus in the *Odyssey* is part of the truth of our finite existence. The desires of life—and first the basic desire for self-preservation—must be cared for by self-consciousness. In the logical advance of Hegel’s argument, the struggle to the death mediates between the absolute desire for selfhood, and the life of finite desiring. The mediation is purely logical since the absolute desire for selfhood goes to its death; the dead self can only draw the moral when it is raised from Hades by a poet.

In actuality, the lesson of Achilles is spiritually absorbed in a different way. For if we are willing to learn this simple lesson at all, there is no need to learn it

through the mediation of the higher concept of recognition. Everyone who goes into battle knows that the end of his life is the end of his singular self. So we do not need Achilles to tell us that. The dissociation of the free Ego and its body takes place by free choice. "In immediate self-consciousness, the simple Ego is the absolute object; but for us (or in itself) this object is the absolute mediation, and has subsisting selfstandingness as its essential moment. The dissolution of that simple unity [of free Ego and body] is the result of the first experience."

Achilles in Hades has become a rational Hobbesian. But (in spite of this propaganda in the *Odyssey* for the wily survivor Odysseus) that is not how Achilles was remembered. He continued to be the ideal model of "freedom." This freedom is now *developed*, because the free consciousness discovers a solution to the problem of natural life and the bondage of the natural desires. It goes into partnership with itself in a dissociated way. Everyone in the battle faces death; and when they recognize that violent death is about to happen, they realize that they have a choice. Instead of dying, they can accept the bondage of the finite desires on behalf of the conqueror. All of us equally are subject to this bondage. Absolute freedom can exist only between meals, so to speak; so I cannot be permanently free, unless someone else labors to satisfy my natural wants. If I am intelligent enough to understand this, then I can see the point of "taking prisoners."²³ This opens up the possibility of a *choice* by those who are defeated. That is the "division of the judgment" in which Hegel is interested. The "division" is not the way out of the struggle, but the way in which a life of struggle becomes possible. It enables the primitive shape of "freedom" to become a stable *Gestalt*.²⁴

Eventually both sides of this judgment will be recognized as equally essential. Then they will be "reflected into unity" and the "infinite freedom" will be reconciled with its finite embodiment. But "reflection into unity has not yet emerged." We have here a repetition of the curious situation in Perception where the properties of things were divided into "essential" and "unessential" even though the actual thing required them all. Freedom is the essential or defining character of Self-Consciousness. The living body is "unessential." There is a "contradiction" here, revealed by the fact that two selves who both make this judgment must kill one another. But that contradiction can be avoided by dividing Self-Consciousness into the essential self who is free, and the unessential self who is subject to natural necessity. The condition of Lordship and Servitude is the life of finite desiring realized under the judgment of recognition. In this new judgment, the purely negative resolution of the contradiction in the struggle is forestalled. It is replaced by the division of the opposed moments of Life and Self-Consciousness between the parties. The first shape of Recognition is a relation between the unessential self who recognizes and the essential self who is recognized.²⁵

In the simple judgment of Recognition it is the one who dies who is the real victor. (Hence the proper *Gestalt* of the "contradiction" is a combat in which *both* combatants perish.) In the divided judgment the one who heeds the Hobbesian advice of the victorious ghost voluntarily accepts the vanquished status; he abandons the freedom of selfhood to the one who did not flinch, and becomes a

“bondsmen”—a living thing that is at the victor’s disposal. Self-Consciousness survives because the simple judgment is not pressed to a decision; and the simple judgment is avoided by the doubling of self-consciousness in opposite (and complementary) roles. The two parties appear to one another to be self-standing and dependent respectively; but since they form only one self-consciousness between them, we know already—from our study of the logic of the thing and its qualities—that they are really interdependent.²⁶

- 13./190. The *lord* is free self-consciousness mediating its relation with its own body through another consciousness (the *serf*). He has both an immediate and a mediated relation (via the other) both to things and to the other consciousness. He is related to the *serf* through the independent being; the *serf* is fettered to this being [his body] and is mastered through it. Similarly the *lord* is related to things through the *serf* who works on them for him. The *serf* only negates things by *reforming* them, i.e. he leaves them *materially* independent. The master consumes what the *serf* works up. He never has to deal with the independent aspect of things.

The simple self of Desire was only the *Begriff* of Self-Consciousness—a project that could not be realized, because of the imperious demands of the living body. It was preoccupied with hunger, thirst and sex. The Faustian Self has now broken free from that bondage to “Life.” It exists “for itself” as the Lord; and on the other side there is the self who has accepted dependence upon the living body. The essence of this consciousness is being-for-another; she is the *serf*. The origin of this division in a “struggle for recognition” is only logical, not historic. Hegel knew perfectly well that neither classical servitude nor medieval serfdom (which still survived in the Germany of his time, and was only abolished in France after 1789) actually arose from military defeat and submission. He was interested, for instance, in the work of Solon. So he knew (from the lives in Diogenes Laertius and Plutarch) that Solon’s principal reform at Athens was the abolition of debt-bondage; and he probably knew, or suspected, that many agricultural populations had originally accepted servitude without fighting. This knowledge is implicit in his treatment of servitude as the recognition of “natural” dependence in the *System of Ethical Life*.²⁷

He also knew, however, that the Spartans had reduced the Messenians to servitude by military conquest; and that, even in the lifetime of Socrates, Athens had voted to execute the adult males of their revolted ally Mitylene. On that occasion they relented; but a few years later they did execute the men of Melos (a Spartan ally), and sold the women and children into slavery.²⁸ He concentrates attention upon this aspect of the institution of servitude, not only for the fundamental *logical* reason that it illustrates the development of Desire as a concept into Recognition as a *judgment* (i.e. a concept divided into rigorously exclusive alternatives); but also because what Sparta and Athens did to their vanquished foes was emblematic of what Rome would do to the natural freedom of the Hellenic consciousness generally.

The “phenomenology of Spirit” deals with a historical process that cannot begin until the harmony of “nature” is ruptured. The recognition of the free self-consciousness in its finite singularity as the principle of absolute reality and value

does not belong to the Greek world, but to the world of the Universal Empire and the Universal Church. Thus, Lordship and Servitude as the result of the “first experience” is the hinge where the logic of the concept coincides with the *Bildung* of the *Weltgeist*. The *Bildung* of the *Weltgeist* begins with the reduction of all the “natural” communities of Europe to political submission.²⁹

The dialectic of the self-consciousness that unites the two selves who recognize one another in this divided relationship of the two moments of Self-Consciousness as an actual thing, is fairly easy to follow; and it has been well expounded by several previous commentators. The lord has the certainty of being a free self because he is recognized as lord by the serf who attends to his bodily needs. He is still the immediate concept of self-assertion; but this concept now has being on its own account because its motion, instead of being negative (and hence self-destructive), is now a syllogistic circle that returns to itself. In order to be on its own account (or *for itself*) the concept must both have immediate being and be a motion of mediation. In the recognition-relation of Lordship and Servitude the simple concept of Desire achieves this status because the lord is a self-conscious living being, whose wants are reliably satisfied without any effort on his part. He is immediately related to the objective world only in a desirable way; the world has only a pleasing or enjoyable aspect. It is harmonious with his self-will. This is because of his immediate relation to the serf, who recognizes him as “Lord,” and does his will as soon as it is spoken. In the myth of the Creation, the *immediate* relation is speech: “The Lord said, Let there be light: and there *was* light.” The same is true in the “appearing of the Spirit”—but the Lord who speaks there (and here) is a human self.

These “immediate” relations to the objective world of consciousness in speech and enjoyment are only made possible for the human Lord through his mediated relations. He simply enjoys the world; but it does not hear his word immediately, as Heaven and Earth sprang from nothing when God spoke “in the beginning.” The serf is the middle term between them. Hearing the Lord’s word, he works on the world, to bring it into harmony with the Lord’s will. The human Lord is Adam who has become “like God”; he is not expelled from Eden after all, because he eats his bread in the sweat of another’s brow.³⁰

And finally, his continued enjoyment of Eden is mediated by the self-knowledge of both. The Lord showed himself to be “like God” in the struggle; and the other learned to fear him accordingly. The serf’s fear was produced, and is maintained, by the forceful control of the world that the Lord exhibited in the struggle. It is the element of *fear* in the relation of lord and serf that constitutes the sublated survival of the life and death struggle in this new relationship. The “knowledge of good and evil” is the knowledge of who is afraid of death and who is not.

This knowledge is maintained by the lord’s continuing power of life and death over the serf’s *body*. For the serf as self-consciousness, his own living body becomes an independent *Macht* over him. It is the middle term in the syllogism of authority, just as the laboring activity of his body is the middle in the syllogism of enjoyment. Through the serf’s *labor* the lord is related to things without being obliged to recognize their independence; and through the serf’s body (a thing which the serf is

dependent upon, and recognizes to be essential to him) the lord is mediately related to the serf's consciousness.

Because the serf's body is *both* a thing, and (in its labor) a negative agency against things; and because under these two aspects it is the middle term of both syllogisms, Hegel has to consider the serf's relation to things in this paragraph too. The moment that belongs to him (in the dialectic of desire) is the one in which the independence of the thing is acknowledged. At the same time his relationship to the world of things is the negative relation of desire itself; but the desire is not his own, because he only works on things to fulfil the lord's will. So his part is to negate things in so far as they are not according to the lord's desire; and more ultimately, to acknowledge their independence when he has made them conform to the lord's desire.

The recognition of things as independent when they are the way another wants them is the climax of Labor.³¹ The serf has this relation to things in general because the preservation of his living body is crucial to him. His situation is that of the fallen Adam; it is because he acknowledges the independent being of his own body that he must *labor*; and because of his acknowledgement of dependence upon his body, the lord (who makes no such acknowledgement of dependence in principle, and is prepared to prove that when necessary) is able to control the serf's labor, and so to set aside the natural control that his own bodily needs would otherwise exercise over him. As a result of the "first experience" Adam, the first man, becomes two men. One escapes the curse of labor by becoming a warrior; the other labors for them both.

We have considered first the immediate, and then the mediated relations. Hegel follows the reverse route (and he does not specify the immediate relation of the Lord to the serf at all). The "middle term" is "independent being"; and the "independent *Sein*" of which Hegel speaks in this paragraph is the living body which proved its "independence" in the dialectic of Desire. It is also "thinghood generally" because it logically refers us to thinghood as the "inorganic nature" of the living thing, ready for consumption.³² Serfdom is the dependence created by admitting that "thinghood generally" is essential to the self because the preservation of life is its absolute imperative. For the lord, his own body is only "*a* thing." But even for the dependent consciousness "*a* thing as such, the object of desire" is *not* an "independent being." The serf labors on things because he *desires* them to be pleasing to his lord; and he eats things himself, etc. He is the first *witness* to the position of Self-Consciousness: "Consciousness is to itself the true" (par. 166).

- 14./191. Both ways the lord achieves recognition as independent, and the serf does to himself what is done to him; and what he does is always done on the Lord's authority. The essence of the action is the Lord's; the serf's action is *impure* (i.e. heteronomous) and lacks an essence of its own. What is lacking is the reflective aspect (that whatever one does to the other, one does to oneself, or vice versa).

The "two moments" of which Hegel speaks here, are the two syllogistic motions: the serf labors, and he does so for the lord, he accepts authority. Both

ways he recognizes the lord as lord. He cannot consume things or make them to suit himself; for because he is bound to his determinate *Dasein* he is bound to his lord. He is not the master either of the material that he works on, or of the body that works on it.³³ He voluntarily gives up his freedom, he accepts to be the living instrument—which is all that the body can be in the eyes of the self-consciousness that is certain of its being for itself. This is the shared self-consciousness of himself and his lord, so he does to himself what the lord does to him. His servile status is as much his own responsibility as the lord's.

We should notice that this is already implicitly a Stoic argument, since it depends on the recognition that the free man can always choose death. But we have not yet found anything worth dying for. Hegel is not saying that the serf has made the wrong choice, for we have not yet seen how choices can be right or wrong. But the serf has made one choice, just as the lord has made the opposite one. Both of them are “free.” This is their shared self-consciousness; and both of their choices are *equally* necessary to the existence of their shared self-consciousness.

Just as the serf knows mediately that he is acting voluntarily, because the lord exemplifies the opposite choice as a real possibility, so the lord knows immediately that what the serf does is what he has ordered (and is therefore mediately his). His own immediate action (of giving orders) is the *pure* one, i.e. the free act of self-assertion; the serf's obedience is in this sense not “pure.” In the eyes of the lord therefore it is “unessential.” But this is only ambiguously true. The serf's action does not have an *essence of its own*; for it would not exist without the command. But the obedient labor is just as necessary as the command. For without it the free self-consciousness would perish either in vile servitude to the body's needs or in death.

The hardest problem in this paragraph is to discover the descriptions under which “what the lord does to the other he should also do to himself, and what the serf does to himself he should also do to the other.” For instance we could say that the lord holds the serf in subjection and that the serf degrades himself to a willing instrument. But these are certainly not the appropriate attitudes to be equalized. The right answer is to be found by asking for a description of the interaction in terms of recognition. The lord should recognize himself as the serf, and the serf should recognize his lord as a serf also. This would mean that serfdom is recognized by both as “essential.” We know that *an sich* serfdom is the acceptance of the finite body and its needs. The master has to accept himself as a “living being” therefore, and the serf has to accept him as that also. Reasoning more closely from what Hegel himself says here: “the serf puts by his own being-for-self”—it follows that he should put by that of the lord likewise. In putting by his being-for-self “the serf does what the lord does to him.” Hence what the lord does is to “put by the being-for-self of the serf”; and it follows that he should put by his own. It is the view that “being-for-self” is the “essence” that is mistaken. Their shared self-consciousness (the fact that both of them know they are free) could not exist without the subservience of the serf. These two are “members one of another” and they must recognize that fact. When they do, it will be possible to see and to say that what is shared between them is the necessary relationship of body and spirit, life

and self-conscious freedom, in each single rational individual. At present both the Lord and the serf recognize Lordship as the essence. They both need to recognize Serfdom as equally essential.³⁴

(d) *The Self-Inversion of the Relationship*

- 15./192. The lord thus depends on a consciousness without essence for the truth of his certainty. His truth is not the truth of independence, but of dependence and obedience.

Truth is the *object* of consciousness. The lord has established his freedom by inserting a subservient self between himself and the driving forces of natural desire. What faces him as the objective truth, therefore, is a world in which self-consciousness exists to serve desire. That this self-consciousness serves another's desire is logical, since for the free self-consciousness all living desire is "other." But it follows that the whole objective world of this free self-consciousness is organized to serve something other than his being-for-self. Service is the truth of life. This becomes *universally* true (comprehensively inverted) when the whole life of this world is organized in the service of the otherworldly Lord in the Beyond. But even a "philosophic emperor" like Marcus Aurelius can be conscious of life in this world in the perspective of "universal service."

In battle the free self-consciousness can find the momentary certainty of self again. But that is the truth of death. At home, enjoying the fruits of peace, the lord is faced with the fact of *his own* servitude to the body in every order that he gives.

The logic of this paragraph is clear enough; and it is strictly in accord with the principles that Hegel has laid down. But it feels like a sophism all the same, so that one is inclined to think (like one of Socrates' victims) that if this is where the argument leads then a mistake was made somewhere at the beginning. And of course there was a mistake; but what matters is to comprehend it, and not to think that we have been tripped up by art (as the victims of Socrates sometimes suspected). So I have tried to show that the truth presented to consciousness is a subservient world; but the truth presented to the self is a world in which the free self has no function and no place. The subservience is not to the lord, but to his bodily needs. When we are all trying to serve God in the Beyond, the problem posed by this truth becomes patent.

The free self, as a negation, a refusal to be bound, is empty. It rejects all positive content. But what *truly is*, is what is positive. The Lord is lord of organized life. But this means that all of his lordly activity is aimed at the preservation of life just as much as the obedience of his servants is. If his orders are what is "essential," then the truth is that they are essential to what the servants do, not to what the lord aims to be. On both sides of the divided self-consciousness we have passed from the first moment (of simple self-assertion) to the moment of finite desire. The lord can go back to war, or he can go forward (as he will) to the Crusade for an empty tomb; but he cannot stay peacefully at home without losing the selfhood that is his essence.

- 16./193. The serf's condition on the other hand will reverse itself inwardly into true independence.

Serfdom is the first inversion (i.e. the direct opposite, or the exclusive alternative, to lordship). It is “outside” itself (selfhood being precisely the shared self-consciousness of both parties that they are free). Serfdom therefore takes itself to be a falsification of the truth of human freedom. But it has already been shown to be the truth of Lordship. So when it comes to its fulfilment it will go into itself and turn over into true independence. That will be the second inversion (and since it involves the externalized self’s “going into itself” we cannot be surprised to find that what is involved is an overarching movement that encompasses the opposite consciousness, the one that is inside itself (or independent) already. What is important is that serfdom will overarch lordship as a consciousness that has been “forced back into itself.” *Frustration*—not being able to express one’s “self” in the real world—is what makes self-possession truly possible.

If we look back to the phases of simple Desire, this claim loses any aspect of paradox that it may seem to have. If what the free self needs is “another self” (as an objective model to which it can aspire) then in the simple polarization of self-consciousness into lord and serf, it is obviously the serf who is lucky in what his world offers him to desire. He can desire lordship.

This comparison has another virtue. For it shows why the world will not advance beyond the immediate or polarized mode of recognition until all are equally reduced to subservience. Until then, we are bound to have a simple see-saw of the two estates. For to desire to be a lord is just to desire the frustration that is the actual fate of lordship—the experience of a freedom with nowhere to go, and nothing satisfactory to do, since the finite business of keeping alive cannot count as a proper goal. But no one who is driven by the urge to be free, will think of any other freedom than this, until this objective is quite plainly out of reach. Only then can the consciousness that has been forced back into itself begin its *internal* self-inversion into true independence. The crux was already stated in paragraph 191: both the lord and the serf must recognize that serfdom is essential. At present they both recognize the freedom of lordship, but not its serfdom. When they are both equally aware that there is no freedom without its own bondage, no freedom without voluntary service and obedience, then Reason (or “true independence”) will begin to be born. But the labor of that birth will still be long and painful. The critical moment is the discovery of “the service that is perfect freedom”; but that turns out to be a concept that unfolds very gradually.

- 17./194. The truth that the serf sees is the freedom of the lord; and he has experienced what lordship is objectively in his fear of death. This experience of absolute transitoriness is the simple essence of self-consciousness as freedom. Finally he actively achieves this independence one step at a time as he works off his dependence on nature as given.

Since we have discovered that serfdom is the first step in the evolution of freedom, and that it is the real “truth” of lordship, it cannot surprise us to find that being a serf is in and for itself the mode of self-consciousness that forms the last moment of the judgment of unequal recognition. We must expect now to see a

second inversion through which the infinite self is reincorporated within the self-consciousness that has accepted finitude. But we shall find that this reincorporation is a long and slow process which takes several intermediate forms before it reaches maturity. Self-Consciousness is the homeland of the truth. The second inversion, which begins here, occupies the rest of the book.³⁵

The serf sees the truth of his humanity in the lord. The lord is the realized concept of humanity, but serfdom itself is not capable of that fully human existence. "FOR IT" (says Hegel with doubled emphasis) "the truth is not yet *in it*." The serf is only an observer of true humanity. But he knows what negative freedom is (more reliably than the lord) because in the experience of his mortal fear everything, every commitment, desire, hope, or goal, was washed out. The pure fluidity of life itself was all that mattered then; and this pure fluidity raised into a mode of self-consciousness is what freedom is. The self as a negating power is necessarily rigid (so rigid that at the limit it loses its own consciousness as we saw). It does not *experience* the fluidity that it produces. That is the side of the experience that falls to the one who surrenders. Those who neither go berserk, nor run away, in a life and death encounter must be presumed to have both sides of the experience consciously (as an opposition of self-consciousness and life). But the identification of the self with the simplicity of courageous will is where freedom (as plasticity) is lost.³⁶

So it is the serf who experiences both the moments of real freedom. He is forced to surrender one of them to the lord, who now stands before him as the objective realization of it; but he does not suffer from the illusion that it is not essential. On the other side the lord could hardly have hung onto the moment of simple rigidity unless he dismissed the organic fluidity as unimportant.

Taking orders and accepting discipline is the very process of self-formation that is the mature object of desire. The more the serf is schooled to subordinate his desires, the more he learns what human freedom really is. Bit by bit, single step by single step, he masters the world, and becomes the architect of the world that answers to *human* desires instead of just expressing its own force; and at the same time he masters himself and learns to mould himself. He does it under orders, but he does it *to himself*. The lord does nothing to himself. But when he applies himself to disciplining the other something happens to him, too. From being a warrior he becomes an *officer* (he gives the "essential" orders). It will be the serf who becomes a common soldier; and in the Revolution the difference between officers and common soldiers will be wiped out.

- 18./195. The experience of what *is*, is not the same as being master of oneself, but labor is the way to that. Laboring for someone else's satisfaction leaves the thing as the independent essence. But consumption is transitory satisfaction, whereas laboring produces an abiding form for enjoyment. Formative activity is the *singularity* or the *pure* being-for-self of consciousness.

I have pointed to the eventual development of the military relationship between *Herr* and *Knecht*, because one of the basic meanings of *Knecht* in German is "man at arms." But, of course, the achievement through discipline of the ability to face

death is only a *symbol* of the second inversion. The sense in which the fear of the Lord turns round step by step into self-mastery is a new experience altogether. I am deliberately using the word “mastery” for it in reference to the “master craftsman,” because Hegel treats the compulsory labor of the serf as the origin of the crafts. This is not a historical thesis, but a thesis about the concept of *Bildung* in the universal society of the Roman Peace and the Roman Universal Church; in the earlier “natural” communities, personal skill evolved and became communal without any *imposed discipline*).³⁷

To begin with, the serf only knows what he is not: he is not a free man. But through his labor he discovers what it is to be a man. The satisfaction of natural desire, the aspect of our dependence upon nature that the lord reserved for himself, actually belongs to the body, the animal nature. It is sensory and hence transient; it has no objective focus that is stably permanent. Craftsmanship reshapes the form of an abiding physical thing; so the worker gets his enjoyment at the level of *perception*. What he does remains in the world to be seen.³⁸ We should notice that for the singular consciousness in agricultural work this is only true in a *cyclic* sense. The improvement of the land (if it happens at all) is a slow process perceptible only to the eye that is keen, and that cares deeply. But cultivated land goes backwards very fast when it is neglected, so the agricultural serf has a solid awareness that his labor is important.)³⁹

This formative activity of laboring under orders forms human singularity. *Singularity* is just what the urge toward self-assertion signifies or expresses. But in its simple form it cannot be self-possessed. In order to achieve self-possession, it must pass over into its opposite and return to itself from that. The self that we really possess is “another self”—the one that we have consciously molded. In the world of natural ethics, this is the Aristotelian character or ethos that is produced by habituation. And even in the natural community this self-molding would never begin if someone else did not initially compel us to do things that we had no spontaneous desire to do. Serfdom is logically significant because it provides the mediating transition for the educational image of life generally as *divine* service.

The serf, of course, is working for his master, not himself; and he is consciously forming *things*. But this labor is the real expression of the self. So, in this way, self-consciousness comes to “the intuition of the independent being as itself.” We must distinguish “independent being” from “being for self.” The objects on which the serf labors have *selbständiges Sein*. Their *way* of being, their *Dasein*, is variable, and his labor changes that. But he is not allowed to consume them, he must not abolish their *Sein* in general. The things belong to the Lord. And precisely because he has to respect it, the serf can observe the meaning of all of his embodied labor when he looks at this property that he has to treat with respect. This made object is his own activity embodied. Through the gradual maturing of this consciousness that the world is his, because he makes it, the serf will come finally to the revolutionary awareness that the land is not the Lord’s but his. This was what did happen in 1789.

But at this primitive level of self-conscious evolution the leap to that social interpretation of the first self-intuition of consciousness is premature. It causes us

to overlook the most important point that Hegel's Science has uncovered here.⁴⁰ The *selbständiges Sein* which the serf intuits as his self is not yet his *property*. He does not properly *own* even the laboring body through which lordship over him is exercised. Serfdom reduces the free human agent to a thing. The serf himself is *property* for the free self-consciousness of his lord. That is the simple and direct way in which this section on "dependent and independent self-consciousness" repeats the dialectic of Perception. In place of the one thing and its many properties we have the one free self and his many serfs.

But there is a much more significant *inversion* of Perception here. Perception "*takes* the truth from things" as they are given. But the human thing *makes* the truth of things, by controlling their properties. Serfdom is a new relation of the perceiving mind to its truth. The world of serfdom is necessarily a "thing-world," because the fear of the lord preserves its integrity and forbids the straightforward enjoyment of things as mere appearances that exist for use and consumption. The self-certainty of simple desire tells us (and the other animals) that consumption and enjoyment is the "truth" of the *Sachen* of Sense-Certainty. But the fear of the lord sublates that truth; and the result is that a comprehensive inversion of the truth of Perception becomes possible.

Because this inversion *is* comprehensive the most important aspect of it is the difference that it makes to the perceiver. The lord turns the serf into a thing; but then in his labor the serf turns *himself* into a *made* thing. He trains himself into the shape of the practical Understanding. This becomes fully apparent at the point where the standpoint of perception itself reaches its limit and breaks down. The principal concern of the serf is with the land. The lords turn the land into finite "things"—their estates. But in his labor the serf experiences the *infinity* of the Earth itself. When he has done all he can with his care and skill, he must depend on the grace of God, and *pray* for the harvest; and when the harvest is all gathered, everything begins again. Nothing changes; no new thing is created. The only important novelty is in himself. With "experience" he gets to be a better *farmer*.

It is this "made thinghood" of self-consciousness itself that is the deepest significance of the repetition of the dialectic of Perception; and this is the most fundamental import of Hegel's concept of *Arbeit*. It is foolish to think that labor can (or should) be abolished. But we must always consider what sort of *self-thing* a given shape of laboring produces.

Thus it is not the shift from the thing's ownership of properties to the self's ownership of things as property that is significant. Even the reduction of selfhood to thinghood and property is only ambiguously (and temporarily) important. It is *self-reduction* in labor to a "thing with properties (i.e., skills)" that is permanently (and hence scientifically) noteworthy.⁴¹ The serf's labor is *his* in the sense that it is inalienably his own negative activity, his pure "being for self." This pure *Fürsichsein* is the topic of the next (concluding) paragraph. The *Fürsichsein* of the serf is different from that of the lord, because it is incorporated in his body—a laboring instrument which has "independent being" for him. The being-for-self of the lord is just his commanding voice. What the *Fürsichsein* of the serf is going to be we must now consider.

- 19./196. In its destructive aspect this formative activity is just the power that was fearful. The serf follows orders but the sense he gives to things is his own. The moments of fear and service are both essential prerequisites of this formative activity, and they must be experienced in a universal way. Otherwise "having one's own sense" of what is done is an obstinacy that is still selfish.

Through the laboring activity pure being-for-self comes to be a *subsisting thing* (*zum Seienden wird*). But also the negative experience of fear is objectively expressed in labor too. For in order to give things a *new* form, labor must destroy the old one. The serf's subjective activity is now a force to be feared. In his lord being-for-self exists for him as the activity of another directed against him; in his own fear he experiences in himself what being-for-self *is*; and finally in his laboring as a destructive activity he expresses his own being-for-self consciously. Here the serving consciousness is aware that it is in and for itself.

After the lord has given his orders he disappears from the scene, and the serf is like Adam in the Garden again, lord of all that he surveys. But this garden that Adam digs for himself is *his* in a way that the one God planted for him is not. The form that the serf creates is the visible embodiment of his creative activity. So it does not appear to him to be foreign or alien just because it is out there in the world as the form of an independent being. He labors under orders. Those orders are an "alien sense." But the realization of the orders in the world is still a matter of giving "his own sense" to things. In carrying out the orders he must interpret them for himself; and it is that interpretation that is expressed in what he does: "Through this rediscovery of himself by his own efforts, there comes to be a *sense of his own*, precisely in the labor in which there seemed to be only *alien sense*."

Before we examine Hegel's argument to show that mortal fear and subjection to a lord holding life and death authority is essential to the proper experience of giving things a meaning that is truly one's own by laboring on them, we must pause to consider the apparently radical ambiguity of the expression *Fürsichsein*. As an alien "other," being-for-self is the fear-producing violence of the lord. Within the serving consciousness itself, being-for-self is the experienced fear of death; and finally in its formative activity the serving consciousness possesses being-for-self as its own. Finally (and the most bewildering thing of all), Hegel makes the claim that this formative activity *destroys* the *alien* objective negative before which the serving consciousness trembled.

That being-for-self should be a unity of opposites, that what causes fear should be perceived as an alien being for itself, while the fear is the experience of one's own being for self, is only what we should expect. This only means that free being-for-self has two sides, the rigid subjective will and the plastic objective character that is moulded by it. But what is still needed to make Hegel's account of *das Formiren* intelligible is an argument to show that the formative activity is a realization of the self by its own will. And this is exactly what Hegel claims the serf is directly aware of when he works, at the lord's command, to change the visible form of the lord's possessions.

It is because what the serf works on belongs to the lord that Hegel claims that he is “destroying the alien essence before which he has trembled.” At the end of a long process of social *Bildung* the subservient consciousness will finally turn and destroy the *ancien Régime*, the whole system of lordship before which it has trembled. But this is not what Hegel means *here*, since *das Formiren* does *not* destroy the fear of the lord. We are about to be told why the fear of the Lord is essential to it. The point is (rather) that Lordship consists precisely in the existence of an absolute identity between the lord and his possessions. Whoever touches the lord’s things in a way that offends him, must die.⁴²

The serf’s submission is the implicit beginning of ownership; and it necessarily involves the sanction of a power of life and death, because any finite concept of *contract* would require equal recognition. The immediate identity of personality and reality is necessary because the lord’s will is the only source of right and justice. His will *is* wherever he posits it. His relation with the serf, unequal though it is, does logically require him to define himself in real terms, to become a personality with some definite boundaries. That is what he does by giving orders. But he can redefine himself in this way at every turn. The serf’s one certainty is that *he* is one of the lord’s things, and that his life depends on the lord’s continuing to regard him as worth keeping. So he must not spoil anything that the lord sets him to work on. Thus the lord’s life and death authority is indeed implicit in any physical object in which he is interested; and hence when the serf works on it he is destroying the “form” of the *Wesen* before which he has trembled.

It does seem sophistical, however, to speak of this formal transformation of the lord’s things at his command as the destruction of his fearful essence. For the *fearful* essence is not destroyed. The serf still trembles if he spoils anything, or does anything wrong—and with good reason. Hegel himself insists on this when he points out that without the discipline of service and obedience the original fear “is not spread out over the conscious actuality of what is there.” So he is not fooling himself or trying to trick us. The serf’s labor has to be done in the consciousness that any failure or mistake may reactivate the mortal peril. So we must ask whether there is a sense in which the *successful* activity of reforming the lord’s things actually does somehow *destroy* the fear of the lord just for the period when the successful reforming is in progress. For it is clear enough that when the lord comes to inspect, the fear is present again.

When we restrict the difficult assertion to this narrow range, the answer emerges. For Hegel claims that in the laboring the serf discovers “his own sense” in what appears to be done according to orders (the “alien sense”). This discovery must be what he means by the “destruction of the alien essence”; it is the lord’s “essential” commands that are “destroyed”; and that is no sophism because it is the serf who understands the world of natural life and its necessities. He does not need orders, because he knows what is needful. The “alien essence” is “destroyed” by being forgotten as the serf goes about the work that he understands, and the lord does not. It can be forgotten because it is irrelevant. The English language preserves a perfect image of this destruction by temporary oblivion in the fact that as

objects of labor the farm animals kept their Saxon names (bullock, sheep, pig, calf), while as objects of desire and consumption they took on the Norman French names of the lords (beef, mutton, pork, veal). Outside of his great hall, the lord (with his supposedly essential orders) does not matter; the tasks are tasks set by nature; and Adam, since he is accustomed to labor anyway, does not need telling what to do, just because his labor must meet the need of others as well as his own. The lord represents only natural necessity.

The alien might before which the serf trembled was really Death. But his death is his life; for both of them are just the rolling world, whose shape the serf does destroy and reform. And again, Death is just the all-dissolving plasticity of life itself within him, which he experienced when his guts turned to water in his mortal fear. Finally the serf himself is a death dealer whenever he destroys anything.

Fear and service, Hegel is now about to argue, must be experienced *universally* if the process of forming things is to be self-discovery. If we universalize the meaning of *Fürsichsein* in its various shapes, we find that the argument is not a mass of sophistical shifts of meaning. The lord in his blind obstinacy at the beginning of things (his *Eigensinn* as we can now call it) was also “death”; but there we have death in its opposite guise of the simple, the unchanging, the absolutely fixed. This death-dealing power is what the serf becomes (finitely) in his formative activity. But that unites the opposite moments. The serf dissolves the old shape of things in order to achieve the new one upon which his “own sense” is fixed. So the serf is the *complete figure of the practical understanding as Death* (cf. par. 32). The warrior-lord was only the blind figure who does not know that he is killing *himself*, in his readiness to kill the other, or be killed by him.

Hegel’s reason for holding that the fear of death is essential to the right comprehension of the cycle at its finite climax is now fairly easy to grasp,⁴³ though we may not find it convincing. Without the daily piecemeal discipline of obedience, the serf would never come to regard everything he touches as belonging to the lord and hence requiring to be treated with absolute respect. We should remember how much of the world that the serf lives in, under his lord’s eye, does not require or allow any “formative activity” on his part. The wild game, and especially the deer, were preserved by very rigorous laws for the lord’s exclusive pleasure in hunting. The swineherd, shepherd or cowherd did his own work in his own way in the context of other things that he could not touch on pain of corporal punishment (and even death).

The logical result of this absolute respect (enforced by the fear of death) for the substantial being of things which the serf has completely in his charge so far as their form is concerned, is the separation of the two “arts” that Socrates distinguishes in his argument with Thrasymachus. The shepherd is a good shepherd because he understands the prospering of the sheep, not because he can make a profit from them. If the sheep were his own, then his private interest, which Hegel calls “a vain sense of one’s own,” would have to be dominant. The discipline of service creates ultimately the recognition that the object has its own good, its own sense. Because of his fear, the serf’s “sense” of the thing is not “his own” but the

true sense of the *Sache selbst*. That is why the “alien sense” of the lord’s orders was less rational than the serf’s own sense of what to do (which is not “vain”). But the serf would never have come to a sort of self-possession that is higher in principle than lordship without this alienation.

Whether fear and trembling really is the best emotional preparation for the will to do one’s best for the objective improvement of things, is abstractly debatable. It is Hegel’s view that no lesser peril can certainly establish that one is not following some whim of one’s own. The experience of mortal dread is what guarantees absolute sincerity, and makes one’s forming (*Bilden*) of the world into a “universal” activity, the absolute *Begriff*. We shall see (in due course) how the forming of the world under the authority of a life or death judgment turns into the forming of one’s own soul in the context of a *last* Judgment (of eternal salvation or damnation). And even if the Hellenic (or more precisely the *Platonic*) conviction abides with us—the conviction that spontaneous “desire” can be developed into ever higher degrees of “love,” and that love not fear is the true road to practical objectivity—still we cannot deny that “the fear of the Lord” (both the earthly and the heavenly Judge) has in fact been crucial to the evolution of our presently more fraternal (but how feebly effective) value-consciousness. Hegel’s doctrine is that absolute fear and absolute love are opposite faces of the same identical experience of freedom. Hegel is quite prepared to defend the maxim that “perfect love casteth out fear.” But fear must arise; for (as he reminded us in the first sentence of par. 195) “the fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom.”⁴⁴

What Hegel says about the “forming” (either of self-consciousness or of the world of objects) “without the first absolute fear” can be taken equally as a reflection upon the democratic consciousness of the Greeks, and upon the bourgeois consciousness of his own time. In that situation “it [consciousness] is only a vain sense of its own; for its form or negativity, is not negativity in itself; and hence its forming activity cannot give it the consciousness of itself as the essence.” In view of the fact that we are about to move on to Stoicism it is natural to regard this as a comment on the encounters between Socrates and the skilled craftsmen (and more universally as a comment on the distinction between Greeks and barbarians—who certainly included the Romans). Socrates found that the craftsmen did not have “universal culture, absolute *Begriff*, but a skilfulness that has might only over some things, not over the universal might and the whole objective essence”; and history proved this universally for the whole Greek world, before Stoicism. But the Revolution and Napoleon brought the world back to the universal discipline of fear; and this recurrence marks the final liquidation of the world of universal feudalism that was founded upon Lordship and Bondage.⁴⁵

Notes

1. There is a paragraph by paragraph translation and commentary on this first section by R. R. Williams (1992, 149–159). He does not read it in the practically-desirous way that the cumulative movement of the *Phenomenology* logically requires, but he makes an effective

contrast between Hegel's social theory of the self, and the self-intuitive theories of Descartes and Husserl. The evolution of the concept of Recognition in the *Phenomenology* has been carefully followed and expounded by L. Siep (1979, 68–131); see also J. E. Russon (1991). (There is an insightful essay by E. Düsing [1990] on the concept of Recognition as expounded in the *Encyclopedia*. In her own book [E. Düsing, 1986] she concerns herself with the evolution of the concept in Hegel's work as a whole; and she is dissatisfied both about the relation of unequal recognition [lordship and bondage] to equal recognition; and about the relation between legal and ethical recognition. Another clear account of "equal recognition" in the *Philosophy of Spirit* is given by D. A. Duquette, 1994.)

In French G. Jarczyk and P.-J. Labarrière (1987) have provided a good analytical commentary on chapter IV A, and the opening paragraph of IV B.

2. I agree with R. C. Solomon (1993, 202) that "This thesis [about self-consciousness] has remarkable affinities with Ludwig Wittgenstein's and later P. F. Strawson's claim that psychological predicates can only be learned through learning to apply them to someone else." But Hegel took over the Concept of Recognition from Fichte. For two accounts of how he did so see L. Siep (1979) and A. Wildt (1982). There is now a good account in English by R. R. Williams (1992) who (wisely) accepts Siep's view. See also Williams (1987); E. L. Jurist (1986). It hardly needs to be pointed out that the phenomenological development of the concept is all Hegel's own; but it is worth emphasizing that it is more *anti*-Hobbesian than Hobbesian (cf. L. Siep, 1974). Hegel's theory is "classical" rather than "modern." M. Westphal (1980 = 1992, chapter 1) gives a good account of how equal recognition is the foundation of the concept of freedom in the *Logic* and the *Philosophy of Right*. There is another valuable essay on this by D. A. Duquette (1994).

3. Logically, the empirical despair is like the real possibility of dying of hunger, because food is out of reach. Desire tells me that the food is there to be had, and that I must just find the way to get it. With food the problem is simple. I do not despair until my ingenuity fails me, and/or my strength is exhausted.

4. In the harmonious evolution of natural desire, the child's education takes up the parent's time and energy; but that is only what the parent wants. Each side realizes itself harmoniously. In the relation of Recognition proper, the model self may be dead; so it is obvious that I take nothing real from her. (But my community needs poets to create the immortal models.) This is the best yardstick (of equality) by which to measure the *inequality* of the recognition involved in the Lord and Bondsman relation. (The fact that the "other" must be recognized as having a transcendent—unknown—side is crucially important. For a good discussion of the relation of Hegel's view to modern French discussions [Levinas, Derrida] see A. Cutrofello, 1995, 12–20.)

5. There is an error in Miller's translation here. paragraph 181, lines 4–6 should read: "secondly, it gives the other self-consciousness back to it again likewise; for it was to itself in the other, but supersedes etc."

6. "Faust. Ein Fragment" (1790), lines 159–164. The passage reappears unchanged in *Faust: The Tragedy. Part I* (1808), lines 512–517. (This is one point about which I agree with E. Craig [1987, chapter 3], even though I regard the Romantic intuitionist presentation of Hegel that he favors as an abomination.)

7. The reciprocity of Recognition means that Lord and Serf must *share* responsibility for the institution of "serfdom" (compare *Philosophy of Right*, sec. 57 Add. which Lauer cites). Thus Lauer is right against Garaudy in denying that it is "the spirit of slavery which brings about the institution" (Lauer, 1976, 108; Garaudy 1962, 228–229). There is *no* "spirit of

slavery”; there is only a spirit of “dependence and independence.” It is true, however, that the principle of motion lies in the “dependent” consciousness—serfdom ends because the serfs rebel.

8. This is perhaps the most appropriate place to comment upon one of Findlay’s more outrageous *jeux d’esprit*. Speaking of the reciprocity of the fully developed concept of Recognition he says: “One is reminded of the Henry Jamesian world where the characters not only see each other, but also see each other seeing each other” (1958, 97). My paradigm case is, of course, not like that. But neither are any of Hegel’s own. The Unhappy Consciousness “knows” that God knows it even better than it knows itself. But of Jamesian sophisticated reciprocity (or even of self-conscious knowing rather than “faith”) there is none; and if we go back to the human lord and serf (who do indeed “see each other”) the situation is even more revealing. The Lord does *not* “see the serf seeing him” (except when he suspects the existence of an unvanquished *Eigensinn* that is on the verge of rebellion); the serf, on the other hand, must “see the Lord seeing him.” But the form of that reflexive seeing is *fear* (that the Lord may have him flogged, for example). Anything further from “the Henry Jamesian world” it would be hard to imagine. The “Sceptic” is, perhaps, a character whom one might find in Henry James, but that is because she belongs necessarily in every world of developed self-consciousness. Even Scepticism suffers a sea-change in the more nearly “Jamesian” world of “Absolute Culture.” Young Rameau is not Carneades, or even Diogenes (with whom he identifies).

9. Lauer says it would be arbitrary to say that “the first conscious relationship which one human being has to another is that in which one *dominates* and the other is *enslaved*” (1976, 104). Hegel never says anything remotely like that. But he does say that the “first experience” of *Self-Consciousness* is a life and death struggle. So we have to find some sense in which that claim is not “arbitrary” at all, but rather a necessary truth. If we take the task upon ourselves seriously, the answer is not hard to find. It is only in a life-and-death situation that we can prove whether (and in what sense) our “self” is the absolute criterion of “truth.” Until we make that test we have not conceptually moved from the Concept of Desire to Recognition as a Judgment that is a new Concept. “Judgment” and “Syllogism” are already moments of the “resting Concept”; so “recognition” occurs naturally within the scope of Desire. But the *world* of Recognition is only entered when someone is willing to sacrifice the “life” that is the natural boundary of the *world* of Desire.

All of the discussions of “Recognition” that try to fudge about the literal necessity of facing violent death (as a natural fact, not a spiritual metaphor) make one of two mistakes. Either they remain within the field of the resting Concept of Desire (M. Westphal, 1979, 130–137, is a paradigm case because “the priority of love” is the perfected ideal of Desire; but Lauer’s self-assertive children [1976, 105] is the common or garden example). Or else they presuppose the whole *syllogism* of Recognition contained in chapter VI. (Flay is a good example here, because his antipathy for all “socio-historical interpretations” means that he does not comprehend the *motion* of the Concept at all). Society is where the Concept *is*; and history is where it moves. We study singular *Gestalten* in order to observe the sundered moments of the Concept; and Self-Consciousness is the “homeland” of truth because it is coterminous with “Spirit appearing.” So instead of inveighing against “socio-historical” interpretations of chapter IV on the ground that they presuppose chapter VI, Flay ought to have asked himself why Hegel himself introduces the Concept of “Spirit” at the climax of his discussion of Desire. It is Flay who actually presupposes Spirit in a *vicious* way; and all interpretations that are not “narrow” or “limiting” (as he puts it) are guilty of the same error. See especially Flay (1984, 86 and 305–306, nn. 20–21). Also (1984, 89): “What is at

stake . . . is not only masters and slaves, but *any and all* pairs of relations constituting human relationships." Even Humpty Dumpty would have to give Hegel best, if he meant as much as that! (cf. also Fink, 1977, 174ff.).

M. Westphal claims (1979, 134–135) that "the attempt to kill the other is fundamentally confused." But he himself quotes Hegel "it is *solely* by risking life that freedom is obtained." So is it Westphal or the tragic hero who is really "confused"? It seems quite certain that Achilles, Hector, Eteocles and Polyneices were not at all confused. Homer and Sophocles knew well enough that *they* did not "identify love with freedom."

10. This is the best defence that can be offered for P. Preuss (1982) who presents the struggle as a "second beginning" of the *Phenomenology*; and as an exercise in rational-imaginative anthropology. Hegel's method will not permit us to take it in either of these ways. But he is nearer to the truth than Werner Marx who offers us the work of his illustrious namesake Karl as an illustration of this moment. He is illuminating *Capital* rather than the *Phenomenology* (W. Marx, 1986, 65–66). For the capitalist employer to regard the employees as "ordinary objects" is to make an *enlightened abstraction* (returning to the "Truth of Enlightenment" in the world that has achieved *moral* recognition). This provides the logical justification for a "struggle" concept of their relationship. But the long "history" that Hegel gives of how the society of Enlightened "equality" and the Moral World-View has evolved offers us an extremely complex critique of the implicit view that the world of Utility can be directly replaced by a "classless society" governed by the Moral World-View. As far as the comprehension of the systematic "*Science of experience*" is concerned, the Marxian application is more misleading than helpful. It must be admitted, certainly, that in the *First Philosophy of Spirit* the life and death struggle is seen as arising from the fact that possession of land etc. is vested in the family-group (compare *Night Thoughts*, 329–331; G. Gérard, 1982, 306–313; and R. B. Pippin, 1989, 156). But that account belongs to the social anthropology of the pre-political condition. For the *logic* of spiritual development it is only the simple principle of free self-assertion that matters. The paradigm occasion for that, is a *struggle inside the family* for the royal succession in the pre-political society.

11. The "struggle for recognition" is a logical construct designed to show us both why the simple Concept of Desire must necessarily become the divided Concept of Recognition (i.e. the "Judgment of Desire"), and how far the primitive Judgment is bound to be from the developed concept of Recognition (which is what we find in Fichte's theory, or Locke's theory before him). Hegel's Judgment begins at the Hobbesian extreme. But in Hegel's view "Reason" is not born directly from the struggle (as in Hobbes). Only the consciousness of freedom as *choice* is born in the struggle itself. Reason (as *self-understanding*) is made possible by the equilibrium of the two choices that follow.

R. Sonnensmidt (1991) has shown that the common theme of all of Hegel's discussions of Lordship and Bondage—he enumerates seven discussions altogether—is the transition from a "state of Nature" to a state of social authority (*Staatzustand*). He claims that the reconciliation of Universal ("State") and Particular ("man") involves "the symbolic death of the subject." His thesis about the transitional function of "Lordship and Bondage" appears to me to be correct (though the pre-political condition is not "fictive"); but the thesis about "reconciliation" is true only for the classical *polis*. The *polis* itself "dies" (not symbolically but really) because it makes this symbolic demand on the individual. In the modern nation state, the "subject" must die only in order to be *resurrected*.

No "construction" (à la Hobbes or Fichte) can be valid in the "science of experience" however, unless it is shown to arise *necessarily* in experience. In Hegel's "construct" the life and death struggle is shown to be rationally necessary, while both Hobbes and Fichte must

(in their different senses) call the will to power “irrational.” The situation where such a struggle is empirically inevitable is a quarrel over *sovereign right* in the unselfconscious community of “Life.” Thus Eteocles and Polyneices fall into place as the logical paradigm provided by the “Art Religion.” The “desire for recognition” is not just “uncovered by philosophic thought” (Fackenheim, 1967, 39n.); and the “life and death struggle” has nothing to do with the “absurdity” or meaninglessness of modern life (*ibid.* 41n). “Truth” does not manifest itself with mechanical necessity; but the movement of the Concept is “rationally actual.” So neither the Struggle nor Lordship and Bondage is a “contingent instance” (as R. R. Williams [1992, 186, n. 1], among many likeminded “ontologists,” would have us believe). The struggles, and Lordship/Bondage, are the immediate Concept of Recognition, and the negative pole of its motion, respectively.

Bondage is the subject of the Concept that will be universalized in the Syllogism of Desire; and Lordship is implicitly universalized in the political institution created from the community of Life by the Art Religion. (Slaves do not exist in the Platonic ideal, and they are “living instruments”—not members of the community—in Aristotle’s view.) The relation is completely sublated in modern society; hence we must look to the intervening community of universal legal recognition for our experiential paradigm: the medieval baron and his serfs. (H. M. Chalybaüs was on the right track as far back as 1837 [1854, 359].)

For the *Fichtean* background of Hegel’s discussion G.A. Kelly’s “Notes” can be recommended (1966, in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 189–217). For the *Hobbesian* background, the best discussion is that of L. Siep (1974, 192–202).

There has been a lot of useless polemic about the various Marxist interpretations. In essence, a Marxist approach can be defended, because the reference to the feudal system is justified. For the appropriate qualifications, which are quite radical, see Gadamer (1976, 73). But of course the Marxist view of what “Science” is (and what it is *for*) is radically different from the Hegelian view.

It is depth-psychological applications of the whole movement that must be viewed with some reserve by students who want to master Hegel’s own meaning. See, for example, S. Mercier-Josa (1975) and D. E. Christensen (1968). Hegel himself offers *behavioural* applications; and behavioural psychology is the only type of psychological “science” that can readily be justified methodologically, either by the “Science of experience” or by the place and function of “Phenomenology” in the System. (This is not meant to imply that psychologically introspective essays are not valuable in their own “scientific” contexts. But they are not valid as interpretations of Hegel’s “Science of experience.”)

The whole tendency to regard this as “the most existential of all Hegelian texts” (Fackenheim, 1967, 38n.) is deplorable. But it is idle to waste ink on *that*, because those who care about Hegelian “Science” will not need telling; and those who do not care will not be moved by polemical rhetoric.

12. Whenever we are considering the relation between Hobbes and Hegel it is important to remember that both of them had pondered long and hard upon Thucydides. But it was careless of me not to point out (in *Night Thoughts*, 112, 115) that Hegel’s concept of “glory” differs radically from that of Hobbes. It is not *power*—as Thrasymachus and Hobbes hold—but recognition by his community, that the glory-seeker desires. The paradigm is Achilles. We should note that (as W. Bonsiepen remarked [1977, 85]) the “tragedy in the ethical” (*Natural Law*, *G.W.* IV, 458–459; Knox and Acton, 103–105) was already structured as a “struggle for recognition.” (Also, we must concede to L. Siep [1974, 196] that as a socially recognized institution for the maintenance of “honor” the struggle belongs to the feudal world of chapter VI B(a). But that is not the proper paradigm for the primitive “freedom of

Self-Consciousness”; it is rather the “returned” shape of it, within the overarching context of the Unhappy Consciousness as Faith or *Bildung*. Compare *Encyclopedia*, section 432 Z.

13. He seems willing to ascribe it to whole groups in his treatment of the Mongol fighting horde (in the *System of Ethical Life*, Lasson, 1923, 450–451; Harris and Knox, 133–134). But since their “havoc” is qualified as *natural*, perhaps it is the opposing *Wut* that should be identified as a mode of “self-consciousness.” (In the conceptual context of the *Phenomenology*, I do not myself think that a distinction between the opposites can be drawn here.)

14. Hegel says “For just as life is the *natural* setting of consciousness . . . so death is the *natural* negation of consciousness.” In the light of this categorical affirmation it is not easy to maintain that “life” designates a general *spiritual* category in this chapter. I suppose one might say that the present context is not decisive for the whole discussion. In any case, it is *impossible* to maintain that “death” in *this context* means anything except “natural death.” Yet this is what Flay (1984, 88 and 307, n. 25) wants us to believe. Hyppolite, Fackenheim and the others with whom he disagrees, are of course in the right about this.

15. The likeness between Polyneices and Macbeth (and the difference between Macbeth and both of the brothers) is important to Hegel. All three go to their death unflinching. But two of them know that they cannot win; and one (Macbeth) knows that he has no social justification. Thus, between them, they get us right back to the Faustian ego. For the pure “abstraction” of “I = I” is all that they have in common. The brothers can say what they like; but the whole story of their quarrel shows that it is only the selfish ambition of Macbeth that motivates them. No “desire to be another self,” no higher ideal of “life in the *Volk*,” can be invoked here. (Polyneices is not dying for “another self.” One has to believe in “another life” before one can do that.)

16. Miller’s translation of “die welche diesen Kampf bestanden” as “those who survived this struggle” is the opposite of what Hegel means. To *stand the test* is to *die in the battle*.

17. See Lasson (1923, 135–136); Knox-Pelczynski, 241 (and *Toward the Sunlight*, 475–477). It is *this* result that Hegel sees as the principal way in which the struggle produces a passage from the state of nature to political society. The “pact of submission”—which V. Goldschmidt (1964) saw as the crucial thing—can often occur without a struggle; and it results in a *divided* social self-consciousness (Lordship and Servitude). The two “shapes” (Struggle and Lordship/Servitude) are *historically* independent. A historical transition from one to the other can (of course) occur. But it is not “natural.” (It must be added that in Berlin, Hegel said and wrote things that support Goldschmidt’s view—see especially *Encyclopedia*, sections 432 Z and 433.

18. In what was probably the conclusion of a “Natural Law” manuscript, Hegel treated the Platonic transition from soldiering to philosophy as the retired warrior’s way of sublating this “shame” (see Rosenkranz, 132–133; Harris and Knox, 179).

19. Homer, *Iliad* VI, 208 (the ideal is stated by the Trojan Glaucus, without reference to Achilles); the importance of the *Iliad* was noticed by H.H. Ottman (1981, 377) Cf. also W. T. MacCary (1982, 22). Hegel discusses the fate of Achilles only in the context of the theory of prophecy and miracle (see Rosenkranz, 467 and *Dok.*, 277). But he discusses the defeat of superior strength by cunning (with probable reference to the revenge of Orestes and Electra upon Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus) in the *System of Ethical Life* (Lasson, 1923, 458); Harris and Knox, 140).

20. Homer, *Odyssey*, XI, 484–491. Criticism of the ideal of “life in the *Volk*” begins already in the *Odyssey*. The wily Odysseus is a hero of another kind: the expert at survival.

21. For “life in the *Volk*” see the *System of Ethical Life*, Lasson (1923, 465–466, 471–472—cf. 460–461); Harris and Knox, 147 (cf. 142–143).

22. Of all the *Gestalten* in the *Phenomenology* this one has been the most widely influential in general culture. See for example the essays of H. Mayer (1974) and W. Becker (1974). Among the early reviewers F. Köppen was (anonymously) probably the first to focus intelligent attention on this section (cf. W. Bonsiepen, 1979, 26). Since then, it has been more discussed than any other. The most influential reading has been that of A. Kojève (1947). For an excellent study of his reading see J.P. Butler (1987, 63–78)—see also M. Roth (1988) and T. Rockmore (1993). A good survey of the influence of Hegel in France between the two World Wars has been provided by B. Baugh (1993).

Apart from the studies that I refer to explicitly, I have noted the following: Tran Duc Thao (1971); H. H. Holz (1968)—comparison with a Leibniz text unknown to Hegel; O. Luterbacher (1969); J. Rollwage (1969); W. Becker (1970, 73–78; 1972b; 1974); W. Janke (1972); R. Gumpfenberg (1972, 1974); M. H. Abrams (1973, 356–372); I. Fetscher (1973); A. Kesting (1973); M. Olivieri (1973); K. Ulmer (1976)—who shows that the double advance (from both Lord and Bondsman) is the one followed in the Encyclopedia; S. Mercier-Josa (1976); J. Derrida (1978); A. Rotstein (1978, 1980); J. Ogilvy (1980); K. Hielscher (1981, 35–55); P. Riley (1981); H. H. Ottman (1981); E. Hanzig (1984/1985)—Freudian; M. S. Roth (1985); G. Gentile (1985); K. Gloy (1985); L. Rauch (1987); G. Römpf (1988); J. C. Flay (1989b); F. Fukuyama (1992, chaps. 13, 14, 18); L. Amodio (1993); P. A. Simpson (forthcoming, chap. 3).

23. Gibbon tells of a Chinese mandarin who taught “Zingis” (Ghenghis Khan) this simple lesson in economic rationality (*Decline and Fall*, chapter 34). This story probably influenced Hegel’s own concept of the Mongolian “horde” as an immature “free self” which did not even understand the dialectic of “Desire” (compare *System der Sittlichkeit*, Lasson (1923), 450–451; Harris and Knox, 133).

S. B. Smith (1992, 99) says that the Struggle section is a “repudiation of Aristotle.” I agree that by taking the struggle as fundamental for the “Science of Experience” Hegel denies that “natural slavery” has a properly logical status. But we must not overlook the fact that this is a “repudiation” (in the same sense) of *his own* quasi-Aristotelian position in the *System of Ethical Life*.

24. There is a “dependent consciousness”—the women and children of the vanquished community, who are at the discretion of the victor for this purpose. But Hegel wants the subject consciousness to be one that preserves the memory of the struggle.

V. Goldschmidt (1964) and S. Landucci (1976, 100–105) are right in regarding the Lordship/Bondage relation as the real foundation of Oriental despotism (in Hegel’s view). But the conceptual foundation of it is in the “absolute” shape of this relation as Religion. This became clear first in the Frankfurt historical fragment *Geist der Orientalen* (*TW-A*, I, 428; *Clio* 7, 1977, 115–117). Where the relation is *religiously* founded there is no thought of possible liberation from bondage. So the “freedom of choice” in the life and death struggle is not involved—compare note 11 above. Goldschmidt obscures his own best insight when he identifies the lordship/bondage relation with “civil society.” Civil Society does first exist for the “free” citizens under Roman Law; and it is true that Hegel calls the Condition of Right “universal servitude.” But it is “servitude” at the communal level; and it can only be called “civil society” in so far as the “sovereignty of law” is *effective* as “equal recognition” (not in so far as the Condition of Right is a masked despotism). “Civil Society” is only *properly* established in the modern world.

25. At Frankfurt, Hegel treated Kant's moral theory as an internalization of the "positive" relation to God in the Mosaic Law. But it is a serious error to follow this precedent with the Lordship and Bondage relation in the *Phenomenology*. Lord and Bondsman are two separately embodied selves who share one self-consciousness (of freedom) from its opposite sides. G. A. Kelly (1966, in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, 191–197) is right to accuse Kojève of blindness to the psychological dimension (which is crucial to Hegel's speculative idealism). But Kojève is right to take the account "socially." Among the many other cases that might be cited, Flay (1984, 86) is quite wrong; and W. ver Eecke (1983, 15–16) is right.

The properly external relation of the two sides produces the situation of "unequal recognition." Hegel's return to the Aristotelian paradigm of master and servant (in which the master is the rational *agent*, and the "slave" is the rational *instrument*) is what distinguishes *his* concept of recognition from that of Kant and Fichte. So when M. Westphal (1984, 49) says that recognition extracted by coercion is deprived of "the freedom which it needs to be, in fact, recognition," his Fichtean moral enthusiasm is leading him into riding roughshod over Hegel's conceptual logic. The master does recognize the slave as a person (though his *ethical* status is not the Kantian *moral* status of which Westphal speaks); and the slave does freely recognize his own status. Hegel's concept of "freedom" is *severely* (i.e., Stoically) moral, whereas Westphal is an enlightened bourgeois relativist. The question is: which value concept is the logical precondition of the other? Hegel takes freedom to be primitive, Westphal recognition. For a *historical* phenomenology of modern moral individualism, Hegel's view is right.

26. The immediate judgment is "Self-Certainty" as a repetition of Sense-Certainty; the Lord/Bondsman relation is "Self-Perception" (with each term taking on both subject and object roles, instead of one/many burdens).

27. Lasson (1923, 442); Harris and Knox, 125–126. The meaning of "inequality of the *Potenzen* of life" is very ambiguous, and several origins of servitude seem to be lumped together. Submission without a struggle, and servitude by contract are definitely included however. Several authors (for instance Lukács, Garaudy, Fetscher) have suggested Crusoe and Friday as a paradigm for the *Phenomenology*. Hegel used this example in his Nuremberg classes, but we do not know how. This model of Lordship and Bondage belongs to the Enlightenment, and is not a proper phenomenological *result*. See now especially P. Guietti (1993). His (obviously correct) location of the Crusoe-Friday fable in the context of enlightened utility clearly demonstrates that it has no relevance to Lordship and Bondage as the logical outcome of a life and death struggle. (This is probably the most appropriate point to remark that my classical and feudal reading of this section leaves many "enlightened" themes in the shadows. These are well treated by G. A. Kelly [1966, reprinted in A. MacIntyre, ed., 1972, and in Kelly, 1978]. His essay provides an essential supplement to this chapter of my commentary.)

28. Thucydides, Book III, 36–51 and Book V, 84–116.

29. We shall come back eventually to the universal servitude of consciousness in the Condition of Right. As the title for the present section of the commentary indicates, the primary historical reference of the individual *Gestalt* must be to classical (Greek) society. As the *absolute* shape of our relation with God we shall find it in Egypt. In the Berlin period Hegel treats it as fundamental for Oriental despotism generally; but then the moments of Natural Religion are not distinguished (cf. *History of Philosophy*, *TW-A.*, 18, 118).

30. H. Adelman (1980) has developed an interesting parallel between the movement of Hegel's dialectic from Life to Lordship and Bondage, and the early chapters of Genesis. I

have generally preferred Greek philosophical models. But my own reference to Adam here is meant to show that I do not regard the options as exclusive. Since I am here using familiar religious “symbols” myself, this is a good moment to express my agreement with the dictum of Fink: “The likeness has almost the rank of symbol” (1977, 174); and at the same time to express my violent dissent from his view that Hegel is using a “metaphor.” Only two distinct consciousnesses face to face can fulfil the logical structure of Self-Consciousness as Judgment; at least two are required for the concept of Spirit. Jesus spoke with prophetic rationality when he said “Where *two or three* are gathered together etc.”

Nor can the distinct beings of Lord and Serf be reduced (as Flay proposes [1984, 86 and elsewhere]) to the “independent” and “dependent” aspects of self-consciousness. That reduction will happen eventually. But here it is precisely the “reflection into unity that has not yet emerged” (par. 189). Lord and Serf are the independent and dependent sides of *spiritual* self-consciousness in a state of manifest “judgment.” It is easy to indicate *other* “shapes” of dependence and independence—for instance, Fink rightly says (1977, 195) that the Unhappy Consciousness is an internalized form. Neither the internalized nor the external forms must be assimilated to this primitively “divided,” i.e., external, shape. The crucial cases against Flay are the *natural* dependence and independence of self-consciousness on the one hand (mother and children depending on father, or children depending on mother alone); and the internal “judgment” (of practical Reason as the supposed Lord of the subservient desires) on the other. Both of these must be distinguished clearly from “Lordship and Bondage,” or the project of a “phenomenology” will make no sense.

31. At least, this is what “labor” is as a *curse* that is to be sublated. Hegel uses the verb *bearbeiten* for this twice in paragraph 190. But *Arbeit* is properly the laboring upon *oneself* that is essential to *Bildung*. This is the blessing implicit in the curse (see par. 195). To think of “sublating” that—except by comprehending it so as to make the blessing of it explicit—is absurd. Even laboring to satisfy the desire of another is only destined to be sublated as an involuntary relation. The inequality of recognition must give way to a relation of free exchange. How the “equality” of *that* relation should be defined is an empirical question; and we shall see that it is a dialectical one, i.e., there is *always* a standpoint from which some “inequality” is visible. (L. Siep [1974, 196–197] points out that this is the first time that *labor* appears in Hegel’s ethical thought outside the context of the family. When placed within the context of recognition it belongs to the thought-world of “estrangement,” and so to the *transition* from the Greek to the Christian world. But it always belonged to the moment of alienation, and “unequal recognition” even in Greek *Sittlichkeit*.)

32. In order to follow this argument in the text we need a translation which carefully observes Hegel’s distinction between “independent being, or thinghood generally” and “*a thing*, as such, the object of desire.” Unluckily for us, Miller thought they meant the same thing. The following amendments are needed: (line 5) *for* “and existence,” *read*: the being; (line 19 and line 22) *for*: over this thing, *read*: over this being. At line 15 *read*: through the being that (and delete the insertion in square brackets).

33. Hegel’s word here is *Meister*, not *Herr*. Perhaps this is not just for variety’s sake, but points to a distinction between the *free formative* activity of the *Werkmeister* or rational “master of himself” and the subservient obedience of the serf to the lord’s commands. But since Hegel defines “mastery” here as being able to go to the “absolute negation” of *Sein*, it seems more probable that Miller is right to take *Meister* as a simple synonym for *Herr*.

34. Hence the further evolution of Self-Consciousness is a progressive extrusion of Lordship into the “beyond.” Serfdom will loom ever larger as the actuality of Life. Compare the

essay of J. M. Bernstein (1984). (J. Elster [1978, chapter IV] offers a logical analysis of the “incoherence” of the position of Lordship; this is further refined in a note by N.M.L. Nathan [1985].)

35. This is the seed of truth in Kojève’s interpretation. But he garbled it completely by oversimplification. His view involves a distortion of Hegel’s own perspective, in which Lordship and Bondage is the repetition (at the level of Self-Consciousness) of the movement of *Perception*. It is Stoicism that repeats the experience of Understanding (*negatively*).

J.-P. Sartre (1965, 235–237) understood the struggle and the acceptance of bondage very well. But he could not admit the transition from Self-Consciousness to Reason because (in his view) the structure of subject-object opposition was fundamental to scientific knowledge. M. Merleau-Ponty (1964, 63–69) takes Hegel’s argument in the proper cognitive-existential way.

36. Fichte gave an important analysis of the servile consciousness (see sec. 5 of the “First Introduction” (of 1797), *Werke* I, 429–435; Heath-Lachs, 12–16); and Hegel acknowledged his importance years later in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, sec. 194. So Siep (1979) is right to regard Fichte’s influence as fundamental. The conceptual ideal of loving identity came from Hölderlin’s theory of Being as “union”; and the “lordship of Death” comes, of course, from Hobbes. Hegel saw the need to put all of these elements together already at Frankfurt. So we should not argue fruitlessly about which came first. (Williams [1992, chapters 2–4] gives a clear account of the Fichtean background.)

37. For Hegel’s view of the craftsman’s place in the natural society see the *System of Ethical Life* (Lasson (1923), 428; Harris and Knox, 113). For the significance of universal natural *Bildung* see the *First Philosophy of Spirit*, *G.W.* VI, 320; Harris and Knox, 246–247). Only in modern mechanized industry has skilled labor become *Knechtschaft* in the Roman universal sense. Hegel was very conscious of this development, but (since it is not an “advance” of consciousness) it does not come into the *Phenomenology*—see for instance *G.W.* VI, 321–324; Harris and Knox, 247–249.

In the later movement of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel’s concept of labor splits into its two sides. As physical transformation of the world, it becomes a largely implicit moment of True Spirit (see pars. 439, 455); and as educational labor on the self we shall follow its evolution in the world of *Bildung*. The “totality” of the concept can be observed in chapter V C(a). Neither the comment of Karl Marx, “The only labor which Hegel knows and recognizes is abstractly mental labor” (1844, in 1964, 177), nor the half-correction by J. Habermas (1973, 162–167) who claims that the serf’s labor is a loose end, is valid.

38. Critics of the degradation of human creative capacities in the industrial world (such as John Ruskin and William Morris) were quick to appreciate the spiritual liberation experienced by feudal craftsmen. This was a valid insight, and one that Hegel clearly shares. But he does not integrate it into his “Science” until we come to his conception of *Bildung* in chapter VI. At present he is concerned with advances that can (and logically should) be made by every singular consciousness. Thus, in Stoicism, to which we move next, every Lord can recognize himself as a servant of Reason, and *every* serf can be conscious of self-mastery. (By treating Hegel’s *Logic* itself as if it were a historical phenomenology, G. Lukács [1978, 53] derives from this “first step” the amusing paradox that human labor exists before human life does. In a backhanded way this shows why the “science of experience” must be the *first* part of “Science.”)

39. The evolution of serfdom into a free peasantry is not of great phenomenological significance. The stability of nature is the frame of the peasant’s solid existence (see *G.W.* VIII,

267–268; Rauch, 163–164). Only his capacity for soldiering makes the peasant important phenomenologically (i.e. as a moving agent of culture).

40. Judith Shklar—who gives a very good analysis of the transition to Stoicism (1976, 61–63) loses her way momentarily when she says that “the slave . . . demands that his master recognize him as a human being.” On the one hand, the serf knows that he *is* recognized as “human,” for otherwise the institution could never have been as enduring as it was; and on the other hand, the *equal* recognition which Shklar means is far in the future. It will be “demanded” by the Enlightenment.

41. S. Rosen (1974, 163) has grasped this point well. M. Westphal (who simply does not want to leave heart’s desire behind) sets up an *abstract* alternative between “the object of labor” and “another self” (1979, 136). But in fact “science” is an object of labor, and when it finally becomes “another self” (God) we face the greatest labor of all in order to overcome the otherness.

42. This is what makes the life-and-death struggle inevitable in the *First Philosophy of Spirit*—see *G.W.VI*, 307–311 (Harris and Knox, 235–240). But there Hegel called this identity “honor”; and he now regards “honor” as a more reflective principle than the inevitable clash of wills that results when one primitive urge to control the world encounters another.

43. As I read it, the second half of paragraph 196 is about the necessity that fear should be made universally present over the finite realm of activity in the two complementary (but opposite) moments of “service and obedience” on one side, and “formative activity” on the other. The occurrence of the word *Furcht* in the first sentence is, on this view, unfortunate; *Gehorsam* would have been more appropriate. Because *Furcht* keeps recurring in what follows it is plausible to think (as Miller does) that the “moments necessary for this reflection” (the second inversion of the serf’s self-discovery) are the immediately adjacent pair “der Furcht und des Dienstes überhaupt.” But *Furcht* is not a moment, it is the *essence* that requires to be articulated in the moments. Thus Hegel continues: “Without . . . service and obedience [first moment]” fear cannot produce the reflection; and “without *das Bilden* [second moment]” it cannot produce it either. His opening sentence is not clearly articulated. But what follows makes the intended articulation quite plain.

44. R. Valls Plana (1971, 128, 145) has rightly understood the theological context of the Lordship/Bondage relation in Hegel’s theory. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom”; but in Christianity, the Lord himself takes on the “form of a servant.”

45. J. P. Butler (1987, 58) ends her discussion of this section with the curious conclusion: “We have the sense that the life of self-consciousness is slowly drawing to an end.” As I see it the life of self-consciousness (in a recognizably *ordinary* sense of the term) is only now beginning. Stoicism is where the concept of the free self as *rational* is born. (This note is not intended as a criticism but as a warning to the reader of the ambiguities even of statements that look very simple.) See further her interesting literal interpretation of this transition (1993, 382–383). I do not think we should accept her view because it is not plausible as an “experience.” The serf is not “frightened of his own freedom.”

Chapter 9

The Syllogism of Self-Consciousness

IV B: Freedom of Self-Consciousness: Stoicism, Scepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness

The concept of self-consciousness, having developed into its primitive mode of judgment, must now present us with its first syllogism. Having passed from immediate certainty, through the complex dialectic of the "self-made thing," Self-Consciousness has arrived at the point where Self-Understanding can begin. Of course, it is only to us that the logical character of the transition at this point is apparent. For it is only we who grasp the logical significance of what has happened to the Lord and the Serf; and it is only we who can put the sides together. The naïve selves are like the opposite moments with which the perceptual consciousness deceived itself.¹

(a) Freedom of Thought (the Stoic)

- 1./197. The independence achieved initially by the Lord is not living self-expression. The Serf finally expresses himself but he is not independent. But for us the two objects of his consciousness (his activity and the Lord's freedom) are identical as Thinking. *Thinking* is quite different from representing (for which the object is external). A concept has a distinctly subsisting content too. But it is my own act, not my representation of something else. The crucial point is that this unity of being in itself and being for myself is self-repulsive. Thinking becomes an *element* that is in itself; and at first this element is only a universal essence, not the objective essence of real life.

We saw that the objective truth of Lordship (which the Lord does not recognize) is evident in his servitude to natural desire; and the truth of serfdom (which the serf can enjoy only in the lord's absence) becomes evident likewise in his creative reforming of nature.

Absolutely speaking, both of them are forced back into themselves—the lord by frustration, the serf by fear. Our task now is to put the two inwardnesses together. Serfdom is the *inversion* of Lordship. We must invert the whole antithesis *comprehensively*, so that our new concept envelops them both. The self that refuses to identify with all the finite concerns about which it gives orders, must be united in a higher concept with the one that knows it is giving its own meaning to those finite

concerns, but will never dare to say so. And when we unite the infinite freedom that the serf sees in the lord, with the finitely creative freedom of his own secret consciousness, we find we have the concept of a self-conscious “freedom in thought” that can escape from the universal service of life’s needs. The retreat into a purely theoretical realm is the inversion involved in this comprehension. In making this unification we are only following the method laid down for philosophical consciousness in the Introduction. We are taking the observed result of the previous experience as the object from which the next experience starts.²

Neither the lord nor the serf actually does anything that Hegel calls “thinking” (properly speaking, or in its narrow sense). Being human, they both think, but they think finitely, and in *Vorstellungen*. Their thoughts have external referents, and are not the comprehensive grasping of completely intellectual contents (the Understanding’s concept of Force was the first “pure thought” that *we* had to deal with).

The serf is directly aware of expressing “himself,” of giving *his* meaning to the world, when he labors. But he is also aware of himself as finite, not free. He recognizes freedom as an alien objective being in the lord who gives the orders. Putting the two elements of this unequal division together, we obtain a unified self whose concepts are necessary and complete (satisfying in the way that the serf’s world is satisfying as it takes on *his* meaning) without having to be accepted from outside (like orders). This is the birth of *logical being*, the recognition of the truth that is self-certified by my thinking.

Hegel treats the serf’s experience as the developed antithesis (*Gegensatz*) of the Lord’s. Lordship is the *abstract concept* of singular selfhood, and serfdom the *concrete experience*. But this first inversion is a “simple negation” in which the absolute lordship of natural life (and death) is accepted. The second, comprehensive, inversion must preserve both this recognition and the truth of the abstract concept, the truth of human freedom. The serf’s experience shows *how* freedom can be achieved, but does not achieve it. For in his “self-forming” he achieves a new freedom, a freedom that escapes from the dominance of death, because he both reforms the world and creates the craft-skills that are handed on. But the serf does not *know* that he is free; he does what he does *under authority*, and he experiences his freedom only when the authority is *absent*.

“Absence of authority” is the key to the transition. For, if we set aside the fear of *death* (which serfdom forces us to recognize as our universal lord and master in Nature), then we can recognize that the authority is *never* present in our inner consciousness. The moments of the serf’s consciousness no longer fall apart; the abstract freedom that gives the orders and the concrete freedom that obeys them can come together.

This can only happen properly, if death (the finitude of life generally) is seen to be irrelevant to real freedom. The higher concept of “freedom of thought” is a formative activity that gives orders to itself. We cannot command Death, or give orders to Life. Hence, “giving orders” (even to ourselves) survives only as the absolute command to renounce the folly of finite Lordship. What happens is that we become the free self who thinks what must be thought. “To think” is not to be

an abstract (singular) Ego—a singular will that is *always* looking for death, and can never be satisfied until it *is* dead—but “an Ego that has at the same time the significance of what is in itself.” In other words “to think” is no longer to desire. It is to *be* the self-consciousness, the “being-for-self” of “what is.” As long as we *desire* anything, we are under authority, since we are subject to the lordship of life and death. Freedom of thought is behaving toward the objective essence in such a way that it has the significance of the being for self of the consciousness for which it is. In my thinking I recognize myself as a “spark” of the Divine Reason. I set aside the lordship of desire and death, by identifying directly with “what is” (or with the *Sache selbst*). This, of course, is what the Stoic does, and although he has not yet been mentioned we are bound to recognize where we have arrived.

This first emergence of logical thought is immediately universal. Where the unconditioned Universal of Understanding was Force, that of Self-Consciousness is Thought. And whereas the immediate Self asserted *itself* simply, the recognition that thought is free is the equal assertion of all selves. I, who am “for myself” a logical thinker, am conscious that logical thinking is the in-itself of all those others to whom I give the same name (of “selves” or Ego). The Ego (or selfhood) becomes the “*in-itself-subsisting element*” for the self that is “like-named to itself,” and which “repelled itself from itself” into the divided shape of Lord and Serf. When we put the two divided aspects of singular self-assertion together, uniting the opposed unequal (complementary) parts of the self-repulsive judgment, we get a concept in respect of which all selves are (*an sich* or implicitly) equal. Neither the lord nor his serf thinks of himself in this way, but both of them can be shown how to do so. Both of them agree that the essence of Self-Consciousness is Freedom; but they have to be shown where their freedom really is. When we show them that Freedom in Thought is what “self-certainty” is, however, all of the concrete variety and complexity of their lives is left out. This thinking self that recognizes all other selves as thinkers can only do logic. It knows nothing of father and son, hunting, fighting, minding sheep or forging horseshoes. It cannot show why any of those is “necessary.”

In dealing with all the *Vorstellungen* of my life I have to remember that my “thoughts” (as I normally call them) are indeed mine, and *only* mine. If I forget that, then the things themselves are liable to break in upon my representations, and teach me that they are indeed “something else.” But with thoughts *proper* (beginning with the concept of “what is”) the situation is different. Here the “Thing itself” *is* my thinking; its being-in-itself is *my* being for myself. The *Sache selbst* is distinct, yet not distinct, from me. It is distinct from me, because it *is* in-itself; but it is not distinct because when I truly think it, I *am* the thought of it, the consciousness of it *for*-itself. I think of it as “what is *in*-itself.” That being-in-itself (distinct from my consciousness) is the concept’s “determinate content.” But this “distinction” from me is only the self-repulsive aspect of my new freedom as a thinking self. That I think something *truly*, means that everyone else must think the same; there would be no sense to the expression “thinking the truth” if the thinking self were not self-repulsive, i.e., if it were not, logically and necessarily, a member in a community of thinkers.

This self-repulsion is, to begin with, quite universal, i.e. formal. I repel myself as being-for-myself from being-in-itself in general, i.e., I distinguish myself as the thinking subject, from the realm of thought as the objective element of truth. I am the logician; truth is the logical. The whole world of finite life, and of empirical facts, is left behind. Of course, it will not stay in this condition of merely formal sublation. But this “repulsion” of the realm of thought out of the self as an *element* is enormously important; and the first defence of Freedom of Thought will be to make this repulsion into a “supersensible” world quite absolute.

- 2./198. *Free thinking* has appeared historically as Stoicism. Stoicism asserts that self-consciousness is thinking, and that the true and the good are wherever it behaves thoughtfully.

The *Gestalt* of Freedom of Thought is the first one to which Hegel gives a definite historical location. With the *sylogism* of self-conscious Recognition, the historical evolution of the *Weltgeist* visibly begins. From the explicit references both here (par. 199) and later (par. 479) we can see that it is the Roman Stoicism of Cicero’s time and the following two centuries that is significant in the historical evolution of the *Weltgeist*. But paragraph 479 contains a fairly explicit acknowledgement that Stoic thought anticipated the real condition of things achieved under the Empire. And this is a necessary admission on Hegel’s part, since all of the important interaction of Stoicism and Scepticism took place in the Hellenistic world before the Romans conquered it.

The “lord of the world” was there already in the shape of Alexander; so from a phenomenological point of view, the Hellenistic shift does not invalidate the argument in its aspect of temporal sequence. We are not allowed, as observers, to make observations or logical connections that do not correspond with what has actually *happened*; all that we contribute on our own part is to point out why some point of view was logically significant, and therefore came to consciousness as a universal aspect of the generally shared culture.

Stoicism and Scepticism become aspects of the *Weltgeist* when the freedom of Lordship is denied its natural expression. This natural expression is “True Spirit,” the community of free citizens who keep those who are not free as their living instruments. In the world in which cities and their magistrates must take orders from the agents of a military conqueror, the distinction between free citizens and bondservants does not vanish; but it loses its plausibility as the conceptual key to what it means to be human. It is now patent that no one—no face to face community of family-fathers—can go his (or its) own way as a self-sufficient whole. When the blindly imperialistic singular self has come forth, and has executed the judgment universally according to which *it* exists to give the orders, then we must leave the world of Desire and enter the world of Recognition proper.

The concept and judgment of Recognition could be absorbed into the naturally harmonious world of desire; indeed they were essential to its self-conscious articulation since they provide the means for reconciling the infinity of the self with the

finitude of life's desires. But the syllogism of Recognition is different. Now Desire is dead. The Stoic sage has no finite desires. He desires only to be free; and he can only be said to "desire" that, in the sense that he disciplines and schools the not-self to desire it. As a thinker he simply knows that he is free, and that happiness consists in not *willing* anything other than this freedom. "Something is only true and good for consciousness, so far as consciousness behaves [or relates to itself] as thinking essence in it."³ For the Sage organic life is a servitude, towards which she should be indifferent. If that indifference is threatened, if the freedom of thought is physically denied to her, she can herself deny nature and die freely. she is the lord's consciousness in the serf's situation. But she "serves" only the universal community of humanity. This is what appears in Zeno and Chrysippus; it becomes *world-historical* at home.

- 3./199. Desire and labor were directed at the organic development of life. This *manifold* activity is now drawn together into the simple distinguishing that subsists in the movement of thought. One can be free as a thinker either on the throne or in fetters [M. Aurelius and Epictetus]. This is not the "freedom" of a private life. It presupposes the universal experience of bondage in a culture that has achieved philosophical thought.

The thinking self is indifferent to how things go on in the real world. Father may do battle with son, and brother with brother. But the free self has found its freedom in thought; and recognition of the other logical beings is all that matters. Who is a lord and who is in fetters is not important. Marcus Aurelius can see the Imperial Purple as a burden, and Epictetus can teach that slavery makes no difference to one's true humanity. The goal is to be lifeless, to achieve "apathy," not to care about worldly fortunes. The concerns of lord and serf alike, the alien sense, and one's own sense of things—both are merely *Eigensinn*, obstinate attachment to some singular transient way that things are. All of that is serfdom (the active commanding just as much as the suffering and obedience).

Hegel's characterization of the *negation* of the whole Lordship/Bondage relationship is easy to understand. The relationship involves an acceptance of life as necessary on both sides. The Stoic withdraws into a "thinking freedom" that is "lifeless." The Stoic is "dead" to all that, without being literally dead like the hero who preferred freedom to life in the struggle. Logically the Stoic has to go right through the experience of bondage in order to discover this new kind of freedom. she draws the moral from what the serf discovered when he realized that the master's orders were irrelevant. He had to use his own knowledge, and do his own thinking, guided only by what was *best* for the things in his charge. In the technical sense the serf does not *think* at all. But his standard of "what is best for the Thing itself" (the "object" defined by the Lord's orders) is the new truth-criterion of Stoicism. The Emperor Marcus, at the other extreme, does think; and this new standard comes to him naturally, because there is no one left to fight, and he sees himself as *charged* (like any serf) with a responsibility for things that he does not desire. His Lord is the Universal Reason.

The terminology that Hegel uses in his backward references is illuminating. It helps us first to see the connection between Lordship/Bondage and Perception; and secondly to see some new ambiguities in *Eigensinn*. The “distinctions” that no longer have “essentiality” (i.e. true validity) are first the one that “posits itself as a *determinate thing*, or as *consciousness of a determinate natural Dasein*, as a feeling.” This takes us back to the emergence of the Ego. For what follows after the next *oder* is “the *desire and aim [Zweck] for the same* whether posited by one’s *own* or by an *alien* consciousness”; and that is the level of Desire which has passed into Judgment and made a self-conscious choice. So it is the victor in the struggle who is the “determinate thing” here; and the “feeling” that is “consciousness of a determinate natural *Dasein*” is the trembling fear of the one who surrenders. But in any case, the whole sphere of the struggle, and of fear-dominated choice, is the sphere of self-consciousness as *Self-Perception*. The natural Ego posits itself as a *thing*; it can then discover that it is *not* an independent thing, but only a feeling in which thinghood dissolves into fluidity, so that it becomes a “property” of the real “thing.” And now this experience of choice has lost its significance for the Stoic. A soldier-emperor like Marcus, can recognize the servitude of all life, just as Epictetus recognizes the freedom of all thought.

After the central characterization of the new attitude in which my universal thinking is the Force that makes all logically valid distinctions but remains identically itself in them, precisely because they are logical, we come to a new definition of *Eigensinn*. As in paragraph 196, it is said to be “the freedom that stays within bondage.” But earlier it was said to be “a skilfulness that has might only over something or other.” Now it is “the freedom that makes itself fast on a singularity.” In the prelegal context of Lordship and Bondage, *Eigensinn* was already a *skill*; but now, in the cultured world of Stoicism, it is the free consciousness that is defined by legal recognition. The legal right of a skilled craftsman is a special case of legal recognition; the finite bourgeois concept of self-conscious existence has moved forward in step with the “infinite” (or philosophical/religious) concept of universal humanity.

For Stoic freedom to be the stance of the *Weltgeist*, the world had to be mature to the point of philosophical self-consciousness, and it had to be reduced to servitude in that self-conscious condition. This first happened in the Hellenistic world; but we shall see the Stoic attitude reappear in Hegel’s own world as the “honest” consciousness of Diderot the philosopher who argues with the sceptical nephew of Rameau (pars. 523–524). Stoicism actually enjoyed a considerable vogue in Hegel’s own time, mainly in association with the Wolffian philosophy and, more covertly, with Spinozism.⁴

- 4./200. For Stoic self-consciousness the essentially real is not the abstract Ego but the Logos. This is an abstract essence. Free thought has let nature go free and has only pure logic as its truth. It is the bare *concept* of freedom, not organically embodied. But all thought-content is empirically given, and the thinker cannot find in his pure thinking any criterion of what is *good* and what is *true* in this given content. Stoicism could offer only formal tautologies which soon become boring.

The Stoic does not take the alien authority of another's will as the criterion of truth. The conviction of the Emperor that he is indeed "Lord of the world" is only a vain "sense of his own"; it is no more significant than the Stoic's own abstractly singular will. The criterion of truth is the self that knows itself to be a "spark" of God, the absolute Self. Hegel says it is "Ego, which has otherness in [or on] it, but as a distinction that has been thought, so that it is immediately returned into itself in its otherness." This is an echo of the language of Force and Utterance. The Ego is a thinking activity that thinks through its whole experience of desiring and laboring in order to be consciously in unity with God.

But all of this thinking is in the fixed, death-dealing mode of the Understanding. The basic assumption is that the whole of living Nature is left outside it and is untouched by it. Like the universal knowing subject at the end of Hegel's *Logic*, Stoic thinking has "let Nature go free." Stoic philosophy is not only the "sublation of the being of Self-Consciousness in the other [i.e. in universal "Life"] and the setting free of the other again" (par. 181). This is what is meant by the "creation of Nature" in a famous passage of Hegel's *Science of Logic*.⁵ We now have thinking self-consciousness on one side, and the living universe of nature on the other, each "reflected into itself." This is the basic structure that we saw in the Understanding; but now it is explicitly the thinking self that takes itself to be essential. We are not now concerned to interpret appearance as the manifestation of the object, but to do logic; and the logic of Understanding, unfortunately, cannot provide us with any concrete knowledge.⁶

Something *begins* with Stoicism that comes to its climax in the *Phenomenology*. The Stoic *logos*, the spark of divine Reason recognizable in each of us,⁷ is an individuality which must both display itself as living in its action (*Handeln*) and grasp (*fassen*) the living world as a system of thought. For this to be possible there has to be *in thought itself* a content for the practical concept of "the Good" and the theoretical concept of "the True." This is what the Stoic thinker does not have; and the Sceptic will demonstrate to him that he lacks any purely rational criterion of what is *comprehensive* (cataleptic) in theory or of what is "according to Nature" in practice. Only the advent of the Gospel will provide the requisite content in thought itself for the "expansion" (*Ausbreitung*) of individuality as alive in action, and comprehensive of the living world as a system in its thinking.

Stoic freedom of thought carries out the serf's finite cancellation of alien being absolutely or infinitely.⁸ But it is not left with "Nothing"—it has its own finite consciousness as a given content. Only after Scepticism has shown up the status of that as mere *Schein*, will Self-Consciousness be ready for the "absolute truth" itself as a *given* content—ready, that is, for a religious *revelation*. The determinacy of the thinker in her world is a certainty, but the thinker finds that she cannot explain it. When she is asked for the criterion of truth and of virtue she can produce nothing but analytically true statements: "The True is the Divine Reason," "Virtue is living according to Reason," "Happiness is living in accordance with Nature." So the Stoic wisdom never makes us any wiser, but we do get bored.⁹ I can form the "determinate concept" of my nature (including my world), and can

“love Fate,” counting nothing human alien, etc. But the Fate that I love remains alien and inscrutable.

- 5./201. Stoicism is therefore an incomplete negation of otherness. The determinate content of consciousness is blandly accepted.

Hegel's procedure is essentially *negative*. Hence when he goes over something quickly (as he does in his discussion of Stoicism) we have to struggle to hold onto the positive moment. It was a tremendous discovery that the freedom which we instinctively yearn for, and which some of us will blindly die to assert, is found in our thinking capacity. The Stoics did not make it by themselves; their patron saint Heracleitus may perhaps deserve the credit for first asserting it clearly in the western tradition. But they were the first to state it abstractly and hence universally; even Aristotle was still in the grip of the aristocratic prejudice of Heracleitus, who distinguished arrogantly but clearly between the few who were awake and the many who lived like men asleep.

It is opportune to remember this as we contemplate the brief paragraph in which the triumph of Scepticism is prepared. Already that triumph is nearly explicit in the undeniably accurate comment about the *criterion*. The Stoic Sage withdrew into her own thought, and let those who wanted to be lords and serfs *be* lords and serfs. But poor Posidonius (whom Kant permits us to smile at¹⁰ for declaring vehemently that no matter how the gout tortured him he would not say that pain was an “evil”) could not say what is “good,” except for this reasonableness that he clung to like a warrior who will not say “I surrender.” The gout meanwhile was demonstrating the alien determinateness of what there was for him to think about. He did not choose to think about it, but obviously he had to; and he was willing (if my memory serves me) to admit that some things were preferable to contemplate, and others not. Perhaps the gout had something to do with that admission.

But then, Posidonius was a rather chastened Stoic. The Sceptics had by that time overthrown the self-certainty of the Old Stoic school. Stoicism survived; and it is, in fact, *not* tedious, because it accommodated itself to the real world of Roman finite freedom and universal service with such ready plasticity. But, like much of Hegel's own work at Berlin, the story of that reconciliation is only historically interesting, and helpful to our comprehension; it is not significant for the motion of the Concept.

(b) *Thought in Antithesis: Stoic and Sceptic*

- 6./202. Scepticism is the living actuality of free thought. It is thinking as the perfect negative, and recognizes that all appearances are just that. Stoicism corresponds in thought to the Lord/Serf *concept* in reality; Scepticism corresponds to its negative realization in desire and labor; but it succeeds better. It is a self-sufficient free self-consciousness and has achieved infinite freedom of thought; so the being of distinctions in its thought becomes for Scepticism all the being that they have.

Ancient Scepticism probably had *two* origins (though the question of its origin is a murky one). On the one hand, a group of hard-headed Stoic students seem to have become convinced that a comprehensive or positive wisdom is impossible, and that this negative admission is the proper stance for the Sage. On the other hand, the same conclusion was arrived at, because of our empirically bounded situation, in the Platonic Academy.

The origin of Scepticism among the Stoics is poetically appropriate because it would mean that in the history of philosophy at least the experience of consciousness does coincide with the logical movement of *our* philosophical observation. But what is important to Hegel is “Academic” scepticism, because he is convinced that the dialectical character of speculative thought was discovered by Plato as he meditated on the poem of Parmenides and the arguments of Zeno. It is the isolation of “dialectic” as the negative moment of the motion of thought from understanding to speculation that he ascribes to the great Academic Sceptics, and especially to Carneades (213–129 B.C.).

Stoicism is the “concept” of Freedom of Thought, and Scepticism is its “experience.” “Realizing” the concept produces a result that is the opposite of what is projected in the conceptual blueprint. All the content of our experience comes to us through the bodily senses. The original faith of Zeno was that it is possible to have a “comprehensive presentation” (*kataleptikē phantasia*) that could be known to be true reliably and irrefutably. But it was fairly obviously a naïve hope that the logical certainty of the “relations of ideas” could ever embrace and comprehend “matters of fact.” As the argument continued, it was inevitable that someone would eventually argue that it was precisely the distinction between logical necessity and empirical evidence that is intuitively clear, and hence universally reliable as a foundation for logically necessary arguments.

Since Plato was among the first to draw this distinction clearly and to build upon it logically, it is not surprising to find this argument coming from the Academy, when the agenda of philosophical discussion began to be set by the younger school whose novelty, charismatic enthusiasm, and essential optimism made them popular. The sceptical Platonists were only saying what Plato had learned from Heraclitus (whom the Stoics revered): that no sensory experience could ever be true knowledge. The Sceptics *realized* the conceptual freedom of rational consciousness recognized by the Stoics. They insisted that “pure thought” must be completely independent of sense-experience. It must not try to use “the independent *Dasein* [the body] or the abiding determinacy [of sense experience]” which lies outside its own infinity. We do not, and we cannot, have any logically certain or necessarily reliable knowledge of that “outside” world.

But in setting thought free from finite experience, the Sceptics inverted the Stoic position directly. They showed that in identifying the standard of “absolute knowledge” the Stoics had proved that we can know *nothing* absolutely. Scepticism demonstrates that Stoicism lacks the mediating concept (of Force) through which the modern Understanding (and even the classical science from Thales to Aristotle) made the transition to the “supersensible world.” “Perfected thinking”

simply annihilates the “manifoldly determinate” world of sense-experience, and “in this manifold shaping of life” freedom of thought becomes just the shape of “the real negative.”

There is a “correspondence” between real freedom and freedom of thought. Stoicism conceives the “independence” of thought as a *universal* human activity. Everyone of us is a rational being, a thinker capable of freely recognizing necessity and loving fate. No one and nothing can take this freedom from us. We must all strive continually to create and to raise the consciousness of it in ourselves and our fellows. In so far as we believe that anything else is good in itself we become slaves, no matter what our outward social position may be. Bodily existence itself is a serfdom; and if we say that the pain of the gout is an evil, we are consenting to be serfs. When we come to that, it is time for us to cast off the slave’s tunic and leave the sense world behind by our own free act. The primitively free self kills an unknown opponent. The Stoic suicide kills the one she has lived with all her life.

Scepticism *realizes* this universal concept in its absolute negativity. In the preceding moment the lord sat in his hall eating, drinking and making merry—consuming the matter of the world while the serfs destroyed the form of it as they labored. At the present moment, the Sceptic upbraids the Stoic for taking all that slavish experience so seriously, and seeking to make a lordly whole of it. The Sceptic *realizes* the significance of “letting Nature go.” The absolute self must release its own absolute other, and stop asserting that it is a realm of “bondage.” “Cast off the slave’s tunic properly and really,” says the Sceptic. “Be the free thinking being that you are, now and here. Let the world *be* the self-contained being that it is; admit that it is nothing for thought, and abandon the vain pretence that it can ever be otherwise. As you say yourself, the difference between having the gout, and not having it, is a temporary and transient appearance. But the difference between appearance and truth, between the empirical and the logical, that is the absolute difference of self-consciousness, the difference between ignorance and knowledge.”

In Scepticism “thought comes to be perfected (*vollständig*) thinking, annihilating the *manifoldly determined* world, and the negativity of the free self-consciousness comes to itself as real negativity in (and towards) this manifold shaping of life.” As we can see by comparing the Understanding, this “perfection” of thinking is a self-closure that lacks any bridge to the world of sense-experience. So sceptical thought corresponds to the *realization* of the singular self-consciousness, just as Stoicism did to its concept. The Concept of independent Self-Consciousness was the Lord/Serf relation itself (in which the Lord becomes independent); and the *realization* was in the negation of otherness, by lordly desire and fear-bonded labor. Neither moment was executed or carried out “for Self-Consciousness.” For *that* the moments have to be brought together in one and the same consciousness. Stoicism brought them together conceptually, and so fulfilled the *concept* of independence (setting free the moment of dependence as rationally indifferent). Now Scepticism achieves the *reality* of independence (and of the release). It already enjoys the advantage of what Stoicism achieved conceptually, since it is free thought that has become conscious of its independence; and now it sets the whole

world of nature free in fact. It looks at the whole expanse of our conscious and self-conscious relations with “the real world” and flatly declares that it is all of it only *appearance*, that we have no cognition except *relative* cognition, and that the “Thing-in-itself” is beyond that. The thoughts that the Stoic took to be tautologous “abstractions” from the real being of nature (which must therefore have corresponding “distinctions” in-itself) are just *our* thoughts; the distinctions are *our* distinctions. The “independences” of the sensible world are recognized to be subjective appearances only. In thought they are known to be “vanishing quantities.” This recognition extends to all supposedly real distinctions (including especially the living consciousnesses of the rational observers). Nothing is known about what is “really there” at all. The theory that we are sparks of the divine Fire is an ungrounded fantasy of our subjective imagination.

- 7./203. Scepticism is a turning point. It is the self-conscious awareness of the dialectical capacity of thinking that kept us moving through “Consciousness.” It also showed that what counts as determinate in Lordship/Bondage and in Stoicism is without essence. Lordship/Bondage includes the positive reduction even of ethical laws to positive commands. Stoic determinations are formal laws of thought. It can only hang determinate concepts (which are pure abstractions) onto the independent reality.

Our own procedure in “Consciousness” was in part that of philosophical scepticism. We showed that there was no absolute knowledge in Consciousness until we reached the “inverted” understanding of the “living Infinite.” In the light of that experience the dialectical movement in its abstract purity seems to be a process that leads to the unsaying of what is said, or to the saying of the opposite. But then, the *progressive* aspect of our procedure, the fact that the negation of the negation is a new affirmation at a higher level of conscious generality, distinguishes our “speculative” activity from the simpler dialectic of Scepticism. Scepticism dwells with each of the shapes of simple consciousness like a kind of demonic “familiar.” In the Understanding, especially, it is permanently present as the awareness that “necessity” is only a subjective feeling.

The way that it is present in the Lordship/Bondage relation is more interesting for us (perhaps because what Hegel says gives us some new insights into the social situation that is referred to). What counts as “determined” in Lordship and Bondage is the verdict of the struggle, which separates “independent” from “dependent” Self-Consciousness. This same determination is universalized in Stoicism into the distinction between free thinking consciousness, and consciousness in bondage. But according to the sceptical insight these “determinations” (whether experiential or theoretical) are worthless. In the world of Lordship and Bondage even the ethical customs of family and community life are reduced to positive laws enforced by the authority of the “Lordship.”¹¹ Thus the Sceptics can easily show that in the sphere of practical Reason, too, there is only *convention*, or a system of distinctions made by the human intellect—distinctions which are valid for it, just as long as it *says* they are valid, and no longer.¹²

Stoicism is vulnerable to sceptical attack because of the positive legal character of its natural law theory—the fact that a determinate law is now promulgated as the will of a sovereign. Hegel sees the “universal law” of Reason as an ideal analogue of the imperial Roman Law. His implicit view is that the Sceptical attack on “natural ethics” rests on a misinterpretation of what “ethical laws” are. From Euripides onwards (or from Protagoras’ time if you prefer) the sceptical tradition used the variety of ethical custom against all theories of natural law and universal sovereignty. The Zeus of *Antigone* is dethroned in Aristophanes by “the Whirlwind” or “the Clouds”; and this ancient attack is valid against all types of “positivity”—including, for instance, the laws of Moses or any other supposed “laws of God.”

When legal theorists are employed by a “universal prince,” we can see clearly that the difficulty springs from the logical involvement of a *singular* will in the concept of “Law.” God can be allowed to commit contradictions (because we do not comprehend his “infinity”); and free communities can contradict one another. But a human sovereign must not contradict *himself*. That is the cultural situation in which Stoics and Sceptics will flourish side by side.

As far as theoretical knowledge is concerned, Scepticism is the internal Nemesis of the Understanding itself. The standpoint of Understanding is the abstract (or formal) standpoint of Stoicism. What truly *is* must be independent of the thinking observation of it. Hence the observer can only hang “determinate concepts” (one-sided, unmoving abstractions derived from the analysis of perception) onto the “being that is independent for it” in a completely external way. The Sceptic sets to work and rehanges them all on “independent being” the other way up so to speak. Hume’s reduction of the “necessity” of causality to “custom” is in the authentic spirit of Carneades; and to see what they did in the perspective of what Hegel says about the “dialectical movement” as the *realized* freedom of thinking, is a good way to appreciate the true greatness of them both.

- 8./204. The negative moment of dialectic appears immediately in consciousness as an alien force to which it falls victim. *Scepticism* comprehends it as the force of consciousness itself. It makes both the object of consciousness, and our supposed relation to it, disappear; it exposes the sophistry by which we preserve the objectivity of our perception; and it realizes the negative character of pure thinking in which all the fixed determinations of Understanding dissolve.

The “dialectic” is the movement of real experience itself. It first appears as the inexorable transience of all sense-certainty. Nothing abides, not even the hills to which the Psalmist lifts up his eyes, because he feels that divine strength comes from them. Scepticism repeats this experience self-consciously from the side of thought. First it shows us that what seems to be imposed on us by a transcendent necessity, in whose grip we are helpless, is really the movement of our own consciousness. Then it exposes the sham objectivity of the object in perception and the sophistical shifts by which perceptual thought seeks to preserve its own security.¹³

Hegel regards classical scepticism as the reduction of perceptual realism back to the ineffability of sense-certainty. It achieves the freedom of the Understand-

ing while retaining the primitive conviction that only sense experience is positive. But the positive aspect of sensation is essentially self-sublating; it negates itself before our eyes every moment. Thus the thinking that sets itself to construct a world of perceptible universals is simply misunderstanding the difference between the eternal simplicity of what is necessary, and that boundless whirl of mere *Schein*. In Hegel's own language, the Sceptic grasps the absolute difference between sensible "show" and rational "essence"; but he does not grasp the fact that *Schein* can be grasped as an infinite totality of *Erscheinung*. The *Phenomenology* itself, as a science of experience, offers us the true (or "total") shape of absolute knowledge as a "comprehensive presentation." But the Stoics had to be taught by the Sceptics that no *Vorstellung* (not even that of the great cosmic cycle) could comprehend *Erscheinung*.¹⁴ The "science of appearance" is a circle of pure concepts: and for that "circle" the sceptical "suspense of judgment" is the centre. It was in play already when we surrendered ourselves to the "divine nature" of language (par. 110).

Scepticism itself is this "divine nature" of language raised to self-consciousness as the nature of human experience, but not yet in full possession of itself as a concept. It directly inverts the *Meinung* of everything that is said; but it does not realize that there is any way forward, when the attempt to mean something extralinguistic is given up as a result of this criticism. It knows that "language is truer" (par. 97) than the simple assumption that truth is the *name* of an extralinguistic *Sache*. But it has no goal beyond that of compelling us to let Things [*Sachen*] go.

Thus Scepticism is the power that *inverts* the world of the Understanding, but it does not know how the inverted world can overarch or envelop the positive non-inverted sense of the "experience of consciousness." It is the self-conscious concept of experience as a "play of forces" (which Hegel promised us in par. 184). For if consciousness is the result of the interaction of the two independent forces of unchangeable Being and everchangeable Thinking then nothing can be reliably ascribed to either of them in cognition. The utterance of this "play" can only be a perpetual and necessary alternation of "Yes" and "No." That is the balance of forces to which Hegel now proceeds.

- 9./205. Thus it realizes freedom as a self-maintaining certainty. It achieves Sceptic *ataraxia*. It admits that all of its thought-contents are accidental, empirical. It is mere animal existence, reason *lost*; yet in it Reason has found itself. It sways on this pendulum, letting theory and practice contradict one another perpetually in itself, while it enjoys creating contradiction in the Stoic Understanding.

The Sceptic ideal is to be *untroubled*¹⁵ in the face of the sensory flux. Sceptical reason tells us not to *worry* about what we cannot help. The great whirl of sensory and intellectual processes is to be observed calmly. The philosophical technique by which we stay on the sidelines, and do not get involved, is the establishment of perfect antinomies, equally weighty and seemingly compelling arguments on opposite

sides. This was perfected by Carneades, and since Hegel seems to be referring to it at the end of the paragraph, I think he sees Academic Scepticism as the philosophy that grasps consciousness as the “absolute dialectical unrest.” Scepticism is the philosophy of the “inverted world” in its *absurd* aspect. Everything in the supposed stillness of the eternal world of pure thought is experienced as an immediate “contradiction.”

The difficulty is that in this situation being unmoved is no more rational than being moved; and Carneades has to be a chameleon supplying whatever is needed to keep the confusion whirling properly. Far from behaving like one who is undisturbed, he enjoys being an active disturber; and on the practical side his life has to be controlled by the felt motive actually present at a given moment. He “follows nature” more primitively than any Stoic; but he refuses to dignify it by that name, acknowledging that his life is governed by chance, while he pursues the “absolute” consciousness of this situation, and strives to keep his thought unmoved by his life. His philosophical consciousness is the calmly undisturbed observer of an animal life that drags a “forlorn” self-consciousness about with it. In this comment, the “Unhappy Consciousness” makes its first appearance. In the main the mood of the paragraph is comic or ironic (like that of Young Rameau later). But if the moment of philosophical self-observation were forced to unite with the forlorn self caught in the rat race, if the subjective freedom were forced to accept its identity with the prison of uncontrolled and incomprehensible but compulsive contingencies, then it would turn into a cry for salvation from what St. Paul called “the body of this death.”

Achieving “suspense of judgment,” by setting whatever contingent arguments one can discern in the whirl against those that someone else offers, is a cheat. The Sceptic lives in the world, and allows himself to be guided by senses which he says we ought not to trust. He proves one day that there is natural justice, and the next that there is not. But he acts according to the dignity of a philosophy professor, and expects to be accorded the same honors as his learned colleagues of the Lyceum and the Stoa.¹⁶ Moreover, both he and his opponents agree that imperturbable steadiness in the pursuit of philosophy is morally admirable. But he cannot justify this, and his very *steadiness* consists in not allowing his opponent to do so.

Anyway the suspense of judgment *is*. It is in essence a stable being, a state of self-identity, of *freedom from disturbance: ataraxia*. The technique of Scepticism is always to take the “No” side, and to ignore the fact that both sides belong to it equally. In this way it avoids bringing both sides together. Carneades borrowed the yes-half of his carefully balanced displays from the voluminous works of the greatest of the early Stoics, Chrysippus. “Without Chrysippus,” he said, “I should not have been.”¹⁷ That is almost certainly what Hegel is thinking of when he compares the great speeches of Carneades to the talk of two children who each “want their own way” (*eigensinnig*) but who do not know which way that is, till the first one speaks so that the other one can contradict him. Carneades read Chrysippus to find out what needed contradiction. This is a *comic* situation. It is “untroubled” because it is both laughing and laughable.

(c) *Thought in Suspense: The Unhappy Consciousness*

- 10./203. Thus Scepticism *experiences* self-consciousness as contradiction. But it does not bring the sides together. The *Gestalt* that arises when that happens is the *Unhappy Consciousness*. The unchangeable consciousness and the flux of sensation are both aspects of Sceptic consciousness; the new *Gestalt* is the consciousness of the self as a unity of two opposed selves. Thus it is the Concept of Spirit as a contradiction.

The Sceptic is a laughing sage because he has the Stoic to laugh at. We laugh at both of them (if we are willing to follow Hegel's lead), because these dignified masters who both take their profession so seriously are like Charlie Brown and Lucy arguing in the playground, while their world is falling to pieces around their ears. It is not clear that Chrysippus, filling seven hundred and five book-scrolls with the bad Greek of his native Soli (from which we get the word "solecism"), generously larded with quotations from better writers, is really more comic than Carneades himself, assembling the materials from those books and others for the rhetorical displays that made him universally famous as a stylist, while conscientiously refusing to let his tablets be copied for publication. Both of them agree that human consciousness is a two-sided affair. Chrysippus labors heroically to overcome the division and make it into a unity. Carneades laughs at him for not seeing that the division is a logical one, and that it can no more be overcome by the Stoic Hercules than the serf can become a lord by ploughing more land. He himself, who makes no pretence to be Hercules, can turn all that labor upside down with much less effort, and make another heap beside the first one with a big "No" at the top instead of the Herculean "Yes."

There is no doubt that if all we care about is "Which is to be master?" (as Humpty Dumpty said), then Carneades wins hands down. Every effort the Stoic makes to *realize* his freedom is tantamount to a serf's fantasy that he really owns the land. The only way to be a Lord is to watch, and to learn to laugh at the spectacle. But the serf's fantasy is not so irrelevant to reality as it seems; nor is the Stoic reverence for Hercules, the original do-gooder of our tradition.

In a world where only professors can be Lords—whether they think they can help the serfs or not—someone who knows what serfdom feels like is going to say eventually that real life is no laughing matter, and that something more is needed for salvation than a professorship. In effect it was Augustine who said this; and his philosophical background is appropriate. Hegel does not refer to Augustine very often. But it seems quite likely that the antithesis of the Changeable and Unchangeable Consciousness comes from him.¹⁸

The Sceptic knows that he is a divided self. But he distracts his mind from the uncomfortable consequences of being a living contradiction, by laughing at those who think that a logical necessity can be changed by moral effort. He identifies himself with the identical aspect of the contradiction, or with his knowledge of its necessity, its "truth."

When one takes the contradictory situation of the self seriously, this self-identity appears as what is "lost." To be self-identical is possible, and one must know

that it is possible in order to recognize that one is in a condition of contradiction; but it is the "contradiction" that is actual. The "identity" is in the Being that is beyond or behind the world of appearance. It belongs to what thought has "let go." The actual self is the consciousness of the division between an actuality that is finite and in servitude to an incomprehensible necessity, and a possibility that is infinite, and perfectly free.

In this comprehension of the sceptical doctrine two selves are recognized. The Sceptic is only wrong about which one is *real*. He has not recognized that the one he identifies with is only a formal ideal by which the concretely actual self can measure itself. Nobody is that ideal self. No finite consciousness *can* be that self (by definition). There is no Lord walking the earth: not the one that the serf fears; not the Stoic who thinks he is free; and not the Sceptic who knows what thinking is, and what it is not.

"In Stoicism Self-Consciousness is the simple freedom of itself; in Scepticism the freedom realizes itself, annihilates the other side of determinate thereness, but doubles *itself* instead, and is now a twofold [self] unto itself." Hegel has remarked already (par. 201) that as soon as Stoicism "cuts itself off from the manifold of things, it has no content *in its self*, but rather a *given one*." Scepticism *realizes* this freedom by "letting the other go free." The real "other" is not known as a "manifold of things"; instead the self finds itself afflicted with the contradictory content of appearances. Only the absolute freedom of the self appears in this world of sensible presentations. When the "other" goes free, the rational self who releases it must take complete responsibility for "appearance." It must double itself, and accept itself as the contradictory unity of the rational philosophical understanding with the empirical whirl of sensible consciousness.

What happens now, therefore, is that the rational ground is recognized as an *absolute Self beyond* the empirical whirl. The Unhappy Consciousness finds itself looking into a thought-world whose content can only become known to it if the supersensible Other freely elects to *give* knowledge. For the given content of Stoical free consciousness has been shown to be only the spontaneous dialectical movement of its own freedom, playing upon an Other that is itself forever untouched and unrevealed by that playing.

The Unhappy Consciousness has a *concept* of truly cognitive Self-Consciousness. But, in accordance with that concept, it can only look for that free Self-Consciousness to reveal itself freely. The revelation must be *given*; it must come from the absolute Self as an act of grace. For the experienced freedom of finite selfhood is simply the power to contradict whatever content it succeeds in giving to itself. The "unhappiness" of finite self-consciousness consists first, therefore, in being conscious that real freedom belongs to an inner self which is as unknown as the outer world that has been "set free." We are still in the sphere of Self-Consciousness; and we have identified the universal element of Self-Consciousness as *thinking*. But the universal self who thinks what is true must now *give* us the truth, or we shall never know it. The Absolute Spirit and its finite moments are face to face with one another as "free" (that is to say independently self-standing) beings.¹⁹

- 11./207. Being contradictory this consciousness is restlessly unhappy. But its reconciliation will display the concept of the spirit that has come to life and entered into existence. The Unhappy Consciousness *is* aware of this unity of two selves, as the truth, but it is not this unity for itself.

With two selves facing one another within one self-consciousness we have reached a self-consciousness that is the concept of Spirit. “Pure self-cognition in absolute otherness, this aether *as such* is the ground and soil of Science or is *knowledge in general*” (par. 26). At the point we have reached we have only to invert the stance of the Sceptic, and recognize “pure thinking” as the “absolute otherness” that no one can claim to be. In that way we shall satisfy the first definition of Spirit that Hegel gave us. That first definition has an obvious logical connection with the dogma of the Trinity; but when we recognize the “otherness” of the “aether” in which our pure self is apparent to us, something paradoxical happens. Self-consciousness itself becomes a mode of consciousness, a way of being aware of an objective reality, something other.

The “self” with which the Sceptical professor identifies in his *ataraxia*, is an empty form. But when we invert that stance, and identify properly with the transient finite content of that form, the form itself becomes for us an infinite intellect *beyond* the whole finite world. This is because the inversion has to be a properly “comprehensive” one. We *project* the Absolute Self into an intellectual Beyond, which comprehends all of us with our contradictory world of appearance. We know that that Being is there beyond the flux because we are conscious of ourselves in and through Him; it is through His presence to us that we know ourselves to be lost souls. We live and move and have our being in Him; but He is absolutely other than we are. In this transition, the contradiction of Scepticism (that of the “play of Forces”) becomes the contradiction of “the Supersensible Beyond”. Self-consciousness knows itself as an object *within* which it recognizes itself, but which it does not recognize to *be* itself. Self-consciousness now has the consciousness of itself as an intellectual thing in a world of intellectual things. This is a thinking consciousness, but it is only a *receptivity* for the other’s thought (not a self-conscious *activity*). The ordinary name for this thinking awareness of an intellectual world that is “other” than the intellect which knows it is “faith.” Religious faith is a conscious access to the intellectual world as “absolute otherness.”²⁰

There is no possibility of *ataraxia* when the two sides of the contradiction are explicitly present in one consciousness. Self-consciousness continually changes sides. Sometimes it is the consciousness of being “saved”; and sometimes the consciousness of being “lost.” But it can never have Carneades’ consciousness that he has saved *himself* (and can perhaps save others); it is not even the consciousness of Posidonius that he could damn himself (if he admitted that the torment of his gout was an “evil”). It gazes into the other self-consciousness, and meets sometimes the eye of a judge “in whose sight shall no man living be justified,” and at other times that of a loving father who will save all them that trust him.

If we want to give a name to this *Gestalt* of self-consciousness as the consciousness of dependence upon another self dwelling in a higher world of pure thought,

and we want it to be the name by which Hegel identified the discoverer of Spirit as a mode of “consciousness”—“the gazing of one [finite] self-consciousness into another [infinite] one”—the name that we can use with some security is that of Anselm. The Ontological Argument is the moment of philosophical discovery that Hegel knows about, and which he defends vigorously against misunderstanding.

But Anselm’s prayer—an argument in the mode of “faith”—comes a long time after the historical situation in which the leap of faith became universally necessary. We shall see when we come to study the phenomenology of the Absolute Spirit (in chapter VII on Religion) that the moment when “the belief of the world” appeared is best identified as the Conversion of Constantine in 312 A.D. It is Augustine who fits most neatly into the historical sequence that this date suggests.

Hegel warns us in paragraph 211, however, that the singular shape of consciousness, which we have reached at this point, does not have the same experience as the *Weltgeist*. Augustine, who comes to conversion with an education in Academic Scepticism behind him, is representative of the “world-era” that was “unhappy”; but Hegel wants us to see the Unhappy Consciousness as coming to its climax in the failure of the Crusades, and reaching its crucial turning point in the conversion of Martin Luther. So I shall appeal to Anselm as my paradigm of the true (i.e. successful) return of the Unhappy Consciousness into itself, partly in order to keep the “singular” experience of the Unhappy Consciousness distinct from the “universal” experience. Almost every thinking consciousness was “Augustinian” in Anselm’s time; but it must be admitted that there were many who were not convinced by the Ontological Argument. The failure to achieve “objectivity” is the crucial weakness of the Unhappy Consciousness.

- 12./208. Since the two sides of sceptical consciousness are opposites, the Unhappy Consciousness *projects* the moment of rational stability into an Other that is its essence, but not itself. It identifies itself with the transient world, and sets up the standard of Reason in the Other. This standard is somehow *in it*, but not of it. So it is a contradictory movement.

For this self-consciousness at the level of Understanding, the two consciousnesses that it contains are both objects in the intelligible world. As their unity it is just the observing consciousness that observes their opposition. Through the maintenance of the standpoint of realistic observation the difficulty of a recognized contradiction is avoided. The two self-consciousnesses are opposites. The essential one, the true *essence*, is the Unchangeable—the Other One. The self that is aware of the contradiction between Changeable and Unchangeable, takes itself to be the unessential one—the Changeable.²¹

These terms (*Unwandelbare*, *Wandelbare*) descend naturally enough from Hegel’s account of the two sides of the Sceptical self-consciousness, which “experiences its own freedom in the *Wandel* of all that aims to make itself firm for it” and “has itself the doubled contradictory consciousness of unchangeableness (*Unwandelbarkeit*) and equality, and of total contingency and inequality with itself” (par. 205). But I do not think they are derived from the technical vocabulary of Scepti-

cism (either in Sextus or in Cicero). Hegel seems to have adopted them in order to avoid an explicitly religious terminology; and in order to make the parallel with the Understanding's "realm of Law" plain. The Unchangeable Consciousness will make its first free gift of "truth" by revealing itself as the Lawgiver.

But since there is no mistaking the identity of the God of the Bible; and since Hegel could perfectly well have spoken of "God" and "Man" if he wanted to, we must ask why he did not. The answer clearly is that he is only prepared to use these concrete names when the consciousness that we are observing has achieved adequate concepts of what they stand for. As long as we are dealing with abstract "sides" of the evolution of self-conscious Spirit, it is precisely our function as philosophical observers to identify the relevant abstraction as accurately as possible. It is taken for granted, however, that the alert reader will recognize that the consciousness we are observing has its own more concrete names (which we still use ourselves) for what we are treating so abstractly. Both Augustine and Anselm spoke of "God." But they said that he, the Unchangeable, was "One in Three and Three in One." We must not speak in such riddles; so we must let the Concept explicate itself in experience, before we speak of "God" at all.

It is important to remember that, in spite of their abstractness, the names that Hegel uses designate two self-consciousnesses "gazing into one another"; and further that the real division between them is a deliberate act, the leap of faith, which goes beyond the pure activity of thinking and comprehensively inverts what both Stoic and Sceptic "thought."²² "Thinking," like "Self-Consciousness," is now *sublated*, or *in suspense*. The Sceptic turned the Stoic *Logos* into an unknowable 'Beyond'; and now what began in Stoicism as the immediate certainty that I can freely think what is true and necessary, has become the faithful certainty that I (being a finite consciousness, drowning in a sea of transience and falsity) can only have knowledge of what is true, through the gratuitous presence of the Other to my gaze.²³ I do still have the primitive certainty that my logical consciousness is *mine*; Stoicism and Scepticism are preserved in that sublated shape. But for me, that logical consciousness is now the "formal" image of the Unchangeable Self in me. That image is my "essence," but it was "given" to me, it is not my own achievement—in the way in which the Stoics, and even the Sceptics, thought it was, when they were struggling over the true concept of "human nature."

There is no way out of the impasse created by the deadlock of Stoicism and Scepticism, except for the Absolute to "give" itself in a new mode of thought that is aware of itself as a direct access to the "supersensible" through the grace of the latter. This creates a problem for Hegel. He can show why there has to be a "revelation" at this point. But the content of the revelation must come from the historical experience; and that experience belongs to the World-Spirit, not to the singular consciousness. The logical development of singular consciousness takes place in the crucial "middle" phase of the communal experience of "unhappiness." So Hegel must give us the whole Concept in outline. But only the middle phase of it is observed here as an experience of the singular consciousness—which returns to self-possession as the *Gestalt* of Reason. The first phase will become vital later on,

in the evolution of communal consciousness, where it takes a different shape than that which it has for the singular “believer”; and the third phase is what Hegel himself calls “Faith.” This third phase can only be expounded properly when the communal experience has taken over from that of the singular *Gestalt*.

Thus the “concept of the history of salvation” which provides our immediate way out of the Sceptical impasse cannot appear to be necessary or rational in any ordinary sense. What is “necessary” at this point is the “leap of faith”; and it is necessary for *practical* reasons. The story of Constantine’s conversion illustrates this graphically. Unless the armies come rampaging through his community, an established professor (Stoic or Sceptic) will stay contented in his schoolroom. It is the contrast between the Stoic constitutional theory, and the Sceptical reality of political and social life, that causes ordinary consciousness to stop listening to professors, and start listening to prophetic preachers. From the side of the professors this transition is, generally speaking, comic. It shows its tragic aspect only in the fate of a great lawyer like Papinian (executed by Caracalla). The preachers, of course, were often called upon to be martyrs; but for the professors they were comic even in that posture.

The crucial significance of the new *Gestalt*—the logical advance made by the “leap of faith”—is the recognition that the ideal of the Sage is mistaken. True freedom of thought does not and cannot belong to any one actual consciousness. It is the One in the Many. Hegel himself is a professor, and his audience is necessarily one that prefers professorial views. So he now presents us with the motion of Unhappy Consciousness as the “form” within which the logical evolution of the Absolute Self-Consciousness can be observed as a sort of Real Universal. The necessary “unhappiness” of this climactic mode of self-consciousness consists precisely in the fact that (within our finite perspective) it must be designated as “consciousness” rather than as “self-consciousness.”

Logically speaking, we ourselves must (as observers) be Sceptics about “the Beyond” at every stage. We cannot observe it; we can only observe the unhappy self observing one aspect of itself *as* the Beyond. This unhappy self is necessarily obliged to recognize its own oneness, its self-identity, as an Other.²⁴ Having begun as a blind self-assertion of the radically singular will, free self-consciousness has now become intellectually visible to itself as the One Will that is done in Heaven, and should be done on Earth likewise. But alas it is *not done*, because that blind singular will is still with us.

Thus, the Changeable now faces the appalling task of self-abolition. It has to free itself from its own original freedom. Only in this way can it escape from the contradiction that it is. What makes the enterprise rational for the Unhappy Consciousness is what we ordinarily call its “faith.” It looks forward to emerging from its self-annihilation in this life, into another life in which it will enjoy “union” with the Unchangeable. Hegel refuses to call this leap “faith” at all, because there is nothing in the “Beyond” that can be experienced. What he calls “Faith” (which I shall always dignify with a capital letter to keep it distinct) uses the same rhetoric, but can be shown to make an effective reference to “experience” (so that it really is

a *mode of knowledge*). The Unhappy Consciousness “knows” only a contradiction. But to say that it *is* this contradiction, is precisely to say that the struggle is endless: every reconciliation of the opposites is a rebirth of conflict. The basic problem of Scepticism has not gone away just because of its inversion. The truth of Revelation is just as contradictory as that of Stoicism and Scepticism.

- 13./209. Union with the Unchangeable is the aim. But this brings the consciousness of one’s own sinfulness. Life is a perpetual repentance for living. To be united with the Unchangeable is still a singular self-assertion. So even the Unchangeable is affected by singularity and is present only as a source of it.

Since we are fighting against ourselves we cannot win, without losing just as much. That is easy to see. But exactly how Hegel wants to put it is not clear. “To win the victory is rather to be conquered” is unproblematic. But then follows “to have achieved the one is rather the loss of the same in its opposite.” The simplest assumption is that Hegel is talking about the two “opposites” from the end of the previous paragraph; and since these opposites are in fact the two modes of “consciousness” we can get at the meaning better by reading the word “consciousness” in. The thesis of the paragraph, in fact, is that when the Changeable consciousness achieves unity with the Unchangeable, the universality of the Unchangeable Consciousness is marred by the singularity of the Changeable, so that the achieved unity necessarily falls back into opposition. The significance of the last clause of paragraph 208, “the opposite does not come to rest in its opposite but only generates itself afresh as opposite,” is explained and deepened by the recognition that when the Unchangeable “enters consciousness” it must do so as “another consciousness.” In this guise it is itself “affected by singularity”—and by striving to be united with the Unchangeable, the changeable singular can only bring this opposite singularity to light. This “self-repulsion of the self-same” prepares us for the experience in which the Unchangeable has first the shape of Lawgiver, and then that of another finite self.

The impossibility of overcoming the opposition is already plain in paragraph 208. The “opposites” are essential to the structure of Self-Consciousness. The struggle of the changeable self to become unchangeable is a hopeless one. The living experience of the contradiction is *Schmerz*, a life of “pain,” of physical suffering. But since this pain is psychologically and not naturally produced (unlike the gout of Posidonius), some one of the more psychological words for *Schmerz* has to be chosen. “Agony”—which Miller uses to good effect here—would do nicely if it retained more of its Greek sense of a struggle in normal parlance. But for a self-consciously generated state of painful consciousness the best of a bad lot still seems (in my view) to be “grief.” On the one hand I abase myself (symbolically I sit in sackcloth and ashes, but I also welcome and proclaim the providential justice of physical sufferings such as the gout). On the other hand I align myself with the Unchangeable righteousness and experience my repentance. But then I am conscious that even in my pious self-abasement, I am facing God as the righteous singular Self. By approaching Him I make Him *another* singular self. I must fall away,

for at best I am only a repentant sinner; but when I come into God's presence *He* is changed. And however hard I may try to deny it I shall eventually have to admit it—if he is “the Other” then he is a single “one” like me.

- 14./210. The movement of this sorrowing is the movement of “Incarnation.” The distinction of the moments remains dominant, as the Unchangeable becomes singular; and the dominance-relation proceeds through three roles: First and always, Father, Lord and Judge; secondly the Son, a man, our brother; thirdly the Spirit, in whom my singularity is reconciled with the universal.

The “movement” must all be produced *by* the Unchangeable in my changeable consciousness.²⁵ The Unchangeable cannot change in His own place. But my experience of Him inverts itself. Just as the world of Law became the “inverted world” of Life, and we were able to comprehend its “Infinity,” so the Infinite Self inverts our awareness of Him comprehensively, and becomes the “Holy Spirit.” As *we* can see, this is a necessity in the evolution of our own human consciousness—a necessity of *thinking*. But it comes to us historically as a free revelation of the Absolute Self; and only when the “movement” is complete will the consciousness that we are observing be able to resolve the paradox of the Unchangeable's appearing to change, by grasping the “movement” as its own necessary contribution.²⁶

For self-consciousness as the finite changeable awareness of the Other, this evolution in its cognizance of the Other has to appear as the way in which the Other has acted in history for the sake of human salvation. Hence, in all the “shapes” of the Unhappy Consciousness “the *distinction* of the two is *still* what is dominant.” The Unhappy Consciousness is the immediate shape of Revelation as a real Concept; in every phase of the historical evolution of Christianity it remains fundamental. In order to *recognize* Providence we must know that we are in *need* of it. At this point, it is the belief in another life beyond death—the interpretation of God's Providence which Hegel refuses to dignify with the name of “Faith” because, within experience, there cannot be any “knowledge” of that Beyond—that goes through its complete evolution for us as the *primitive* mode of our religious experience.

The first mode of this “absolute otherness” is the awareness of the “Holy One” as a Judge: here we find only the ceaseless repetition of the cycle of repentance, justification, and renewed sinfulness. In the second mode “the *Unchangeable* itself has *singularity in it* for consciousness; with the result that singularity is [the] shape of the Unchangeable, onto which the whole mode of existence passes over herewith.” In the third mode, “consciousness finds its own self as this singular being in the Unchangeable.” This last is the transformation of the Unhappy Consciousness into “Faith,” and of the Beyond into Here. The first Unchangeable is an alien judge; the second is another human shape; the third is Spirit, in which the singular consciousness finds itself again as saved.

Since Hegel begins the next paragraph by warning us that “this experience is not, of course, *its own one-sided* motion,” we know that the movement of subjective consciousness, which is all that he is concerned about for the present, is not the whole story of God's Revelation in history. The properly historical aspect of the

experience will be discussed briefly in the next paragraph. But for the moment let us consider how the three moments appear in the mind of a convert like Augustine. His literacy and his philosophical training mean that he can complete all the moments within his own singular consciousness. Otherwise he is in no way a peculiar case.²⁷

First, he is in flight from the world and from himself. Our human helplessness is no sceptical comedy for him, but an experience of absolute “unhappiness.” Reading the Scriptures he finds a Last Judgment pronounced upon this world and its life. God, who is holy, gave us long ago a *law* to live by; but we cannot live by it. So God himself took our sinful nature upon Him, and came to us in human form. As human he died, and returned to himself. From God’s point of view (as the Unchangeable) all this is the eternal truth of his Nature. But, for us, it is a historical event through which we now have a Mediator upon whom we can depend absolutely as a source of pardon at the Last Judgment.

Thirdly, however, the God-Man sent his Spirit to be with us as “Comforter” once he was dead. Through *this* gift we can experience *here and now* the meaning of the promise that we shall share in God’s Kingdom after death. Augustine’s philosophical training stands him in good stead here; for he experiences the sending of the Spirit as the presence of the risen Christ in his mind whenever he reads or thinks any spiritual truth. By himself he can never get out of the sceptical impasse. Everything true that he learns comes from the risen Christ as his “inner teacher.”

But over all of his experience there presides the consciousness of his own sinfulness. Every day he must begin again, experiencing his own wilfulness, condemning himself and turning to Christ. The experience of the “inner teacher” is only the *promise* of salvation, not its *reality*. “Objectivity,” the real presence of God’s Kingdom, he experiences only negatively. Only when he follows the incarnate Savior through the portal of natural death will his salvation be an objective fact. Only then will the struggle to abolish the natural self cease to be “the element of the whole relationship.”

This is the *Gestalt* of Unhappy Consciousness as we meet it in this chapter. God as Judge is the shape of the *past* (before Baptism); God as Spirit is the shape of the *future* (after death). In this life “the whole mode of existence” passes over to the “shape of the Unchangeable.” This paragraph concludes the statement of the “concept” of Unhappy Consciousness. As an “experience” it must go through its three phases one by one. But the “experience” of the singular Unhappy Consciousness is an ambiguous affair, because Hegel is about to tell us that, as a *Gestalt* of singular consciousness, the concept itself *results* from the “experience” of the *Weltgeist*. That *universal* experience (which is completed only by the *Phenomenology* itself) has to be distinguished from the experience of the singular *Gestalt*. For the singular *Gestalt*, the second moment of the World-Experience forms the climax of its evolution as a natural self-consciousness. The “first relationship with the Unchangeable” is remembered only as a “past” abolished by baptism (and in the world of the Unhappy Consciousness as a distributively universal concept, baptism is no longer delayed as it was in the more “particular” experience of Augustine).²⁸

The third relationship, on the other hand, is present only symbolically, or as a promised “future.” It is the second relationship that belongs to Unhappy Consciousness properly—precisely because the sublated first relationship is the “element” in which it defines itself as a *Gestalt*.

- 15./211. This logical exposition resulted as the experience of the Unhappy Consciousness, but it is also the history of the Unchangeable. This last is first Lawgiver; then Jesus condemning and condemned by Pharisees and Rome; finally the “body of Christ.” For we are only concerned with the singular Unhappy Consciousness here. The concept of the Unchangeable in and for itself has not yet arisen and we do not know how it will be related to us yet.

Even in the daily experience of Augustine, the historical aspect of the Revelation, which is the ground of the three moments of his experience, is present. He knows that, until Jesus began his ministry, God was known only as Lawgiver and Judge; and that the Spirit of Christ as the Inner Teacher was only manifest after the Ascension. He *must* be aware of this because the Unchangeable Consciousness is one side of his consciousness; but as a side of his consciousness it is always simply Unchangeable. Its “changing” belongs not to Augustine’s own experience, but to that of the human race; and that historical dimension cannot concern us directly as yet, because we are now concerned only with the evolution of the singular “shapes of consciousness.” But Hegel needs to refer to it in passing, because the Unhappy Consciousness does not “think.” It receives its truth passively as a revelation; and the shape of “God’s history” in the singular consciousness is different from the one it will have in the history of the World-Spirit.

Hegel warns us at this point that the evolution of the Unchangeable as the World-Spirit will concern *us* later, and that we do not know yet how “the Unchangeable in and for itself will behave” (or will be related [to us]—*sich verhalten*). This is puzzling, because when we come upon the Unhappy Consciousness as a phase in the development of the “manifest Religion” (pars. 751–754) it seems, at first sight, to be the same experience in that context as it is here. It certainly involves the same time-period. So we must ask why a mystery is made here, and what the novelty is, that is promised for later.

The answer can be given quickly, and just as quickly confirmed. For the Unhappy Consciousness as a singular *Gestalt* it is Jerusalem (and Mount Sinai, and Golgotha and so on) that matters; but for the Absolute Spirit what matters is Athens (and Sparta). Rome is the hinge of fate for both movements, but they are indeed different. The “experience that the split self-consciousness makes in its unhappiness” goes all the way from the Exodus (or from Abraham) to Jacobi and Schleiermacher; and the implication of Hegel’s “Science” is that it will never vanish altogether. But the things that happened in and around Jerusalem gave rise to the “belief of the world” largely through the life work of a single consciousness that passed through all the relationships that Hegel enumerates: the apostle Paul. He was born a Jew, and he began by zealously persecuting the heretical sect with its crucified Messiah, in the name of God’s “Law.” He had no contact with Jesus in

the flesh, though he counted his conversion experience as the last of the accepted encounters with the Risen Lord. It was not a bodily vision that was accorded to him, however, but only the sound of a voice; and the voice spoke of itself as living still to be persecuted in its surviving community. "Saul," said the voice, "why persecutest thou *me*?" when Jesus himself was beyond the reach of persecution.

Thus it was the third relationship that became decisive for the new-named Paul: the sense that "Now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."²⁹ But while living himself in that third relationship (being probably the first to do so, and the one who invented it) Paul remembered and described vividly what the first relationship (that of "living under the law") was like; and he organized the lives of many who stood in the second relationship. The second relationship (as I understand it) is the state of dependence on the Savior who has "gone to Heaven" ahead of us. "The whole mode of existence steps over on to" the hope of Heaven as guaranteed by this Savior as a singular witness—"the Master" who was once alive and is now dead.

When we come to the "biography of God" as it is given in chapter VII, we shall not find any sign of the "first relationship" as it was experienced by consciousness in the person of Paul. The invisible God of Moses, with his Law, does not appear in the phenomenology of "Religion" (and that is only proper since "not appearing" is the absolute character of that God). In Hegel's biography of God as the *Weltgeist*, we shall recognize Lordship and Bondage in Egyptian religion; Stoicism and Scepticism appear in Greek Religion as Tragedy and Comedy; and the Unhappy Consciousness (or the grief of God's Death) appears in the Roman destruction of that "living work of art."

The "first relationship" of the World-Spirit in Unhappy Consciousness is "the grief that expresses itself in the hard saying that "God is dead" (par. 752). This "grief" is present but always "sublated" in the present chapter. In the experience of the singular *Gestalt* God is always very much alive; it is Man, the finite changeable consciousness, who is properly "dead," and who ought to *realize* that "death." For the finite *Gestalt* the experience of "God's death" comes at the end of the long evolution of "Faith" in its battle with "Enlightenment." It is the moment of darkness out of which the truly speculative or "manifest" Religion (which is *not* "Christianity" in any pre-Hegelian understanding of it) is born.

The "Judgment" that is involved in the "first relationship" of the World-Spirit (to God as "dead") is a *human* judgment—the judgment of the Roman Empire upon all the pagan cultures that worshipped "living" Gods. For the World-Spirit, the Unchangeable itself appears as Judge only momentarily at the beginning of the "second relationship." At that point it is the heritage of pagan culture that is "judged" by the Christian God. We can hear this "judgment" in Augustine's sad farewell to Virgil and the other poets of his professional career; but it is only in the Divine Julian (c. 331–363, traditionally called Julian the Apostate) that we can observe this "last Judgment" in what Hegel identifies as its absolute perspective. The failure of Julian's attempt to restore the old ways was the "judgment of God" upon paganism; and Augustine was as much a child of the Hellenistic culture as Julian (not a Hellenized child of Israel like Paul). So the gulf between Julian and

Augustine is a fair measure of the difference between the “unhappiness” of consciousness as singular, and that of “the Unchangeable in and for itself” (or in slightly less puzzling language the “unhappy consciousness of the *Weltgeist*”).

If someone had expounded the doctrine of paragraph 211 to Augustine (according to my reading of it) he would have said without hesitation that the experience of singular “consciousness” was more important than the passion of “the Unchangeable in and for itself.” Hegel largely agrees with this verdict; his agreement is implicit in the basic thesis that “the True is to be grasped and expressed not as substance but *just as much* as subject” (par. 17). The movement in Paul’s consciousness is a one-sided one; but it is that missing side that is *just as important* (by itself) as what Julian misguidedly took for the whole.

Thus I am not just being faithful to the argument of the paragraph when I return finally to Paul’s martyrdom in Rome (about the year 67 A.D.). The years 65–70 A.D. really are more important than Julian’s failure in 361–363 A.D.—or even than the sack of Rome in 410 (which Augustine might have nominated as the moment when “the return of the substance into itself” began). Paul was executed near the end of Nero’s reign; Nero’s death precipitated “the year of the four Emperors” (which showed that the truth of Scepticism is not really comic); and that crisis ended with the arrival of Vespasian in Rome from Palestine. He had left Titus behind him to finish the siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, and the scattering of the Jews among the nations (which lasted until Hegel’s time and beyond). For the Unhappy Consciousness of Christianity (then still no more than a barely noticeable fraction of the Diaspora) the destruction of the Temple was to become the outward ending of the “first relationship.” The full recognition of the “second relationship” came with the conversion of Constantine (312 A.D.). Only with the advent of Luther (the ninety-five theses, 1517) will the *Weltgeist* decisively move to the “third relationship” (as Paul understood it). Hegel’s book is the rolling up of all the “relationships” into the speculatively comprehended *identity* of substance and subject.

(d) *The “Second Relationship” (the Historic Good Friday)*

- 16./212. So, as an object, the Unchangeable Consciousness remains a separate being. God’s incarnation is an *event*, and we are “fallen by nature.” Our salvation comes by grace, but also we will it. So the antithesis persists even in our saved condition. The opposition between Here and Yonder becomes *more* fundamental; for although the Unchangeable becomes incarnate, this means that it became a single physical human, far away and long ago; and salvation must be *hoped* for Yonder.

This is the paragraph in which the sublated presence of the “first relationship” as the fixed element of the whole experience is made clear. For the World-Spirit, the Unhappy Consciousness in its first mode exists from Alexander’s conquest of the Greek cities onwards. It is the aspect of the real situation that the lordly philosophers (and especially the Sceptics) ignore. But as an explicit selfconscious state—

the projection of One God into an intelligible Beyond—the first mode of the Unhappy Consciousness was confined to the Jews. When the known world is all subject to Roman Law, we have in actuality a Sceptical experience that clearly *points* to the need for a Stoically righteous God to reveal Himself. By then, however, we need him not just as a Lord, but as a Savior. As a conscious state of the *Weltgeist* the first relationship exists in the decadence of Hellenistic speculation, and as the Lordship of Fate (see pars. 752–756). But it is the second relationship that has world-historical importance; and that begins as contingently as the accession of an Emperor. It is proclaimed and believed that the Unchangeable Consciousness of that strange and scattered sect called the Jews took human shape upon Himself, and died “for the sins of the whole world.” This Gospel (or good news) is accepted for the world by its hitherto divine representative in 312 A.D. The event of Yahweh’s Incarnation is supposed to have occurred in the time of the first of the divine rulers, whose successor now sets that status aside. Effectively, therefore, the Savior in another world takes the place of the Universal Judge who has been recognized as humanly present in this world. The Unhappy Consciousness comprehends and overarches in the fourth century the real world of Stoicism and Scepticism, which has existed since the first (Stoicism being realized in constitutional legal theory and Scepticism in the Roman legions).³⁰

By this time, the divinely human Lord of the invisible kingdom is long dead. But he is as singular as the visible Emperor was, under whose worldly dominion he died. According to the universal declaration of the Unhappy Consciousness, he was “crucified under Pontius Pilate.” So the human consciousness, which has learned to know its *fallen* condition in the centuries since then, simply *finds* itself “opposed” to this singular shape of the Unchangeable, and has this relationship “by Nature.” When the believer reads the words of the founder (or of his great apostle), or hears them read, she knows that she is saved in the “body of Christ.” In part this is because the worshipper has given herself to God.³¹ But the union with God pertains also to God, both as historic salvation, and as eternal truth. There is a paradox involved in the union because these “parts” will not fit together. The “creation and preservation” of the free self that knows itself in God is *entirely* due to God; and God “became man” historically because He is “the Son” from all eternity. The “unity” of God and man is an eternal truth; hence the antithesis of his “two natures” persists even in the figure of the historical Savior himself. This was, of course, the battleground of many early heresies within the community of the faithful; and the partisans fought because they agreed about the *fact* which they did not know how to interpret harmoniously.

The “shaping” of the Unchangeable, as a human being like ourselves, *reinforced* the “otherness” of God as God. The distinction between “this life” and “the life beyond” became more radical. That we should be saved “Yonder” became ever more miraculous and more mysterious, because, instead of Paul’s glorious intuition of the Savior risen and “living *in* me,” what triumphed as orthodoxy in the battle of the heresies was the figure that appeared to doubting Thomas: a solid physical being with nailholes in hands and feet, who “ascended” to Heaven ahead of us. We

can only live in *hope* of rejoining that historic figure in his own kingdom after we die; what it *means* to be one with Him there, to be a “member of his body,” we cannot imagine or conceive. The words of our faith have no present meaning. Miraculously he came; and he gave us the message of hope. But ns if

But now, precisely because he came to *die* for us, he is necessarily long gone. And since he came to a people far away, speaking a language none of us know, his memory abides now far away in the Holy Land where his holy places are.³²

- 17./213. Before the event of incarnation, the Unhappy Consciousness strove to live by the Law (“become the Unchangeable”); since that event it strives to come to Christ, to “live in Him.”

The first sentence of this paragraph makes the transition to the “second relationship.” For the Unhappy Consciousness, God is “recollected” as the life under the Law. But for us (as methodical observers) there is a problem about this transition. What is “the mere concept of the split consciousness”? In terms of the explicit argument of the previous paragraphs it seems that this has to be the sceptical consciousness inverted into a finite awareness of Fate as the “Unchangeable.” How can these two “histories” be seen to coincide? The Sceptic (and the Stoic) did strive to “*become the Unchangeable*” (i.e., to be *imperturbable*) in thought. The “inversion” is from theory to practice, and from “happiness” to “unhappiness” as a result. But for both the Sceptic and the Jew (rather than the Stoic) the truth of life was a relationship with the purely shapeless (or conceptual) Unchangeable. The curious formulation of the goal of piety as “becoming the Unchangeable Consciousness” seems to be Hegel’s way of melding his own interpretation of the evolution of the *Weltgeist* (which passes through Stoicism, Scepticism and, I suppose, Plotinus) with the perspective of the Christian Unhappy Consciousness (for which the “first relationship” to the Unchangeable is the Mosaic Covenant of God with his chosen people). Whether any of the Rabbis ever thought of “walking righteously in God’s sight” as “union with God” I do not know. It is important to realize that this does not matter. Paul *remembered* his Jewish heritage in this way, because membership in the Body of Christ was the Christian goal.³³

The ambiguity continues right through the paragraph. In accordance with his own insistence that, for the present, we must leave the history of the *Weltgeist* out, Hegel simply ignores the fact that the great mass of pagan converts had no Jewish experience. But the hiatus is easy to fill. Paul could preach the “Unknown God” to the Greeks, because they all had a “sceptical” experience, which could readily invert itself into a “need”—if it had not already done so. With the proclamation of the Gospel, their relation with the Unchangeable as an abstract being without any human shape—the consciousness of a fate without any meaning—was changed into a pilgrimage towards “oneness with the shaped Unchangeable.” The Gospel was preached in the context of an exposition of the “Old Testament” which reinterpreted (and often distorted) its original quite “particular” meaning.

The Jewish experience of Paul was not a world-experience; but it was one in which the world could recognize itself. And later on (in the Universal Church of

which Hegel is actually speaking here) every nascent Christian consciousness could recognize Paul's first relation with the invisible Lawgiver as what it needed to be "saved from." The change of "essence and object" which Hegel speaks of, became the universal and compulsory topic of instruction. Everyone was *taught* that her natural condition is that of the "lost soul." But she was further taught that the invisible Lord has ordained everything according to his eternal Will. The baptized child does not have the Jewish experience even vicariously; for if she learns to read at all, she reads the Bible in the context of its universalized Christian interpretation. Salvation, in any case, now depends on the new relationship with the dead Savior in the *New Testament*.

It is certainly right to emphasize the significance of the gradual spreading of the capacity to read; for the external connection with the shaped Unchangeable can only be raised up into the Pauline consciousness of membership in the Body of Christ through a spiritual contact with the "shape." This experience of "becoming-one" is the final phase of the process of *Bildung* which Hegel analyses in the next paragraph. But we must not forget how many uneducated people have received the Gospel orally, and yet achieved the goal of an inward unity with the "shaped Unchangeable." Justice to Hegel himself requires this recollection; for the distinction between "letter" and "spirit" remained a matter of fundamental importance in his *overeducated* mind. His account of the Unhappy Consciousness is not the "burlesque" of Christian consciousness that some students (both devout and profane) would like to make it out to be.

- 18./214. The "way to Christ" has three parts: hearing the Gospel, carrying one's Cross, and knowing one is saved.

I have deliberately tried to turn Hegel's conceptual language back into the language of religious devotion here. And I have done so because the first essential is to know what "experience of consciousness" he is talking about. Hegel could take it for granted that his audience would know what the "threefold relation with its shaped Beyond" was, since they were still universally subject to the teaching process by which it was set up. But we are no longer in that situation, so it needs to be spelled out.

Having spelled it out in the analysis, I want to emphasize in the commentary first how completely secular Hegel's own language is; and secondly what a *historically material* conception he has of the path of salvation. The religious encounter with the Savior is spoken of as "pure consciousness." This is strictly "philosophical" talk; it refers us, on the one hand, to Kant and Fichte, for whom "pure" Reason designates the *a priori* structure of consciousness in abstraction from any experienced content; and on the other hand, to the "pure consciousness" which the Stoic and Sceptic professors strove after. Kant and Fichte did not think "pure consciousness" needed to be striven for in the theoretical sense; and practical purity of motive they regarded as unachievable—that is how they belong to the Unhappy Consciousness. But long before they arrived on the scene, the embodiment of the

Unchangeable meant for the Unhappy Consciousness that this “unhappy” reading of the sceptical situation did not have to be accepted quite so simply. The Unhappy Consciousness (in its “second relationship”) does not have the rational confidence of the Stoics and Sceptics; but it is not as “unhappy” as Kant and Fichte (who are part of the darkest hour before the dawn).

The first movement of “pure consciousness” is a “hearing” of the Gospel that is *devotion* to it. What must intervene between “devotion” and the “being-for-self” that is achieved in the third moment of Unhappy Consciousness is a long discipline of the singular consciousness through “desire and labor.” All of the orthodox Marxists who believe that Hegel’s doctrine is that “ideas make things happen” should study his account of how the Idea made *itself* happen. For it is hard to see anything in Hegel’s account other than a *harmlessly* “mystified” version of what Marx himself taught. We must concede the element of “mystification” (at least for the moment) because of Hegel’s distinction between the “side of consciousness” and the evolution of the Unchangeable itself. But, for the stage of social evolution that we are presently observing, even Marx allows that distinction (as the form of “false consciousness”); and Hegel’s distinction between what is “for consciousness” and what is “for us” is a more neutral way of formulating the Marxian distinction between “ideology” and “science.”

“Being-for-self” was where the evolution of self-consciousness began. It is what has now passed over to the Unchangeable Consciousness as a result of the adequate comprehension and inversion of the *comedy* of Scepticism. The circus-displays by which Carneades secured “suspense of judgment” turned over into conscious unhappiness when that “suspense” was recognized as an absolute *loss*. The way back from this parlous condition, began with the proclamation of the Gospel. But the unhappiness of consciousness can only end when it recovers its being-for-self *in* the absolute Self. We shall now observe how the three moments of the “second relationship” evolve until this moment of self-recognition can occur.

(e) *Sunday Consciousness*

- 19./215. When one receives the Gospel, it seems this is how God and man are “one.” But this devotion is not the real “body of Christ.” Christ must “live in me”; and that can only happen by his own grace.

The “shaped Unchangeable” seems to be perfectly presented in the Gospel record. But the image of the Savior constructed in consciousness by the pondering of devotion upon the record is *not* the way that the Unchangeable is embodied properly and finally. The record itself says so, for Paul’s experience is there to tell the faithful believer what it means to be a Christian.

This creates a problem. On the side of experience, the meditation that makes me ever more conscious of my own sinful failure and imperfection, is all that I can do. The gulf between me and the object of my devotion can never be bridged in this life. God’s grace must save me, and I must try to deserve it. But Salvation can only

be granted to me after death. The Savior is in *his* Kingdom, and I am here in this fallen world. To suppose that I am better than the world is the one certain way of being worse; my path to salvation must rather be a continual reflection on how I am the greatest of sinners.

One might object that this penitential mode of devotion produced, and was always buoyed up by, the consciousness of its “saints.” But this reflection properly belongs to the third moment in Hegel’s analysis. St. Francis, for example, marked miraculously as the type of the Savior himself, is a portent, or an evidence of the reality of that grace which the penitent looks for in her own case only at death. The “third relationship” is triumphant when these marks of promise become no longer singular pledges of hope, but are a universal and present experience. For this first moment, it is the gulf of death that is the “antithesis” between the worshipper and the Savior. Devotion produces only a “onesided presence.” I can know my Savior only as an “other.” He is *here* for me, but only externally, and in a way that points to a “true and perfect” presence in the Beyond. My devotion is “burdened” with the *Gegensatz* that belongs to simple consciousness as such.

- 20./216. The hearing believer has advanced beyond the Stoic thinking that closes its eyes to singularity altogether, and beyond the Scepticism that asserts its contradictory presence. It does not achieve rational identity, but it is a halfway house where abstract thinking makes a conscious *contact* between the singular consciousness and the Unchangeable as singular.

Trust in a miraculous transformation of existence beyond the boundary of the present life seems like a terrible falling away, compared with the Stoic’s recognition of all men (Emperors, slaves, women, foreign speakers of strange tongues) as friends and fellow-citizens in the world city of Reason which is the only native land of the wise man. The Sceptic shares that vision (we should remember), and only insists that we must not deceive ourselves about *how* the universal city is realized. In place of that universal Earthly City, we now have a pilgrimage to a City beyond the gates of death, in which (as the very fact that it is beyond death already indicates) a quite incomprehensible divine power restores that part of the Stoic vision which the Sceptics denied. Stoic and Sceptic alike would denounce this “sublimation” of their ideal as irrational.

But the finite experience of the embodied consciousness receives absolute recognition here. God loves every one of his children; the seeming irrationality of the leap of faith is just a clear intuition of this truth, affirmed in the face of the recognized contradictoriness of a sceptical situation that points us towards despair.

It is clear that Hegel means to embrace the ratiocinative method and arguments of the Scholastic philosophers and theologians under what he says in this paragraph.³⁴ When he comes to describe the actual “experience” of devotion he insists on its *muteness*. The “contact” of devotion is the speechless witnessing of the miracle of the Mass. It is *Andenken*, it goes to the threshold of “thinking,” but does not cross the line. Yet here he speaks of the contact as taking place through a mode of *abstract* thinking which is more advanced than the logical reasoning of the Stoics

and Sceptics; it is more than merely “formal” thought, but it is not yet at the (Cartesian) level where “the singularity of consciousness is quite reconciled (*ausgesöhnt*) with the pure thinking itself.”

The eventual “reconciliation of singularity with pure thinking” is what Descartes achieved in the *Cogito*. So the pure thinking spoken of here, is at the threshold of speculative consciousness—the threshold which the Unhappy Consciousness reaches in its *Andenken* but which it does not cross. Abstraction is only overcome in the thinking certainty of my existence which not even the Devil can take from me, and through which I am united with the thinking of God himself. On the other side, below the “abstract thinking” of the finite Understanding (which reaches its own conscious limit in *Andenken*) we have the formal thinking of Stoicism which prescind from the singularity of experience altogether, or “thinks it away” (*Wegsehen*); and the concrete but negative thinking of Scepticism (which is just that restless contradictoriness of singular experience that led Descartes to try the test of the *génie malin* as a way of escape).

Hegel himself finds it hard to describe *Andenken*, the stilling of dialectical restlessness in the Unhappy Consciousness; but in the Unhappy Consciousness, the extremes of Stoic “pure thought” and Sceptical “pure existence” *touch* one another. The Unhappy Consciousness *is* this “touching” of the Unchangeable and the Changeable. It does not have the Cartesian rational certainty of a substantial identity, but it knows that it is *in touch* with God. It knows that it is itself a singular thinking existence, and that the Unchangeable is also essentially a singular thinking existence. This knowledge is “abstract.” The concrete embodiment of the division in thought, is all in *Vorstellungen* that refer to “another world.” I am not united with God in this world, but as an “immortal soul” in God’s own “Kingdom.” The context of all my true thinking is my trust in the Other who has revealed himself. Hence I do not *understand* my own thinking. The two singulars cannot be united because the structure of Understanding consciousness dictates that as singulars they are separate.

So, for example, Anselm can formulate the Ontological Argument. But even when he has it in his mind he must say “We *believe* that thou art that etc.” He cannot say (as Descartes would not hesitate to say) “We *know* that thou art that etc.” The certainty of participating in God’s knowledge does not, and cannot, belong to the Changeable consciousness; it lives in the world of the Sceptical anarchy of free singular Reason. Everyone formulates the revealed Truth in their own way; and there is no way that is certain “in itself.”

Gaunilo’s response to Anselm’s argument illustrates the abstractness, which Anselm transcended in the moment of *contact*. Gaunilo held that a valid argument about existence ought to apply to the “perfect island,” because God is on *his* island, and we are on ours; the Understanding abstracts every concept onto an island of its own.

21./217. As contact with God, therefore [i.e. in worship], the Unhappy Consciousness does not *properly think* but *feels*. The encounter is in thought, and both parties are intellec-

tual, but their meeting is a speechless communion of sound without sense, a thinking that thinks the singularity of the self and of God in mutual recognition. But the singular being who was God is dead. My singular living being is what is opposed to God; and the Savior can only be found as dead. So the focus of devotion is a *grave*. And because property-right is essentially contestable, that grave is an object of warfare, a battleground for inevitable defeat. Only after the defeat of this devotional attitude can the quest for true salvation begin.

It is fitting at this point to remember that the Ontological Argument is formulated in a *prayer*. But it is plain in this paragraph that Hegel does not want us to focus our attention on a place of learning like the great monastery at Bec, or on the network of travelling brothers plodding back and forth—for instance from Bec to Marmoutier, with Anselm's little prayer-treatise fresh copied for Brother Gaunilo to answer with an "Apology on behalf of the fool." We must think rather of the countrymen whom the travelling brother would meet on his road. Shakespeare (who belongs to the world of Reason) would not hesitate to call these peasants "fools" (or "clowns"). But they are not like the "fool" whom Anselm and Gaunilo are arguing about. They are believers. They cannot give a philosophical interpretation of what it means to say that they are "made in the image of God." "God the Father" they recognize in a picture of an old man with an impressive white beard. But they know that God loves them, and that this is very lucky because they are sinners, and must roast in Hell if they do not try to love Him in return. For they also know that they have immortal souls, and that the testing of the soul beyond death is what they have to be concerned about here and now. That is why Hegel does not want us to worry about Anselm, and the brothers or laymen whose education falls to his charge as the Prior of Bec. In sinking back to the level of "consciousness" and giving independent selfhood to God alone, the Unhappy Consciousness becomes *universal*. This is its most important advance over Stoicism and Scepticism—and especially over Scepticism which acknowledges that there are no "wise men," but continues to act as if this admission itself was a wisdom that sets the wise man apart.³⁵

The peasants who give the travelling brothers bread, cheese, and a little wine, for charity's sake are not expected to *think*. When they are driven by circumstances to try to think for themselves, they make insurrections. What they need to know they are told. When they come to worship God, they come to pray and to give thanks. Prayer and thanksgiving can be high modes of thought (as we see in Anselm); but the thought is *self-estranged*, because worship is explicitly something else first. Prayer and thanksgiving are acts of intuitive recognition, face to face modes of behaviour which express the unequal status of the parties involved. (The implicit contradiction is apparent in the reverent thinking of Anselm's prayer; true thought is implicitly an equal conversation with an other who is *here*.)

Hegel takes advantage of the echo relation between the German words *denken*, to think, *Andenken*, remembrance, commemoration, and *Andacht*, religious devotion. We should not forget the middle term *Andenken*, because the most important "service" in the liturgy of the Church is the Mass, which reenacts and commemorates a

symbolic ceremony that the living Savior went through with his disciples at their last communal meal. At the moment in the service when that original occasion is recalled, a bell is rung. It is unquestionably this bell whose “shapeless” sound Hegel means to refer to. The sound comes at a moment whose significance everyone appreciates. But it is “shapeless” because it does not say anything.³⁶ For the reverent faithful, there is nothing that can be said. We are in the presence of a mystery. Every aspect of what is happening is beyond and above the comprehensive power of our reason.

Hegel speaks in the tones of the Stoic and Sceptical professors observing the behaviour of the superstitious masses. I have tried to match him by describing the ceremony in the manner of the reformed faith that has come to terms with the Enlightenment. It is important for the present to avoid the “Lutheran middle” interpretation espoused by Hegel himself. But if we allow the mute peasant to speak with the voice of those brothers whom Anselm instructed, he will say that he is witnessing a “miracle” when the bell rings and the censer is swung. The bread *becomes* the body of the Savior, and the wine becomes his blood. It still looks and tastes the same, but it is now the outward form of a different substance, a spiritual substance that belongs to God’s kingdom rather than to this fallen world.

Instead of bringing any of that in,³⁷ Hegel qualifies this state of devotion as “a musical thinking that does not come to the Concept which would be the only immanently objective mode [for it].”³⁸ Devotion is the *feeling* of the inward presence of an Other—a presence which is “objective” in the way that outward or physical objects are. It is “other”; it does not “flow in” as an objective presence of the kind that sustains the subject. This would be the immanent objective mode, for which I think we can adopt Paul’s description: “Now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” as the ideal model. The alien presence is an absolute or *universal* presence (that is what is meant by calling the feeling “pure”). It must *contain* me, the worshipper, as a witnessing presence; but it remains radically “Other.”

The “purity” (or logical universality) of the experience is what makes the worshipper certain that only an absolute fool “could say in his heart ‘There is no God.’” The “heart” of which the Psalmist speaks is what Hegel renders here as *Gemüth*.³⁹ The “movement” of the reverent *Gemüth* is unmistakably “penitence.” The worshipping self is “painfully split”; and her motion is a straining away from her impure self towards the unattainable purity of the Other. The movement is checked or tethered, and it does not go anywhere (except momentarily). The act of contrition purifies the living whole at the moment of devotion; but the Other remains Other. There is an impassable gulf between this fallen world and the Beyond; and because of its sensory transience (as a feeling) the moment of purification, which is conscious of its immediate transition, becomes a “yearning” or “nostalgia” (*Sehnsucht*) for a home (or a condition) that is nowhere in this life.

The yearning “has the certainty that its essence is the sort of pure *Gemüth*, or pure *thinking*, that thinks itself *as singularity*; and that it [the yearning] is cognized and recognized by this object precisely because the object thinks itself as singularity.” It is a defeated or “unhappy” yearning, however, because it cannot itself think

what it is “certain” that the object thinks. The devout self knows what it is to be singular; and so whenever she seeks the “singular shape” of the Unchangeable she sinks back into herself as the *antithesis* of the Unchangeable. Christ has ascended into Heaven. But when I follow him there as a believer, I find *myself*, and as soon as I do that, I am conscious of my alien embodiment, here in this world and opposed to that divine kingdom.

The effective “middle” is death. The singularity of God in Christ is available to me *here*, only as what is left to me of the dead Jesus. The status of the risen Christ as the eternal singularity of the Unchangeable in the Beyond, is represented in the world of here and now by a *grave*. This *points* to the selfhood that cannot be successfully thought on this side of the grave. Hence the epic struggle of the universal consciousness that is in this world only as a community of journeying pilgrims, is the *Crusades*.⁴⁰ The grave of the Savior must necessarily be the central focus and symbol of the truth that this life is only a pilgrimage towards the other one. Only when the inexorable transience of the sensible world teaches us that we cannot maintain contact, in that sensible mode, with the divine self who came to save us, do we begin at last to reconceptualize what it is to be a singular consciousness, as distinct from a singular “thing.” Then our problem will be to *recover* “thinghood”; at present, it is the certainty of “thinghood” that stands in our way.

The unhappiness of consciousness arises from the loss of “thinghood” in both ways—naïve and involuntary, and self-consciously deliberate. All of the language of this *Gestalt* describes a contemporary (1800) mode of religious piety, and a distinctively Protestant one at that. But the contemporary piety is well aware that “sacred relics” are of no use to it. Hegel generally uses *Sehnsucht* to refer to the devotional piety of Jacobi and Schleiermacher.⁴¹ Thus, one thing that he has contrived to do here is to move from one extreme of the spectrum of Christian religiosity (the beginning) to the other (the final mourning posture of faith, completely worsted by the Enlightenment). The poles are “identical,” but also they are “opposites”; and it is the “naïve” pole that Hegel wants us to attend to at this stage. For although he uses the language of the Protestant piety driven back to this “feeling” by the Enlightenment in his own world—the piety that insists that we cannot “know” God, we can only have an immediate feeling of him in the absolute darkness of our own finitude—he makes this explicit reference to the barons and their men-at-arms (*Knechte*) who went on the Crusades.

Hegel holds that the failure and abandonment of the Crusades led to the recognition that dependence on the singular “shaped Unchangeable” is not the way of salvation. Consciousness has to accept that the grave is empty, the physical reality of the Savior is long gone. If the Savior is indeed objectively present when the bell is rung and the censer swings, then he is present in quite another way than the sensibly perceptible mode in which a flesh and blood person would be present.

A glance at the Philosophy of Religion Lectures of 1824 shows that what the Unhappy Consciousness of the Crusaders has in common with the extreme of Protestant subjectivity is the “observational” attitude. For both extremes God is not an *immanent* object that embraces our own thinking being as it develops and unfolds in

our thought.⁴² The God of true “devotion” is a transcendent being whose presence can only be “felt.” For the Unhappy Consciousness in its original shape, this inner feeling was identical with an externally sensible presence, signalized by the bell and the incense. The Protestant virtuosi of inward feeling regarded this symbolic outward presence with contempt as a piece of superstitious mummerly.⁴³

It is important to notice that there is no polemical partisanship of that sort in the present paragraph. The superiority of thinking to feeling is clearly asserted here. But it is asserted against the piety of inward and of outward sensibility equally; and it is clear enough in *Faith and Knowledge*, that Hegel regards the “objective beauty” of religious ceremonial as sounder and healthier than the “subjective beauty” of religious sentiment.

Within the *Phenomenology* itself, the subjective piety of pure feeling develops from the perceived divinity of the Unhappy Consciousness (where what is inward is the sense of sin) to the absolute inwardness of the Beautiful Soul (where what is outward is all sinful, and the inward feeling is at one with God, who is no longer an alien presence). But Hegel claims that, at that point, the soul, in its self-conscious holiness, has become the actual principle of *evil*. The development is necessary, and it represents an enormous advance in self-consciousness. But we must not identify development and conceptual advance with *improvement*. On the contrary, it is the Unhappy Consciousness venerating its relics that is the healthy state of religion as feeling.

We should remember that the self-deceptive cycle of sense-certainty and perception is the normal state of healthy consciousness. The Unhappy Consciousness (as characterized here in its logical place) is the corresponding cycle of religious sensation and perception. Hegel presents both phases in an ironic light, and comments upon both in tones of outright sarcasm. He has to do this because he wants to move us from the certainty of “common sense” to the comprehensively inverted standpoint of “Science.” But it is only the *final* scientific standpoint that can claim (if *any* standpoint can) to be “healthier” than the ordinary feet-on-the-ground attitude of “healthy common sense.” One of Hegel’s reasons for characterizing the piety of the pilgrim Crusaders in the very terms that he applies to contemporary Protestant religiosity, is precisely that the pilgrim consciousness which continually lays hold of “holy things” that are merely symbols, and are in themselves quite unessential, is the standpoint of “religious common sense,” and as such is common to all of the different Christian confessions.

The empty tomb is an apt symbol for the “unhappiness” of religious common sense, because the Risen Lord first appeared to the repentant sinner, Mary Magdalen, who came to the tomb meaning to anoint the body, only to find that it was gone (John 20; Mark 16:1). This common sense is also healthier than the extreme of Protestant subjectivity because it does contain the cognitive moment of thoughtful *recognition*. Hegel does, indeed, say that it is “musical thinking,” which seems to suggest that it is inward feeling without a clear meaning, just as music is beautiful sound without an intelligible sense; and this coheres with the main theme of the paragraph: the focussing of devotion upon external sensible signs and relics

of the departed Savior. But apparently the thinking is “musical” not because it has *no* sense, but because its reference is to the Beyond. For the contrite consciousness has the certainty that the essence which is for it the truth (i.e. the “shaped Unchangeable,” or the Savior) knows and recognizes it as a brother, because that essence is a pure thinking that thinks itself as singularity. This consciousness is aware that the Unchangeable has taken human *shape* upon itself, and is indeed another *man*. All the fruitless questing to find and preserve the traces of that man, to reverence his *memory*—fruitless because “his kingdom is not of this world”—reflects the inner certainty that, although dead and gone, he is still the *pure* essence of humanity, the essence whose existence is to think itself.

(f) *The Working Week*

- 22./218. Devotion teaches the absolute value of singular actuality. The pure heart is a *self*, and must assert itself. But it is alienated from its world and from itself. It *finds* itself alive, so it sets itself to deny its identity with this life. It cannot help experiencing the self-affirmation involved in desire and labor. But it must break that, in order to confirm its own split condition.

Nowhere is the contrast between the consciousness that we are observing, and ourselves, so absolute as here. The Unhappy Consciousness experiences every necessity as a *fact*. In devotion it returns into itself, and *feels* the absolute significance of its singular selfhood. God himself became a man of flesh and blood. Only He knows how that was possible. But what it means is that we can be saved from this contradictory world when we die.

Meanwhile it is a fact that we are alive. We desire and we labor; so we must desire not to desire, and labor only for the glory of God. We cannot see how we can be the “pure *Gemüt*” otherwise. This was how the Savior himself showed forth his oneness with “the Father.” The Sceptical contradiction is resolved by being *broken* into its two halves.⁴⁴ The self-certainty of the devout self belongs to the promised life with the Savior; and the self that is made by labor belongs to him even now. One must live always for the greater glory of God. Our share in his glory will come later.⁴⁵

This is probably the best place to point out that Karl Marx was wrong to say: “Labor as Hegel understands and recognizes it is abstract mental labor.”⁴⁶ The labor of the serf was physical, and only reveals a mental side superveniently in its “result.” Serfdom is labor in the most stringent sense because it is involuntary and enforced. The labor of the Unhappy Consciousness is “self-estranged.” On the physical side it is a voluntary-compulsory service to natural need, which is “broken” into the unavoidable enjoyment of satisfied desire, and the voluntary service of God. This voluntary service is “mental”; and it is what is important *to the Unhappy Consciousness* (but not yet to us). In this aspect, the laboring of the serf has here become both *free* and *universal*. It comprehends all human activity—that of the lords as much as that of their servants. It is important in its “unhappy” aspect, because it fails of its object. Nothing that the Unhappy Consciousness does can

make any difference in “the Beyond.” But the poor sinners, maintaining and enjoying their own lives willy-nilly, have to go on trying to serve God; and, of course, they are transforming this world physically and socially all the time. This inversion of the pattern of serfdom (where physical labor was the focus of attention, and spiritual liberation came unheralded) is what matters to us. For when the reconciled Unhappy Consciousness attends to it, we shall arrive in the world of the self-conscious *Bildung* of Faith.

For Faith, too, the important aspect of its *Bildung* is the mental transformation of the self—which becomes at that stage an *objective* achievement. Insight teaches Faith that the *real* transformation of life in this world is what matters; and that again is what is important to us. In *Bildung*, where the serf’s experience of spiritual “liberation” becomes both the direct, and the successful, object(ive) of consciousness, we can see that the real mistake of Marx was to accept the conceptual opposition between “concrete physical” and “abstract mental” labor in the first place. That opposition belongs to Greek philosophy, and to the bourgeois society of Hegel and Marx; but not to the Hegelian philosophy. There is no mental self-making in Hegel which is not *essentially* a physical making of the world at the same time. Free *labor* is this *identity* of human thought and action. In the serf’s activity it is a “simple” (i.e. unreflective) concept; in *Bildung* it becomes reflective; in enlightened Utility, it is self-conscious but self-external; and in Conscience, it is fully reconciled, i.e. self-expressive.

Even the world that recognized a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as the highest possible act of devotion, was in the ordinary run of things a world of desire and labor; and unlike desire and labor for one’s earthly lord, pious desire and labor must not produce any finite satisfaction. To be conscious of putting one’s own will in the place of God’s, of making one’s own world in one’s own way under the guise of carrying out the Lord’s commands, would be impiety. In sinking to the level of consciousness, and surrendering self-consciousness to the Savior, the Unhappy Consciousness has lost the happiness that even the most downtrodden serf can enjoy, the happiness of a finite self-realization.

The self of the Unhappy Consciousness is a *broken* self. It finds itself desiring and laboring, but this is not its proper destiny. This world is not its home, and it must not conceive of what it is doing as making itself at home. Desire and labor is its lot in this world. The satisfaction that arises from success in this world is something that it is bound to feel. But in recognizing the Christ figure as its own true essence, it has admitted that any satisfaction it gets from success of that kind is a snare and a delusion. In the most terrible of all his sayings, Jesus declared that the community of those who had chosen to follow him was his “mother and his brethren.” The saying is terrible, because the story is so explicit that his own family was *outside* asking for him.⁴⁷ Thus it is not an *extension* of the natural bonds that is meant. On the contrary, the intent to deny all the ties of natural desire and natural love could not be plainer.

And even *within* the new community, one must take no personal pleasure in being the one who *does* something. To claim one’s own work as one’s personal con-

tribution, is to fall out of the community. It is not Martha, she who busies herself with the Savior's bodily comfort, who is meritorious, but Mary who sits drinking in the Savior's words about the Kingdom. No doubt other less antithetical readings of the Scripture are possible (and, like Hegel himself, I think they are preferable). But for the Unhappy Consciousness it is the choice between Here and Yonder, between the things of this world (the joys and rewards of seventy years) and the blessings of eternity, that poses itself absolutely.

Hegel says first that the sense of being at home in this world is *broken* for the Unhappy Consciousness; but at once he adds, more accurately, that it must itself do the breaking. It is, after all, a mode of *self*-consciousness; but it can only resolve its unhappiness (in this first immediate stage) by dividing itself—by breaking itself into the consciousness which is sinful and must be nullified in this life, and the self that is *destined* to be eternally blessed in the Beyond. We need not hesitate to affirm that Jesus loved his natural mother; but according to the record he knew at the age of twelve that that bond was something to be broken, set aside, surrendered.⁴⁸

- 23./219. The world is not just there for my use and enjoyment. It also is *broken* in two. It is merely God's instrument, and will pass away; but also it is holy and the order of Nature is God's temporal shape.

For the natural consciousness the world is simply there to be taken. Adam is lord of all he surveys (except the two Trees). Even when one Adam is in servitude to another lordly one, he has the comfortable knowledge, whenever the other is out of the way, that everything is arranged as *he* wants it. But now the relation of consciousness to the world is broken in the way that consciousness itself is broken. On the one hand, this world is just God's instrument. It is the place of pilgrimage; when the pilgrimage is all over, this world will be rolled up like a scroll that we have finished reading. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; and in the end "Heaven and earth shall pass away." The whole of finite creation is *an sich* *nichtig*; it has no being "in itself."

But also, on the other hand, "the earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is." It is the abiding shape of the Unchangeable.⁴⁹ The wondrous order of it is the testimony of God's power and wisdom; and its beauty is a visible earnest of his goodness, and of the blessedness of his own true kingdom. But its *hallowing*, its *sanctification* is mainly a function of those who have gone before us on the pilgrimage. Only in Palestine did the Savior walk the earth. But after that Paul went everywhere; and every place has its *own* saint, as does every day.

Anselm was born in Aosta (and is, no doubt, still revered there). But most of his learning and teaching was done at Bec in Normandy (and I am sure they think of him as theirs, especially if the monastery is still there). But after Duke William of Normandy became England's only acknowledged "Conqueror," his son William II's most prominent Abbot succeeded Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury; and for almost everyone who reads him now the saint is Anselm of *Canterbury*. I do not know who the saints of Stuttgart are. But for Hegel and his circle, his own birthday

was *Gebhardstag* (the Blessed Gebhard was bishop of Constance in the tenth century). Everywhere there are Churches and holy ground; and every activity has its holy patron. Every Christian must participate in this “Sabbath of the world,” and not just in the Good Friday consciousness of it. (This is one aspect of the Unhappy Consciousness that retains its validity virtually unmodified in the world of Absolute Knowledge—except that no *authority* can now determine who the saints are.)⁵⁰

- 24./220. Because Nature is God’s own “shape,” consciousness cannot properly touch it. God *gives* himself to us in his embodied form. When consciousness labors and enjoys it is selfwilled; but the active power too is a gift of God, and God means us to use his gifts.

The serf has to remember always that he is handling his Lord’s property. But the lordship of Christ is far more absolute. He *made* everything; and if the crop is good or bad, I cannot deceive myself into thinking that it was by my will and efforts. The harvest may be bad, the beast may die, no matter how carefully it is tended. Once the harvest is gathered in, however, the serf and the lord of the manor will both enjoy it. They cannot get away from that; but in a realistically pious recognition of the ultimate truth, that in spite of all that the lord of the manor said, and all that the serf did, there need not have been a harvest, they can both go to Church and make a great festival of Thanksgiving for it; and every day they ask God, in the words that he taught us himself, to “give us our daily bread.”

The great mystery of the Mass symbolizes this truth. Lord and serf together see the miracle that makes their life possible take place before their eyes. Unchangeable as it is, the Unchangeable gives itself to us, and lets us act on it to change it. This contradiction resolves itself fairly simply, because the active powers by which we change it are themselves the gift of the Unchangeable. Already at this point, we can see how the reconciliation of the finite Unhappy Consciousness with the Infinite Self is structured. We can go about our lives, doing whatever we do, all of us sinners, save those given grace to be saints, because it is all of it *God’s Will*. That Will, the will of the Father as Judge, takes *shape* as the eternal Logos, the whole order of our lives. The Concept, as we know, loses *nothing* no matter how forgetful of the previous stages the new “shape of experience” may be. The Divine Logos “made all things”; and it was “unto his own” that the Father’s “only-begotten Son” came, even though they “knew him not.” When Jesus instituted the Mass, the significance of his act was to show that the embodiment (or shaping) of God was permanent. Here too, Unhappy Consciousness knows and says what is meant: that everything is God’s gift *of Himself* to us. But it cannot put its thoughts together as thoughts. It does not draw the consequences from what it correctly sees and says.

The unorthodoxy of speaking of the created world as the abiding shape of the Unchangeable Consciousness in time must certainly be part of Hegel’s reason for employing the terminology that he does. If he spoke of “God,” every Christian capable of reading his book with understanding would protest that the Creation of the world must be distinguished from the Begetting of the Logos. But that is only another example of “broken consciousness,” another incoherence of the Unhappy Consciousness. The inversion of the world of Law into the world of Life, is the

inversion of “creation” into “begetting.” When we resolved the problem of the origin of “difference” earlier, we saw that it arises from a false perspective. The Changeable Consciousness is a logical condition for the existence of the Unchangeable; and the Unhappy Consciousness itself affirms, as a fact of its experience, that its own changeable consciousness is part of the temporal Creation. So if a “singularity” like its own pertains to the Unchangeable, the creation of Nature *cannot* be consistently sundered from the “begetting” of the Logos who created it.⁵¹

The divided structure of the Changeable Consciousness follows necessarily from its double relation to the “Shaped Unchangeable.” As a relation to the created world it is self-assertive; and in this aspect it becomes the creator of itself. The experience of the serf, in the finite relation, remains valid even in the universal relation to the absolute Lord. His experience will actually become the foundation upon which the world of “Culture” rests; for we are all equally “servants of God.” But as a self-consciously “finite” relation to its own creator (the Logos), the creative freedom of our “service” is itself the “gift of God.” Every potential that it realizes in its self-creation, comes to it by God’s grace. Thus, the experience of self-creation is a contradictory one. The contradictory experience of the Sceptical consciousness is not resolved, but only broken into two aspects: one Here, and the other Yonder (to borrow an expression from Plotinus, as the Christian thinkers did). This “broken” character is overcome only in the figure of the Ascended Savior. But he did “descend into Hell” before his Resurrection; and what is promised for all of the faithful is the resurrection *of the body*. That promise will eventually sublate the split between Here and Yonder.

- 25./225. It is by God’s will that the world exists with man as free agent in it. In the experience of human freedom only surface appearances are involved. Consciousness *projects* the experience of its own power into the Beyond. It is God who is absolutely free, and He is the source of both freedom and nature.

The concept of the “Will of God” now begins to emerge as the direct resolution of the broken character of consciousness. This is the Unchangeable into which the extremes have “gone back.” As far as consciousness in this world (and this life) is concerned, the human will is active, and the world is there to be labored on and reformed. That was the experience of the serf. But that experience is now comprehended in a wider perspective. From the standpoint of the Unchangeable Consciousness both the world and the human will are its own freely posited creations. As a free self-positing, or as a “consciousness,” it “repels itself from itself.” God freely puts his freedom into our hands. Hegel does not speak of this as “necessary” here. He speaks from the point of view of the Unhappy Consciousness. For me it is simply a known fact that my free activity in the world is only possible because the Unchangeable Consciousness eternally wills to *be* a consciousness. But as we have already seen (par. 162) this “fact” is a logical necessity.⁵²

The significance of the *duplication* of consciousness, the logical option created by its being *broken* into the extremes of Changeable and Unchangeable, is that all freedom in our ordinary sense is ultimately “reflected back into the other extreme.”

Instead of being conscious of *our* freedom—as the serf becomes conscious of his freedom in his labor—we are conscious of God’s freedom, conscious that our freedom is all contained in, and conditioned by, his Will. It is “God’s Will” that is the “unconditioned Universal” (or the “absolute *Macht*” as it has now become in the *free* perspective of Self-Consciousness).

This “reflection into the other extreme” is a free act of consciousness resulting from the recognition of Scepticism as an “unhappy” condition. It will be stigmatized by the secular Enlightenment as an imaginative projection, and no more; but Hegel presents it as a necessary phase in the evolution of scientific consciousness. We shall eventually have to “sublate” it in the awareness of an absolute Spirit who is the “Subject” of Nature as Substance. The significance of that “return to self” will remain a matter of some controversy. But from the way the beginning of it is characterized here, we can see that an interpretation which eliminates “transcendent entities” altogether is logically legitimate. Faith is simply the movement that goes *all the way out* (“reflection into the other extreme”) in order to *come all the way back*. Just what Absolute Knowing involves will continue to be debated; but it does *not* involve any postulated beings. Reason does not *need* any absolute power which is not resolved into its own process of experience *without residue*. Postulation is the explicit shape of the *breakage* that is to be mended by rational comprehension.

- 26./222. The Unchangeable surrenders its shape to the communicant worshippers; and they give all of their free activity back to it. But this unification with God is again “broken.” We give up only what we have fully had. Reflection of everything into the other, is equally reflection into self. In all my thanksgiving I have not really renounced myself.

The resignation of the Unhappy Consciousness to God’s Will is a dialectical one. Resignation is the *act* of the Unhappy Consciousness; so in the ultimate analysis there is a self-realization involved in the recognition of God’s Will as “absolute.” God has given himself to us in the Sacrament. We are all members of his Body; but our “thanksgiving” is a linguistic activity that inverts the “meaning” it points at. By recognizing that everything I am and do is given to me by the Grace of God, I do indeed experience my unity with God. But nothing can alter the fact that I take God’s gifts (including the gift of my freedom) and *use* everything that He has given in my own way. The cycle of desire, labor and enjoyment is all *mine*, even if it is God who lays the desires upon me, and sets the limits to what I can do. When I come to the *enjoyment*, I must recognize that I am actually enjoying the exercise of my own choice.

If I give thanks to God for *that* enjoyment, then I can hardly overlook the fact that it is I who give back to God everything He has given me. In doing that I give Him *more* than I take Him to have given me; for I give Him everything that I am, while He has given me only the “surface” of Himself.

The Unhappy Consciousness would reject this linguistic inversion with contempt as a sophism (and as the vanity of pride). But the claim that it *has* enjoyed itself, and has *not* renounced itself, it must take seriously. The self does “reflect everything into itself” just as much as it reflects everything into the Other. This

“reflection into self” brings us back to the “first relationship.” The Changeable consciousness becomes fully aware that it has *lost* the battle to wipe itself out. In using God’s gifts, and creating its own self, the Changeable Consciousness moves further from union with God at every step. Thanksgiving is not enough. The whole career of finite self-affirmation must be repented and atoned for.

As we have already seen, it is the *embodied* character of human existence that obliges us to regard the Creation as a necessary aspect of the begetting of the Logos. The human body—in which the cycle of “life” as desire, labor and satisfaction is seated—is the focus point of nature generally. When the Unhappy Consciousness gives thanks “for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life” it acknowledges itself *first* to be one of God’s “creatures.” When the Unchangeable took upon itself “the form of a servant” it became a creature likewise; and it therefore identified with the fluid continuity of physical reality in the way we all must. We can become “bondservants” precisely because we have bodies (and we identify with our embodiment). The Savior became a man at that level: the *Knechtgestalt*. Jesus was not a Stoic; he did not identify with the freedom to choose death. Death was imposed upon him by civil authority (and he prayed, as anyone would, that his fate might not come in the shape in which it impended).

The Unhappy Consciousness identifies with the *Knechtgestalt* likewise; that is why the Beyond remains empty. Only another world that is like this one in its phenomenal structure is *imaginable*. Faith in “the resurrection of the body” is what divides the Unhappy Consciousness from the “rational faith” of the philosophic Enlightenment (from Locke and Leibniz to Jacobi and Fichte). Dante volatilizes the “body of glory” into pure light; and he insists that the true Paradise (of the Rose) is not physical at all. But he cannot escape from (or resolve) the paradox. He was loyal to his philosophers; but their thought cannot escape from its own abstraction. The body disappears finally into a “pure thinking” that is not humanly Aristotelian (or Kantian). But that is not the faith of the Unhappy Consciousness.

The contradictoriness of the Unhappy Consciousness arises from the inviolable unity of mind and body in actual embodied consciousness. It cannot escape from the finite pleasure of the serf in being alive, or from his finite self-realization in labor. What we try to put into the hands of God remains obstinately the work of our own hands. We make a *show* of renouncing everything, of *saying* that it belongs to God. But it can only belong to Him in the way that the land and the beasts belong to the Lord of the manor. Even the acts of renunciation and thanksgiving, or the action of voluntary resignation and trusting in God’s grace, are the very own acts of the reverent consciousness. The act of renunciation even goes *beyond* what God does or did. He assumed mortal shape long ago, died once and returned to Himself; just as now, every year, he gives us the harvest, but retains the life of next year’s harvest. Our surrender is absolute; and it is absolutely *ours*. The extreme of trust, the surrender to grace, is a Pelagian extreme of free will. This is the “double reflection into the two extremes”; we can find this awareness of the absolute ultimacy of free choice in Dante. Wherever Hegel himself found it (and we must suppose a “Lutheran” source) it is the key to the transition to the next phase. This is

the fulfilment of the Concept, the reconciliation of the judgment that has shown itself only as an immediate unity of opposites.

(g) *Penitence and Absolution*

- 27./223. Thus from cross-bearing we pass on to salvation. This is the final great struggle for *justification*. In devotion I can lose myself except as a feeling; in “doing God’s work” I can *forget* my own authorship of the deeds, by *giving thanks*. But the thanksgiving is my own act, and refers to my self-realization as the real result of all of my activity.

The recognition that God’s giving is *identical* with my free acceptance is the dawn of a new “relationship.” This is the “third mode of being” of consciousness in relation to the “shaped Unchangeable” as specified in paragraph 214. It develops into the initial (or immediate) “Shape” of the third “relationship with the Unchangeable” as specified in paragraph 211. But the full evolution of the “third relationship” mentioned in paragraph 211 will only be shown in chapter VI. Chapter IV has the “second relationship” as its fundamental theme. It is paragraph 214 (not pars. 210–211) that states the logical agenda of our discussion in the present chapter. Only at the end of chapter VI will the agenda of paragraphs 210–211 be complete.

In the first moment of the relationship to the Shaped Unchangeable (par. 214), the observed consciousness was in church, engaged in purifying its *Gemüth* on the one hand, and witnessing the self-surrender of the Unchangeable on the other. Consciousness was not yet actively changing the world in any way. We have now observed how the pious consciousness does relate actively to the “shape” that the Unchangeable surrenders. This is the desiring and working life of the six laboring days. It has brought consciousness to the awful discovery of the enemy in the shape that is authentically *his*, the self that cannot be exorcised. The present paragraph is simply intended to make the last agony of the recognized identity of opposites as dramatic and as stark as possible. The figure of this recovery of the Pauline experience is unmistakably the monk Martin Luther. Consciousness wipes itself out down to the level of a musical sound (a feeling without a meaning of its own) in the “purification of heart.”⁵³ Then, in its embodied natural life, the self must inevitably take on its own meaning; but it wipes that out again in thanksgiving. In thanksgiving it can forget its own share, because it is literally and obviously true that “without God nothing is possible.” But this thankful recognition that “man proposes, God disposes” is a proposal on our part. What can we do to wipe all of the “proposing” out? That is the problem of the “third relationship to the shaped Unchangeable.” This is *absolute* penitence: the moment when I cannot help knowing that I am the *actual* consciousness of the whole process, and I want to strike *that* down.

- 28./224. The hypocrisy must be overcome by an effective demonstration of our *nothingness*.

In paragraph 224 Hegel defines the problem of this last phase as the connecting of “genuine actuality” as “*nothingness*” [*Nichtigkeit*] to the “universal essence.” It is

important to remember that the extremes to be related are *both* singular. Otherwise this third moment of the second relationship would be *identical* with the first relationship itself. I called that first relationship “repentance”; I shall call this one *penitence*. If we stand in the sight of God—be it the God of Israel, or the Stoic wisdom for which “all sins are equal”—taken simply as a “universal essence,” then not merely is it the case that “no man living shall be justified,” but also we are at a final impasse. There is nothing that can be done about the situation. That is why it is the Unchangeable that must move at that point in the evolution of self-consciousness.⁵⁴

This is one of the ways in which the Unhappy Consciousness is remarkable among the “shapes of Consciousness.” In the transition from the “first” to the “second” relationship, consciousness must knowingly change its “object.” To put this in ordinary empirical terms, there must be a conscious “conversion experience” at that point. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle because he recognized the Risen Christ as the God of his own Scripture; Augustine became a Christian because he recognized that the Scripture (Old and New) records the transcendent intervention which alone can resolve the sceptical difficulties of the Platonic tradition. Constantine gave up the claim that the Emperor is the divine representative of an ever augmented Pantheon. Of course, the consciousness of changing one’s ultimate truth-criterion will not long be necessary. Very soon one is simply born a Christian, just as one’s forefathers had been born Jews or Pagans. But for those involved in the self-education of the *Weltgeist*, the transition involved a *conscious* change of the fundamental standard of judgment. With the advent of infant baptism, the Unhappy Consciousness (in its “second relationship”) becomes as mindless as any other ordinary experience.

There is also a conscious change that is *brought about* by the “comprehensive inversion” that we are approaching. But it need not be dramatically self-conscious. The evolution of Unhappy Consciousness into Faith is gradual and ambiguous. When the circle of the Unhappy Consciousness closes on itself, we can understand how the world of Culture actually subsists. The consciousness of a world is a grasp of *objectivity*; so the Unhappy Consciousness is sublated in Culture. Culture is the *world* of Faith. We can say where the logical transition from Unhappy Consciousness to Faith is. But empirically, the two shapes are as labile as the standpoint of perceptual consciousness. Faith is the closure of the circle; but that means it is also at the beginning of the circle. *Lutheran* experience appears to go round the same circle of the “second relationship.” The *difference* is that, after his conversion, Luther does not need the *external* mediator whom we shall meet in this third moment of the “second relationship.” The formal difficulty that we do not move directly from the Unhappy Consciousness to Faith is easy to resolve. *Faith* is not a “shape” of singular consciousness at all, but of communal experience. To have Faith (in the technical sense that the capital F designates) is to enjoy membership in the Body of Christ here and now. But even as a singular consciousness, I know that I am “risen with Christ” who is “risen in me”; so the experience of Unhappy Consciousness can be logically complete as a singular *Gestalt* (cf. par. 210). It is only implicitly (*an sich*) complete, however. The Risen Christ is still only

a *Vorstellung*. The paradigm example of Paul (and especially the story of Paul's conversion) shows that the objectivity of this experience is properly the recognition of an actual *community* as the other self. That is how Hegel will expound it at the end of chapter VI; and we cannot even begin upon the properly conceptual comprehension of Paul's experience until our comprehension of "Reason" as a singular *Gestalt* is complete. Only then shall we be in a position to observe "Faith" and "Insight" as the sides of Reason's communal "judgment."⁵⁵

The three moments of the second relationship (to the "shaped Unchangeable") are coeval. All are easily identifiable in the Gospel record itself. Jesus instituted the Mass and commended its perpetual repetition "in remembrance of me." He also taught his followers how to pray; and it is the Lord's Prayer that is the key both to the attitude of the Unhappy Consciousness in desire and labor, and to "penitence"; for it includes the petition "Forgive us our trespasses."

Penitence appears, in itself, to belong to the sublated "first relationship." Men have asked God (or "the Gods") to forgive them ever since they arrived at a moral conception of their world, and of themselves. Otherwise the "first relationship" could never have endured as stably as it has done. What is new in the Lord's Prayer is that it offers a way of confirming God's acceptance of the petition: for it continues "as we forgive them that trespass against us." This is prophetic of the resolution of what we have identified as the final difficulty. We have to be *forgiven* by God for the aspect of self-assertion and self-realization that is present in our active doing of His Will; but we can only obtain forgiveness by reciprocally *acting for God* in relation to our brethren. The fulfilment of this injunction of Jesus sublates the "first relationship" (of Judgment) altogether; i.e., it sublates the "Unhappy Consciousness" itself, for which the "first relationship is the element." The "Kingdom of God" ceases in principle to be beyond; it is established now and here. That is the meaning of the transition to "Faith."

Jesus was peculiar because he was so ready to act for God, towards those who still stood in the first relationship. The most shocking things that he habitually did, were first to associate preferentially with those whom the pious presumed to condemn on God's behalf; and secondly, to reiterate to them continually that God had not condemned them, that their sins were forgiven. The Unhappy Consciousness takes all this to be the peculiar mark of the identity of the Savior, as "singular consciousness," with God. But just for this reason, it is primitively quite certain of forgiveness in its own relation to the shaped Unchangeable, as a "nothingness" (or a being-for-self which knows that it *ought not* to be and points to its own non-being).

- 29./225. This final *Gestalt* of the Unhappy Consciousness is thus [Luther's] struggle with constipation. In finding the symbol of his own sinfulness in his body's lethargy in the expulsion of its own waste (an everyday struggle) he offered the perfect image of the nothingness of human consciousness, the wretchedness of human existence, and the trivial insignificance of human effort.

Hegel does not speak of the certainty of forgiveness, in presenting the problem of the third moment. He does not speak of the Savior at all, but instead allows "the

enemy” to reappear (in par. 223) for the first time since paragraph 209. But we can understand how the closing of the circle is an effective triumph over this enemy, how victory emerges from the recognized inevitability of defeat, if we remember how Jesus dealt with the problem, and what a shock his behaviour was to the consciousness of those who stood in the “first relationship.” Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of those who were penitent. Hegel now analyses penitence as the movement of the last vestige of self-will over onto the side of the “shaped Unchangeable.”

The penitent consciousness wants to be one with Christ, and sincerely assigns all truth and all reality to him; but it finds this purification of the *Gemüth* to be inconsistent with a forgiving and accepting attitude towards its own embodiment. It is the sentient human body which has desires that are inevitably gratified by our labor. In the maintenance of our own bodies through the cycle of desire and labor we encounter *der Feind* in “the shape that is most his own” (par. 223).

This is the “enemy” (par. 209) whom we cannot conquer without “being worsted” in the victory itself. The rejoicing over God’s goodness in the harvest, recognizing its self-assertive aspect, turns into self-loathing when we reflect that the divine sacrifice was occasioned precisely by the self-preservative urge of singular life. The intuition of “God’s Kingdom come on Earth”—the *universal* aspect of desire and labor recognized on the *absolute* side of the “broken consciousness” of paragraph 219—is now directly inverted in the recognition that all of God’s self-surrender and suffering is for the sake of my wretched selfish singular being. This *actual singularity* is what I am made aware of perpetually in the “animal functions.”

The animal organism maintains itself through the perpetual cycle of what Plato identified as the “necessary desires”: eating, drinking and sex. These desires have often been the object of penitential discipline, but the attitude of different congregations within the Christian world has varied very widely. Furthermore it would be quite impossible (not just for Hegel, but for any Christian consciousness) to dismiss them as “something . . . that is of no account, [which] *can acquire* no importance or essential status for spirit.” A Protestant might say this about eating fish on Friday, or any Christian about the Jewish avoidance of pork (or blood). But no one for whom the Eucharist was the supreme act of devotion could say it of eating and drinking generally; and no one, in any universalist religious confession, has ever said it about sex.

So natural “desire” cannot give us the key to what is meant by the “animal functions” here. But something that Paul says about participation in the Eucharist with a heart that is not “pure” helps us to see why the Unhappy Consciousness can regard *elimination* as the revealing aspect of the total “animal function” (which Plato characterized as “filling and emptying”). Paul admonishes his little Corinthian flock thus: “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly amongst you and many sleep” (I Corinthians 11:29–30).

A devout soul—specifically Luther—meditating upon a text of this sort, in the light of the inevitably selfish unworthiness of all human desire and labor, can easily

come to see, in the end-product of the filling and emptying process, an apt symbol of the *nothingness* of finite existence as a whole. The life of this world, he might then say, is nothing but an open sewer. This comparison was already made by Dante.⁵⁶ But Luther applied it to his own existence as an animal organism with a peasant crudity that was typical of him. His body was lethargic about the expulsion of its own waste, or in other words he suffered constantly from constipation. The “damnation” that he ate and drank, he personified as the *devil* within him; and hence he regarded his struggle with constipation as a direct encounter with “the enemy.”

Hegel’s reference to the “consciousness that is aware of itself as *this actual singular one* in the animal functions” and to the “most characteristic shape” of “the enemy who is begotten in his very defeat,” points unmistakably to Luther. For it is only the eliminative function that should ideally be “carried out without constraint as something that is in and for itself null, which cannot come to have any importance or essential significance for the spirit.” But in Luther’s perspective this daily struggle was a very proper occasion for the “most serious effort,” since the vanquishing of the Devil was the most important problem of his existence in this life. Obligated by his sluggish peristalsis to spend more time in the privy than most of us, it was natural for Luther to brood upon it as an apt symbol for the misery of the human condition. According to one fairly well attested tradition, it was in the privy that the witness of the Spirit first came to him.⁵⁷ I cannot prove that Hegel was familiar with that story, but it seems to me eminently probable that it was retailed—both in a pious and in a ribald spirit—in the *Tübinger Stift*.

30./226. I know that I am lost and cannot save myself, precisely because I can see myself from the divine standpoint. But my self-condemnation is penitence, the reassertion of my unity with God.

Certainly it is true for Luther, brooding upon his sinful misery, and on his helpless incapacity to do anything about it, that the consciousness of his unity with God is linked with his own *Nichtigkeit*. His misery and his helplessness both spring from a self-condemnation that is mediated by the thought of God’s holiness. This self-condemnation is the *act* of the devout consciousness. It is because I yearn to be with God, that I am led to regard my life here in the body as a flowing sewer, and in this way to reduce its effective significance to *nothing*. I know that I am, in principle, a being of quite another kind; and my devout meditation upon God establishes a mediated connection with Him. That this connection is doubly felt is evident, for example, in our reaction if someone kills himself in his despair. We *belong* to God and we must accept the destiny He has given us. The moralists of God’s grace could distinguish between the Stoic suicide and the sin of despair; but a Stoic *act* on their own part would have involved the sin of pride. The path by which the devout consciousness can express its renunciation of self-will and so achieve *unity* with God is not the act of simple self-negation, but a *sylllogism*, involving another devout consciousness whose part is implicitly *positive* (not negative). Through his action my self-condemnation can turn over into the certainty of forgiveness. But his part is only positive *an sich*. How *Fürsichsein* is avoided is what we have to observe.

- 31./227. Another conscious being must *serve* as the mediator between the penitent sinner and God. He mediates the extinguishing of singularity in consciousness.

The mediating consciousness is essential because in this first encounter with God as spirit, the worshipping consciousness fixes itself in its singularity. God is the *Ansich* with whom I am to be united. But the syllogism of mediation requires another consciousness because the whole movement must be presented pictorially, with terms that are *imaginatively* separable. The mediating consciousness presents me to God, and God to me. He is the *minister* for us both. This minister has to be another singular conscious being, because the extremes to be mediated are the Changeable and the Unchangeable consciousnesses (as singular). He presents us to one another verbally. But his action is one that *extinguishes* singularity.

We should notice at once that the minister who “mediates consciousness as such” by “presenting the extremes to one another” is actually involved in, and presupposed by, the “musical thinking” of the devout consciousness. The shapeless sound of the bell might be produced by some merely natural means. But it is *not*. The bell is rung by another devout consciousness when the minister presents (*vorstellt*) God to the congregation. The “minister” is the third who closes the circle of Unhappy Consciousness and makes it into a self-sustaining *Gestalt*; and now we are concerned with his role in the consummatory action that makes us fit to come to the “service” at which God is thus presented to us in sight and sound. We have to be freed from the sin of self-assertion.

- 32./228. The mediator must tell me what to do, so that the doing, enjoying, and responsibility is not mine. The minister of God gives *moral advice*, and I accept the “advice” voluntarily, in order to alienate myself from my own self-will. I do what I am told, and in addition, I renounce the fruits of my own efforts to do God’s will. I renounce even the *consciousness* that my world and my doings are *mine* (for I say things in a language that I do not know); I give alms to God; and I fast and discipline myself.

In the sacrament of penance of the Catholic liturgy (as it was performed in Hegel’s own world), the circle does return into the noncomprehending devotion of “Divine Service.” The “minister of God” tells the penitent what to do; and following the model of Jesus himself he absolves the sinner from her sins. But she only knows that that is what has happened, because the alien formula of absolution has been explained to her. The “penance” that is laid upon her is equally alien to her ordinary life; it may involve the temporary abandonment of the ordinary life of labor and enjoyment (as in the case of Chaucer’s Canterbury pilgrims, for example). But it belongs essentially to the world of “devotion,” the *abstract* (i.e., Sunday-separated) world of “divine service.” If one is told to say the Rosary, for example, there is obviously no more appropriate place than right there in Church, where one has made confession and received absolution. In that case the penance answers exactly to Hegel’s description of the liberation of consciousness from selfish action and its pleasures. The immediate form of the escape from self is the voluntary doing of what someone else “advises.” Hegel says “advises” advisedly; for

the ministering priest is not a "Lord" (and he does not represent one). He does not issue commands, and there is no sanction of corporal restraint or punishment attached to disobedience. Even Jesus could not declare God's forgiveness to those who did not voluntarily repent; his declarations were essentially comforting advice. We must understand that the Unhappy Consciousness is not *threatened* by the judgment of damnation. Even in the "first relationship" that awful prospect was a judgment of its own Reason (for otherwise it would not contain the Stoic wisdom sublated within it). But now it is in the "second relation"; it comes to the "*shaped Unchangeable*" faithfully and hopefully, asking to be *forgiven*, set free, released from the burden of selfishness from which it cannot escape by itself. Like Jesus, the minister *advises* it of God's forgiveness.

Apart from the Protestant-sounding use of the word "advice" the only other problem I can see in the paragraph concerns the "immediate connection of the mediator with the shaped Unchangeable." In dogmatic terms the authority of the Catholic priesthood rests on a "connection" that has many links (generally called "the Apostolic succession"). But Hegel ignores that. Again, there is a mediating instrument between the minister and the Savior in the shape of the Bible, the holy book that the minister can read and the penitent cannot. We might think that this is what establishes the minister's connection with God, since the use of an alien tongue is crucial to the renunciation of self; and in that case the connection is not "immediate." But this view is not sound. For even if the penitent takes the priest's knowledge of Latin to be *evidence* of his direct access to God, it is clear that this is only a psychological support for faith, not a logical necessity.⁵⁸ The priest is only another sinful consciousness; he becomes, in his turn, a penitent in spite of his privileged knowledge. The "immediacy" of his connection with God is a *logical* aspect of the unarticulated trust that the Unhappy Consciousness must have. The priest (or the educated layman) might tell us in detail about the promise of the Savior to Peter, and about the following "apostolic succession." But we can see that that this only matters to the penitent as a faithful believer; just as we can see that the voluntariness of penitence is absolutely essential, so that the priest can only *advise* the penitent about forgiveness.

Logically the "counsel concerning what is right" reduces completely to the one word injunction "Trust!" It was actually the Church that defined the sins to be confessed. The whole world of *Bildung*, as we shall encounter it in chapter VI, depended upon the educational activity of the priesthood. We have to remember the sermons that accompany every "divine Service," and the schools attached to every cathedral or great abbey. In the *action* of Penitence, with which we are directly concerned, however, only a complete surrender to God's grace can be counselled. The point to be grasped is that, just as this moment in the confessional is the closing of the circle of devotion, so it is the founding of the great edifice of Church authority.⁵⁹ For in advising the penitent that God is merciful to them that trust in him, the priest establishes that the Church itself must be trusted. But everything depends upon the penitent's belief that the "counsel" she receives comes *straight from Christ himself*.

What belongs to the circle of devotion as such are the three moments of repeating uncomprehended verbal formulas that have been learned by rote (hence my example of saying the Rosary), giving alms, and the penitential disciplines of fasting and mortification. That is why I have focussed attention upon the logical minimum of advice that belongs to this strictly “singular” context.

- 33./229. Through this *self-denial* in three moments, the Unhappy Consciousness deprives itself of the consciousness of freedom, and turns its immediate self-consciousness into a *thing*. This overcomes the hypocrisy of “thanksgiving” (which consciously *gives* to God what it claims to *receive* from Him).

It lies in the very concept of Recognition that one does to oneself whatever is done to one. In the climactic *return* of the Serf’s experience in the Unhappy Consciousness, this moment is completely *self-conscious*. The “service” of God is absolutely *voluntary*; it is what we *desire* to do. In this final stage of the Unhappy Consciousness we return to the “abstraction” of the first moment of *devotion* (or, in other words, we are “in Church”). But now the whole of our *real* experience of desire and labor will be comprehended and inverted, as well as that first moment. In the first moment we were at Mass beholding God’s gift of himself to us as the Incarnate Logos. This gift of himself was the foundation of our lives of desire and labor, because it included God’s gift of our own nature to us, in all the variety of our different personal abilities and interests. In the second moment, we went out into the world and used these gifts of nature and spirit as well as we could in God’s service. But in all this activity of real life we were logically unable to avoid self-assertion and self-realization.

So now we come back to Church at the end of the week to do penance for all of our particular sins, but especially for the general metaphysical guilt of self-assertion and self-realization. If we look at the activity of the first moment again in this light we can see that the struggle of repentance does indeed “remain the element of the whole relation” (par. 210). Positively, our devotion was “the return of the pure *Gemüth* into itself.” We *saw* the incarnate God (when the Host was elevated); we adored silently, and we were conscious of union with the Unchangeable when we partook of the Communion. But there was a negative side in all this. We deliberately *stopped thinking*: we gave our own finite thinking selves to God; we renounced our own language, and our sceptical right to decide what everything really means for us. We listened to our mediator say things that we did not understand, and we made responses ourselves that we had learned by rote.

This renunciation of Reason is carried out not just by the illiterate lay congregation—lords, ladies, serfs and children—but even by the “philosophers” in the world we are observing. Peter Abelard was arguably the best intellect of his time, and he certainly esteemed himself to be the best theologian, for he tells us so explicitly in his *History of Calamities* (which is itself an act of contrition). But when his treatise *On the Trinity* was condemned by the Council at Soissons (1121), he was not told to return to his cell and correct his errors (which he was very willing to do). Instead he was told to put his own book into the fire (literally, as an act of

renunciation) and to say the *Athanasian Creed*. This is the authoritative statement of the dogma of God's Triunity; and we can say quite categorically that it is so formulated that knowing Latin does not enable one to know what one is saying, but only to be *reflectively* aware that one does *not* know what one is saying. Every clause is a paradox, and all of them are one and the same paradox: God is three persons, yet only one substance.

The intent of the Council was clearly to drive home the undeniable fact that the Trinitarian dogma is a mystery that surpasses human insight. Hume and Voltaire would probably agree that it is easier for an intelligent person who does *not* know Latin to say this creed devoutly, than for one who does. Abelard, like everyone else who had had any schooling, learned the formula by rote as a child. But I do not think he ever accepted what I assume to have been the Council's point—unless perhaps it was years later in the saintly resignation of his last months of life. The Council meant, I take it, that one must remain always a child in the presence of this formula, that the repetition of it must always be the reduction of one's self-consciousness to a *thing* (the "thing" that Hegel calls in his mature psychology "the mechanical memory"). Abelard was as incapable of relating to the Christian definition of God in that way as Hegel was; and he is one of Hegel's forerunners because for him the "Spirit" was the key with which the mystery of the Trinity can be unlocked. But his humiliation at Soissons is the model case of the *sacrifice of Reason* that the Unhappy Consciousness requires.

So much for the inversion of the first moment itself, which was there all the time. In the sacrament of penance—which if we are truly pious we have completed before we come to Mass—our life of desire and labor goes through the same inversion of significance. We abdicate our inalienable right to decide for ourselves, by coming to our spiritual adviser and confessing our sins; we abdicate our "lordship" of the world, by giving (some of) our goods to the poor; and we abdicate our own understanding, by performing "divine service" mechanically. The moment of *absolution*, which resolves the contradiction of the moments of devotion and labor, here takes its place as the *first* moment of the completed circle.

The adviser absolves the repentant sinner; and the sinner makes an offering to God. We *sacrifice* something that God gave us; we give it back to Him. Even the poorest among us can give him our prayers (and give him our independent thinking capacity in the very act of penance by saying those prayers in Latin).

The use of our own understanding, and the making of our life-decisions, are "inalienable rights" in the sense that we cannot help taking them back as soon as we are out of Church; and the sacrifice of property that we make is necessarily finite. Even if, like Francis, we give up a rich inheritance, we must keep the hair shirt. But the sacrifice is *actual*. It is not hypocritical like the verbal thanksgiving for the harvest. We *actually* surrender our Reason and our freedom for the present moment, and this piece of our property, now and here. We can say to the critic who points to all that we do *not* give up, that we are doing what is possible for us in this life. The kingdom of God to which our sacrifice refers is Beyond; and we are explicitly doing penance for the failure of the Changeable Consciousness to live out its identity

with the Unchangeable in actual life. When we come to the struggle of Faith with Enlightenment (where, if my reading is correct, the present reality of the Kingdom is what Faith *knows*) Hegel stands firm on the side of Faith and directs his own irony against the ironic critics. An *actual* sacrifice is made. Something real is given up. That is more significant than all the critical laughter, or the rhetorical protestations of the rational lovers of humanity (when we come to them). Abelard (or his pupils) certainly had *other* copies of his book in 1121; but that does not affect the reality of his renunciation.

- 32./230. Thus the unhappiness is in principle cast off—but only “by the grace of God.” However, in this renunciation of *my* will, the General Will is generated. The Unhappy Consciousness calls it *God’s* but it is expressed by the counsel of the mediator. Similarly all the private sacrifices create the common good (but in the guise of *God’s* property not ours). The Unhappy Consciousness sees all the positive action as coming from the other side. Nothing happens objectively in this world. Actual salvation remains a *promise*. Its own experience as the Will of God is the *new object* that has arisen. In its reconciliation with this Will the being and doing of the single person assumes infinite significance. This is the *Vorstellung* of Reason.

The sacrifice that enables the Unhappy Consciousness to “relate itself to the universal essence as a nothingness” (par. 224) is the sacrifice of singular Reason. The worshipper is aware of herself as a word-saying, ceremony-watching *thing*. She is a consciousness full of *meaningless* (“musical”) matter. Her action is the receiving of something that does not correspond (as far as any act or sense-awareness of hers is concerned) with what is said and done. The action of the penitent and the priest together is *sublated*. This is true of all the Sacraments, of Baptism and the Eucharist, as well as of Penance. The sacramental action has an outer and an inner side. To cite the Catechism that I learned myself, it is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” The “inward and spiritual grace” is *God’s* action, not the action of any man; and the “outward and visible sign” is *aufgehoben* in it.

In letting the Unchangeable act through the outward signs that are the human action—in the very *knowledge* that this is what happens—the sinner has *implicitly* (*an sich*) “let his *unhappiness* go from him” (*sein Unglück von ihm abgelassen*). This again is true of baptism, or of the Eucharist as well as of the absolution of sin in penance; but both the emphasis on “actual sacrifice” and the expression “absolution” dictate that we should concentrate attention upon penance. Only God has acted, and we do not know how. But we *do* know what he has done; and he acted through our surrender of decision and understanding, our doing of something that had *no* literal meaning on our side. We gave ourselves up to God, and we let him act through us. The admission that this happens makes each of the sacraments (but especially penance, where everything is verbally mediated and intelligible) a *Vorstellung* of Reason. The identity of Being and Thought *appears* as a represented object of our “abstract thinking.” Through what *we* do in this sensible world, we are able to *see* with the eye of the mind, what *God* does in the intellectual world.⁶⁰

The sacrament of penance is important because the priest gives absolution in

his own person: “I absolve you . . .” But Hegel does not regard this as a performative. When Jesus said impersonally (as he usually did) “Your sins are forgiven you,” it was clear that this could only be taken as true by a believer; it was not an action, but *advice* about the factual situation. This is what lies behind Hegel’s renewed insistence that the will of God comes into being for consciousness “through the third [term], the mediator *as counsellor*.” In essence the claim that the mediator is a “counsellor” asserts Luther’s view of the indulgence controversy. We should remember that Luther was still a Catholic, when he protested about the sale of indulgences. He was only saying what Dante had said and shown, in and through the fate of Guido da Montefeltro. No mere human (not even the Pope) can perform the self-creative act of Reason as the Spirit. We can only *observe* it, and pass on the good news that it has happened.

The “syllogism” of which Hegel speaks here is the perfect *Vorstellung* of Reason. The sinful consciousness is related to God through a “third” who is like herself. The relating moment is a *speech*. As the speech of another sinful self, it can only be a “counsel,” a description of the situation seen from an *observer’s* standpoint. That other side is God’s side, the side of the Unchangeable. “I absolve you,” says the mediator “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” The Unhappy Consciousness would not be unhappy if it did not see its own situation from that side, and if it did not identify with the view from that side; and now another self is announcing what God *wills*. The sinner is thus required to recognize that the Unchangeable does not will things to be other than they are. The way they are *is* its will. The total pattern of sin and penitence is *absolute*.

All of this is simply *observation* of how the Unchangeable is, and wills to be. Our finite desire for unity with the infinite, which creates in us the consciousness of *unhappiness*, the desire for self-abolition, *is* the Unchangeable will, and it is therefore *implicitly* the goal of our desire. This implicit side, this *Ansich* is only presented to us as *implicit* (or as a promise) in the words of the counsellor. Our human part continues to be *sin*; and the Unhappy Consciousness is forever born again, because the saving action is all of it really on the other side, it is all the work of God.

The counselling voice says “I absolve you . . .” But this is not explicitly (or “for itself”) an *absolute act* of the self. If we take it to be an act of *this singular self*, then we have the moral abortion of the supposed “indulgence.” What is made absolute in the act of “counsel” is the total pattern of sin and penitence. Just how it can be absolute is still God’s secret; but the whole pattern *must* be absolute if God is the Unchangeable. For the sinner it is not her penitence, but God’s act that *makes* the pattern absolute; and God’s side remains hidden, except for the words of the counsellor who speaks in His name. Thus the certainty of absolution, of union with God, is a broken certainty; it remains split into the unhappiness of Here, and the happiness of the Beyond. Only the words of the counsellor bridge the gap; and the counsellor himself is the same consciousness of brokenness. He speaks “in the name of” the Beyond. The existence of the bridge is quite the opposite of rational. The “absolution” of my sin, its acceptance into the unchangeable unity of the infinite will, is quite incomprehensible.

But if we turn this absolution round the other way, if we make God's Will (the *object* into which the certainty of self-consciousness has resolved itself) into the subject of a new experience, then we have *Reason*. We cannot do this practically (i.e. performatively) because of the moral absurdity of a certificate of *indulgence*. But we can do it as theoretical *observers*, because the moment of subjective action in this experience is a *Vorstellung* of Reason. The sinner gives herself up. she says "I am nothing"; and in response the counsellor gives her back to herself "in the name of God." As a result "God's will" takes over. Negatively, I give up my will. But I can only do that by accepting a higher will altogether. The mediator is essential, because only through his otherness can the otherness of this higher will be explicitly presented. It is only my voluntary surrender that makes this higher will possible; but if my surrender to God did not take the form of freely abdicating my autonomy of decision in favor of another like myself, this higher will could never become a real positive will at all. Thus the last act of the devout singular consciousness is the establishment of an authority recognized as *universal*.

This is not something that it knows it is doing. Hegel calls the mediator a "counsellor" in order to force *us* to see what is happening. The Unhappy Consciousness takes God's will to be *there already*, waiting to absorb it so that His Will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven." According to what *we* can see, however, it is only the willing *surrender* of the sinner's self-will that makes it possible for God's will to exist at all. Similarly, in giving up possessions and enjoyment, the penitent consciousness takes itself to be only giving back to God what is His. The Universal that comes to be as a result of this is God's presence in the world as "the Church." But for the devout consciousness that is the institution that the Savior left us.

"Doing God's will on Earth" (which is what "absolution" means as the consummation of God's plan of salvation) is the "essence and object" of the devout life. But this identity of my will with God's, of my "being-for-self" with the objective universal, is precisely what is involved in *rational* thought and action. The concept of this identity is realized in the devout consciousness only as a momentary intuition; and even in the moment of absolution the certainty of it is another's, and it is *broken*. The sinner is absolved and blessed by the priest. But the priest acts in the name of God, and the reconciliation with God is just a miraculous moment. The same old struggle begins again every week. God's will is done; but it is *not* "done on earth as it is in Heaven." We do the sinning, and God does the forgiving. Our actions continue to flow in the sewer, and our "enjoyment" of them continues to be the pain of penitence.

The "experience" of the other side, the comprehension of the absolution, and the enjoyment of the blessing, is reserved for Heaven, the Beyond. But the act of absolution *represents* a rational syllogism. The three terms are all necessary. It is not the personal or singular act of the priest. He is the mediating term through whom God's will is united with that of the penitent. This identity of my will with God's is "Reason." For the devout consciousness it exists in the inverted form of a *Vorstellung*—an object of thought, not an act of thinking. God's will comes into being as "authority," the willing acceptance of another's will. But the authority that another

has, is only the power that I have authorized, and which I alone can give him. I *say* that he has “God’s” authority. This refers to the “Unchangeable” moment both of my consciousness and his; or, in other words, it is Reason (which we both have).

The appearance of Reason begins innocently enough as the self-consciousness of identity with God achieved at the moment of absolution. But it is implicitly a claim to universal rational *authority*—the “autonomy” of Reason. The self that began as singular self-assertion, has discovered and surrendered itself to the universal rational self. When it begins to think properly *as* that universal self—i.e., when it gives up reflecting abstractly upon a “represented object”—it will discover what we have already seen (in the absolution-relation). Authority cannot be singularized; Reason cannot be “autonomous” in a singular shape. Self-consciousness has now raised itself to the level of Reason as a singular shape. But the true shape of Reason is that of the absolution syllogism as a whole; hence this *Vorstellung* already contains the identity of Reason as “Spirit.” In the absolution-syllogism the Spirit of God appears *between* the priest and the penitent. It is the penitence that validates the act of priestly authority. Both are essential to the stable subsistence of Unhappy Consciousness. The story of chapter V is the story of how the singular consciousness finds that, *by itself*, it cannot think and act “in the name of God.” Like Dante’s Pope Boniface or Luther’s John Tetzel, the subjective singular Reason is riding for a fall.

Notes

1. For the parallel between this section of chapter IV and chapter III see J. Stewart (1991).
2. Many interpreters (notably Hyppolite and Kojève) assume the transition is made simply from Bondage. Thus W. ver Eecke (1977, chapter V), who is interested in the psychology of negation and denial, makes this assumption (108). But his analysis of the negations of Lordship shows how and why the Lord can make the same transition. Neither of them is bound to make it. The slave’s discovery of “freedom” is not the discovery of *Stoic* freedom. J. Stewart (forthcoming, chap. 6, III B) falls into this mistake.
3. Miller’s “consciousness holds something to be . . . true and good only in so far as it *thinks* it to be such” is inaccurate and misleading. Baillie’s rendering “is true and good, only when consciousness in dealing with it adopts the attitude of a thinking being” is more nearly correct. But Hegel knows that “thinking” reduces almost everything to a matter of “indifference.” It does not become “true and good” just because we “deal with it” thoughtfully. We can only “behave thoughtfully *in* something,” so far as that something is a matter of logic. So the mode of speech must be preserved.
4. Kant takes care to distinguish his own moral position from that of the Stoics—see especially *K.P.V.*, *Akad.* V, 127 (Beck, L.L.A., 131–132). (The main channel of information about ancient Stoicism was Cicero.)
5. Landucci has understood the transition to Stoicism correctly as a “sundering from the singularity and particularity of the immediate nature of man” (1976, 94–95). But this leads him into the mistake of denying Hegel’s interest in “liberation from serfdom.” That problem is simply postponed at this stage (for sound reasons, both logical and historical). We shall come back to it in chapter VI B. (On the other hand, those who think—with Kojève and Marcuse—that political liberation is Hegel’s *ultimate* concern in the *Phenomenology* have not appreciated chapters VI C and VII properly.)

5. When Hegel speaks of “the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence, before the creation of Nature and of a finite Spirit” (*G.W.* XI, 21, lines 19–21; *Science of Logic*, Miller, 50) the moment where time and “creation” began is this moment of Stoic insight; it is the Sceptical reaction that is the logical “creation of a finite spirit.” The “beginning of time” (i.e., of the history comprehended in the “Science of experience”) coincides with the Incarnation of the Logos—mythically at Bethlehem, but actually with the establishment of the Empire.

6. Anyone who thinks that Hegel’s own *Logic* is a form of neo-Platonic emanation from the One, must explain how Hegel supposes that concrete knowledge is possible for himself by the neo-Platonic route, when he is so clearly of the opinion that it was not possible for the Stoics.

7. Compare *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 323, lines 14–15; Cerf and Harris, 65.

8. Hegel uses here the verb *vertilgen* (not, as before, *zerstören*). Stoic contemplation does not actively *destroy* anything in the visible world. It “wipes out” its alien status.

9. We should remember that Hegel called the Roman Peace “the boredom of the world” (Rosenkranz, 136; Harris and Knox, 181).

10. *K.P.V.*, *Akad.* V, 60 (Beck, L.L.A., 62). For the origin of the anecdote and the identity of the sufferer, see Cicero, *Tusculan Disp.* II, 25.

11. Hegel’s remark shows that it is not a methodological error to interpret the singular categories and *Gestalten* of chapter IV in the context of the communal experience of chapter VI. Those who think that that is an illegitimate procedure (e.g. J. C. Flay) simply have not understood what Hegel is doing. But this does not mean that *every* social interpretation is justified. The concept of “Unhappy Consciousness does not occur in the Philosophy of Right, but some French thinkers have tried to drag it into “Civil Society” (cf. M. Le Dantec, 1982; A. Gouhier, 1986). This is a mistake. The poor may be kept from becoming an active “rabble” by the opium of the people. But Hegel’s “system” presupposes “the Truth of Enlightenment.” The Unhappy Consciousness (like Stoicism and Scepticism) properly belongs to the world of the Universal Empire and Church.

12. We may note here that Aristotle mentions the claim of a late Sophist that “God has made all men free, and Nature has made no man a slave” (*Ethics* V, 1373b—the quotation itself is supplied by a scholiast). Since Hegel counts the Sophists as part of the sceptical tradition, it is possible that he may be remembering that chapter of the *Ethics*. As far as the Stoic ethics of “following Nature” is concerned, he is relying on Cicero’s reports of how Carneades attacked the Stoic claim that there is natural justice; and on the arguments of Sextus “Against the ethical philosophers.”

13. Baillie followed the order of Hegel’s German, and Miller follows Baillie, but with even less clarity. Hegel’s meaning is better grasped and expressed by moving the direct object forward: “. . . and thus its *perceiving* also [disappears], along with the *sophistry* [which is] its way of securing what it is in danger of losing, and the *true* [object] that is *determined* by that sophistry and *firmly established* by it.”

14. Compare K. Westphal (1989, 162–163). From his study of Sextus, Hegel knew that the ancient Sceptics enjoyed making fun of the “supersensible” hypotheses of their speculative predecessors. He himself enjoys underlining the bad logic of the empiricist “instinct of Reason.” But he does not raise the question of *why* the scientific understanding was successful in the modern world; he has only a speculative (cultural) explanation for this. Stoicism and Scepticism belong to a world of intellectual atomism; the “order of nature” and its “Author”

belong to the world of Faith. This is certainly important; but what is not brought out is the *methodic* aspect of Science, transforming itself into Reason in the world of Faith. The modern apostles of Understanding work together. They do not speculate independently—indeed their logical situation is parlous, because they try not to “speculate” at all. But they have a method that is self-correcting—the experimental method. Hegel never does justice to the “method of science”; and he seems not to be clearly aware of the relation between his own logical method and the experimental method. But he is aware that the aim of speculation is to make the “instinctive Reason” of the empiricists both self-conscious and logically coherent. That is one reason why his “science of experience” is so important.

15. *Ataraxia* is found in Democritus, Hippocrates, and the Epicureans. It is also used by Cicero (*Fam.* 15, 19, 2), which may indicate that it was part of the terminology of Academic Scepticism. It means “not being disturbed, being *imperturbable*.” The Stoic ideal is *apatheia*, not suffering, being without passion.

16. The important influence of Greek philosophy at Rome began when Athens sent the heads of the Academy (Carneades), the Lyceum (Criotolaus) and the Stoa (Diogenes of Seleucia) as their ambassadors to enlist Rome’s support in a financial dispute with Oropus (in which the Greek arbitrator, Sicyon, had decided against them). Carneades created the nine day wonder (with his two display speeches on justice). But it was Diogenes who began a tradition of lasting influence.

17. Diogenes Laertius IV, 62. Chrysippus died (204 B.C.) while Carneades was still a boy (of ten to fifteen) in Cyrene. When he said “Had there not been Chrysippus, there would not have been me,” he was probably poking fun at the already proverbial comment “Had there been no Chrysippus, there would have been no Stoa” (Diogenes Laertius, VII, 183).

18. See, for instance, *De Trinitate* I, 1; *Confessions* VII, 16. Jean Wahl has made a powerful case for the whole movement of the “syllogism of Self-Consciousness” in the mind of *Pascal* (1951, 123–126, 136–139). There is no doubt that Pascal is in Hegel’s mind in connection with the contemporary *return* of the Unhappy Consciousness at the moment when “Speculation” is reborn. This is certified by the quotation at the end of *Faith and Knowledge*: “la nature est telle qu’elle *marque* partout un Dieu *perdu* et dans l’homme et hors de l’homme.” That is a perfect expression of the Unhappy Consciousness; and the famous “wager” is a self-conscious expression of the “leap.” But the France of Montaigne and Descartes is not the world of naïve Scepticism triumphing over the formal thought of Stoicism. It is the world of “Reason”; and the religious response of Pascal seems to me to deserve the name of “Faith” in Hegel’s sense. (The reader should be warned that I am no expert on Pascal. But if he *is* indeed a figure of the Unhappy Consciousness, then it is because he is already Faith left disconsolate by the Enlightenment. In other words, he has the experience of “Faith” behind him, not ahead of him, like the defeated Crusaders.) It should be remarked that, although it appeared as long ago as 1929, Wahl’s whole discussion of the Unhappy Consciousness (1951, 119–147; trans. by R. Northey in R. Stern, ed., 1993) is still probably the best that we have. Almost everyone else—e.g. Fink (1977, 179–201) and Greene (1970)—has made a difficult topic more obscure by dragging in various post-Hegelian forms of “unhappiness.” Hypo-lite (1946, I, 184–208; 1974, 190–215) is quite good because he relied heavily on Wahl.

Loewenberg and Findlay are in a class by themselves because they achieved absurdity without recourse to any post-Hegelian “darkness.” If the despairs of adolescence—to which Loewenberg appeals (1965, 104–105)—ever *do* reach the pitch of Unhappy Consciousness, then his interpretation offers us a paradigm of how the *whole* development of “natural Self-Consciousness” is truly implicit in the “resting Concept” of “Desire.” But anyone who

knows what the despair of alienation from one's "essence" is like (such as Kierkegaard, whose discussion in *Either/Or* I, 217ff. is still well worth reading) must smile at Findlay's attempt to drag Unhappy Consciousness down into the realm of the unselfconscious Understanding (see the "Analysis" of par. 230 in Miller, 527).

H. Kainz—who is much influenced by Kierkegaard—makes an interesting attempt to identify the experience in different phases of our cultural history (1976, 148–151). He avoids both obscurity and absurdity, but I am not always convinced by his suggestions.

19. This is my way of saying what Fink means (I hope!) by the assertion that "Hegel's expression . . . designates a mode of *legen*, of addressing the *on*, it designates a mode of understanding Being" (1977, 192). Even Fink's negations are dialectically true (i.e., they contain important truth as well as falsity): "The unhappiness that Hegel is dealing with here is neither that of a determinate factual situation of humanity, nor simply that of being human; it is neither a historic situation of existence, nor the existential state of humanity outright." But if we concentrate on the truth of these negations we shall obscure what Hegel wants to achieve. The "unhappiness" of consciousness takes *many* shapes; and *several* have universal significance for our culture. But the one "that Hegel is dealing with here" is "a historical situation of existence" (though not a very "determinate" one). Hegel wants to distinguish it both from other singular shapes of "unhappiness" and from the "universal unhappiness" of the *Weltgeist*. The best way to understand his distinctions is to establish a *locus classicus* (if we can) for the "shape" that he describes. Hegel gives enough concrete details to make this possible (specifically he gives us Roman Stoicism and the Crusades as our boundaries). Instead of insisting that these are not the boundaries of the *Gestalt* (which is quite true, and not at all difficult to prove when we are concerned about the "modes of addressing the *on*") the task of a commentator who cares about *Hegel's* concerns is to understand and explain *why* Hegel gives us just *these* boundaries at *this* stage of *this* work.

20. Hegel distinguishes between the Unhappy Consciousness and what *he* calls "Faith." The Unhappy Consciousness is a mode of subjective devotion that does not achieve the "objectivity" of valid thinking. It cannot be *justified* in doing anything—and all of its *doings* are a despairing struggle against this contradictory situation. Faith proper, which is a mode of *active* life, begins only when the contradiction is overcome. But in ordinary parlance "faith" comprehends both of these *sides*; and the "age of faith" is the cultural world of the Unhappy Consciousness in full bloom.

21. For the use of the term "Unchangeable" compare *Philosophy of Right*, section 270 Anm.

22. Hegel does not use the word "thought" until later in the development, when a conflict between this "suspended thought" and free thought has again arisen. This is because he recognized how the later opposition of "Faith and Reason" obscured the sense of what Anselm was saying (for example). But if we compare the "gazing into the Other" with the ideal of Scepticism I think we can recognize one aspect of what "faith" meant to Augustine; and I take Augustine to be a better touchstone of "faith," than any of the degenerate squabbles of the Enlightenment. The figure of what Hegel himself calls "Faith" in the *Phenomenology* I take to be Luther. So I am not far from Hegel's usage. But Hegel distinguishes "Unhappy Consciousness" from "Faith," so I always have to use a capital letter for Hegel's *Glaube*; and the reader must always remember that "faith" is not quite the same as "Faith." "Faith" is the *reconciled maturity* of the Unhappy Consciousness (which is "faith" more generally).

23. Jean Wahl was right when he called the Judaic Unhappy Consciousness "Stoicism reversed" (1951, 129).

24. Michael Foster (1929, 53, n. 2) might have realized why “Hell is missing altogether from Hegel’s picture of Medieval Catholicism” if he had taken proper note that (in the same sense) Heaven is missing too. But he did see clearly what “experience” Hegel was observing. After Kojève’s “atheist” reading, we find an orthodox Catholic reader like Lauer trying to avoid the obvious.

25. *My condition is one of “despair.”* Kierkegaard (1849) called this despair “the sickness unto death”; and his comment that “it is the greatest misfortune not to have had it” (1849 in 1954, 159) throws light on Hegel’s claim later on that the Beautiful Soul is “unhappy” (par. 658). See also his essay “The Unhappiest Man” in *Either/Or*.

26. This point was anticipated from the opposite side when the problem of the “going forth of the Many from the One” was shown to be a paradox of false perspective in paragraph 162.

27. Flay (1984, 103) has the signal merit of having recognized Augustine here. It really is a “signal merit” in his case, because of his overwhelming prejudice against the historical interpretation of chapter IV. But he will not allow his insight to “overpower” his general interpretation (which is more than usually implausible here, since his discussion is couched in terms of Kant and Fichte).

28. Now that we have reached the history of the World-Spirit explicitly it would be nice if we could give *perfect* singular examples of the singular shapes of consciousness. Unfortunately, the individuals we *remember* tend to be in some measure exceptional. Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus (together) are “perfect” for Stoicism. Carneades (with Chrysippus sublated) represents only a slight historical displacement. Augustine fits the historical moment exactly, but Latin was his native tongue, and he did not experience the Sacraments in the way that “universal Christendom” did later. Even Anselm, being literate and very much a thinker, could not experience *Andenken* in its genuinely “universal” shape. But if we identify and name someone truly “typical” who will remember him?

29. Wherever the “third relationship” has been reached in this *decisive* way, it becomes uncertain whether we should speak of “Unhappy Consciousness” or of “Faith” (in the Hegelian sense). But one crucial logical distinction in the “science of experience” is that Faith is a mode of *objective* Spirit—i.e., of social existence. So perhaps the right view is that “unhappy consciousness” is the dominant condition of the typical singular consciousness who belongs to any actual *community* of “Faith.” Hegel does distinguish between them as “forms of consciousness,” however; so that cannot be all that is involved. “Unhappy Consciousness” does not achieve “objectivity.” It is a “subjective” condition, and a necessary moment in Faith proper. Luther, although he was the founder of the modern community of “Faith,” was certainly an “unhappy consciousness” in his personal piety. For an “unhappy consciousness” the first relationship—the impossible struggle to be *just*—remains the element of the whole relationship” (par. 210); i.e., there is no properly objective experience of “justification” in this life. Paul was probably the first Christian to transcend the Unhappy Consciousness and to stand in the relation of Hegelian Faith. In Augustine this “third relationship” is quite explicit (it is even the basis of his “philosophy”); but the “first relationship” remains for him what is characteristic of this life. Hence it is “the element of the whole relationship” in Augustine’s consciousness.

30. For the validation of this interpretation, see the commentary on paragraphs 477–483. (The double shape of the Unhappy Consciousness is confirmed in the *Philosophy of Religion* lectures [see *Vorlesungen* 5, 231; Hodgson, III, 308]. The three stages in the relation of Changeable and Unchangeable were probably inspired by the history of salvation as con-

ceived by Joachim of Flora. Joachim's ideas were assimilated into one stream of the Lutheran tradition by Boehme. For a useful discussion of this indirect influence on Hegel's thought, see C. O'Regan, 1994, 265–280, 306–310.)

31. What Hegel says is: “that it [singular consciousness] finally finds itself in it [the Unchangeable Consciousness] appears to it partly, to be sure, to have been brought about through itself, or to take place, because it is itself singular.” It is apparent here that “being itself singular” means “having a will of its own.” So the paradox is that I owe my “creation and preservation” in that free status *entirely* to God. (Hegel does not seem to be interested in the possible separation of “creation and preservation” from “salvation.” The sense of being damned *now* is important to him, but he ignores the problems of divine “election” and “predestination” altogether. It appears that he agrees with the Enlightenment about all that.)

32. The last sentence of paragraph 212 needs to be translated as faithfully as possible, in order for this first reference to the Holy Land to be visible: “Through the nature of the *one that has being* (*seienden Ems*) through the actuality that it has put on, it happens necessarily that it disappeared in time, and it has been in space, and in the far away, and it remains far away without qualification.” This *remaining* in the far off place is essential to the “second relation” as we can see from the argument of the next paragraph. Hegel probably knew the legend of how Saint Helena (mother of Constantine) discovered the True Cross. But in any case, he takes the remarkable response of the faithful to the preaching of the Crusades as the real “experience” of the faith.

33. It is a mistake to speak of “the first relationship” as “Judaism” or “the Jewish experience” (as many writers do). The Unhappy Consciousness is properly a *Christian* experience; and “the first relationship” is the *Christian recollection* of our Jewish heritage. The “Science of experience” requires the recollection of *our own world* in thought. Hegel does not *need* to be concerned with “the Jewish experience” as such. As we have noticed, there are even many aspects of “the Christian experience” with which he is not concerned; and when I speak of *our* Jewish heritage, I am not implying that “we” are (or ought to be) “Christians.” Among the authors who ignore the necessary and important distinction between Judaism proper and “the Old Testament” are J. Wahl, J. Hyppolite, and W. Marx (1986). (W. Marx [1986, 132–143] cites texts from the “Philosophy of History” lectures which show that Hegel regarded Judaism itself as a paradigm of the simple Unhappy Consciousness. That, of course, is indisputable. But the Science of Experience itself is not directly about Jewish experience.)

C. O'Regan (1994, 194) carelessly identifies the whole section with “Judaism.” He does not literally *mean* this, because he has noted the Joachimite inspiration of the periodization elsewhere (1994, 271). But like D. P. Jamros (1994, 38–39) he probably accepts J. Wahl's view of the *first* moment.

34. On the “reflective” character of Scholastic thought see Hegel's *History of Philosophy* (Brown and Stewart III, 50–51; Haldane and Simson III, 97–101; compare also Haldane and Simson I, 124).

35. Judith Shklar (1971, 77) remarks that this chapter “traces the path, from classical birth to Christian death, step by step of the . . . hero-as-philosopher.” But when she adds “For it is the autonomy of contemplative man . . . that stands in contrast to the enslavement of the producer” we must comment that the philosophical “hero” *does* die, but the philosophical producer survives. The *Hegelian* philosopher “produces” the community's “self-consciousness.” He exists for its service, not vice versa. It was *Socrates* (a self-producer) who was the “hero-as-philosopher.” (This point about the Hegelian philosopher *producing* general self-

consciousness, is the truth contained in Adorno's (1963, 34) typically peculiar thesis that the *Phenomenology* is "labor." Hegel himself speaks of the "labor" of the World-Spirit, and insists that if we want to be philosophers we must match it. It may seem more natural (in that instance) to think of the labor involved in giving birth, than of the labor that reforms the world for someone else. But both senses are relevant because the World-Spirit has *spiritual* (not natural) offspring.

As for the "enslavement" of the nonphilosophical producers, we must admit that W. ver Eecke's dictum (1975, 563) "the Lord is a figure without a future" has an unjustifiable ring of Marxist prophecy about it. Our world is still full of natural "Lords," and there is no philosophical warrant for thinking that they will disappear. *Philosophy* will not get rid of them—even in its own sphere. The "hero-as-philosopher" has disappeared only in Hegel's Science, not in the world. When Fackenheim (1967, 43n.) refers optimistically to "the redemption of the promise to the American Negro," he is speaking religiously not philosophically. He is right to say that in that cultural sphere Hegel was not optimistic. But neither optimism nor pessimism concerns philosophy. Hegel's Science is not refuted by the optimism (on his part) which failed to foresee Hitler and Stalin, any more than it is by the pessimism that spoke in the accents of Dr. Malan and Mr. Botha a century before they were born. "Science" only tells us that the result of the first experience of self-consciousness is: "To be free is to choose." (In spite of his completely negative view of African societies, Hegel recognized that the slave-trade itself demonstrated the possibility that the black races could be educated into full political and cultural freedom. See S. L. Gilman, 1981, 163–172.)

36. There is no way in which it is "chaotic" (the word that Miller chose for *gestaltlose* here).

37. The interpretations of the Mass are Hegel's climactic topic in the *Philosophy of Religion* lectures. So the complete absence of interpretation here illustrates a significant difference between the standpoint of the *Phenomenology* and that of the System. Hegel's view of what the original ceremony signified to Jesus himself, which is given in The "Spirit of Christianity" (Nohl, 297–301; Knox, 248–253), fits into the phenomenological pattern. It is *symbolic* in the Oriental sense—compare further the fragment *Geist der Orientalen* [Rosenkranz, 515–518; *Clio* 7, 1977, 115–118]).

38. S. Rosen is guilty of oversimplification when he identifies *Andacht* with prayer. He says: "Prayer is a 'musical thinking' however necessary it may be from a human standpoint" (1974, 170). But the "experience" of *Andacht* is not identical with the "concept" of "devotion or prayer." Anselm *thinks* very effectively (not "musically") in his devotions; and while a Hegelian philosopher may continue to pray, he need not be an "unhappy consciousness." (I am not sure that Rosen is right in claiming that we find "unhappy consciousness" *only* "where wisdom is not"; and I am sure he is wrong in claiming that we find it *always* where wisdom is not.) Certainly a Hegelian philosopher cannot be "unhappy" in the present mode. We should attend carefully to the markers by which the "experience" is designated instead of looking for the "concepts" with which we feel more comfortable (and often comfortably superior). The "experience" is not confined to the Catholic Mass. But we must know what the paradigmatic experience *is*, before we can usefully discuss its other "shapes."

39. I am fairly confident that C. Jamme (1983, 184) is right in holding that Hegel took over Schiller's usage of the word *Gemüth*. In the *Philosophy of History* lectures he offers it as the "abstract principle" of the Germanic *Volker* (*T.W.-A.*, 12, 423–424; Sibree, 350–351). It stands for the conscious living organism's sense of its own organic *wholeness*.

Rosenkranz (1844, 86) was surely using the language of the manuscript itself when he wrote that in his commentary on the economic theory of Sir James Steuart (1767) Hegel

was striving to “save the *Gemüth* of man amidst the competition and mechanical interaction of labor and of commerce.” This Schillerian usage is already apparent in the Tübingen fragment of 1793 (see *Toward the Sunlight*, 485, 500). How to render it in English is a problem. But (at this point, anyway) Miller’s “pure heart” seems to me to be the best solution—compare the English *Book of Common Prayer*, where the minister adjures the congregation “to accompany me with a *pure heart* and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace saying after me [the General Confession].” (It is the Confession, I suggest, that purifies the “heart.”)

40. The Crusaders are all *singular* souls on pilgrimage. Hegel’s account of the Crusades in the *Philosophy of History* lectures should be compared with the remarks here—*T.W.-A.*, 12, 467–477; Sibree, 389–398. Helen Adolf (1975) has freely developed—not to say embroiled—upon—Hegel’s interpretation of the Crusades; and she gives some further references. (Julian Roberts [1988, 104] goes astray here, in his otherwise sober analysis of chapters I–IV, when he speaks of “Roman Catholic ritual and the cult of relics.” The reference is plainly *historical*. But even in respect of “Stoicism” Roberts obviously wants to ignore the historical reference.)

41. See especially *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 383–386 (Cerf and Harris, 147–152). Hegel’s polemic against the theology of “feeling” was lifelong; it can be found, in some shape, in the introductory sections of every successive course on the *Philosophy of Religion* that he gave at Berlin (but especially in 1824—see Hodgson *et al.*, vol. I, 268–288). The word *Sehnsucht*, which distinctively identifies both this form of Protestant piety and the Unhappy Consciousness, is less prominent in the Berlin lectures. (Hodgson *et al.* render *Sehnsucht* as “longing”—see for instance vol. I, 284–285.)

42. The difference between the empirical or observational standpoint and the *immanent* attitude of religious thinking is made very clear in the lectures of 1824. As soon as we begin to *think* about God, *Sehnsucht* is overcome (Hodgson I, 283).

43. Württemberg was a Protestant enclave surrounded by larger Catholic states. This situation encourages and accentuates bigotry, and it is not at all surprising to find that as a schoolboy Hegel himself was proud of Protestant “inwardness” and contemptuous of Catholic mummery and superstition. See his Diary for August 1785 (*G.W.* I, 15, lines 20–22); compare *Toward the Sunlight*, 11.

44. Miller twice translates *gebrochne* as “incomplete.” But there is nothing *incomplete* about the self-certainty of the Unhappy Consciousness, or about the joy of its labor. It is certainly *imperfect*, since no one simply is Unhappy Consciousness, but partly lord or serf, Stoic or Sceptic (and most important of all, the original naturally assertive self as concealed *Eigensinn*). But *that* imperfection is just what the Unhappy Consciousness is unhappy about. Its “brokenness” is how it is reconciled with that, and is not the source of a *new* imperfection. (Baillie’s “shattered” is even worse than “incomplete.”)

45. But what “we” (the scientists of experience) know, *a fortiori*, is that it must come now if it is to come at all; and we have seen already that even for the serf it does come. The project of a voluntary surrender of what no one can take from us even with a life or death authority is visibly absurd. Yet this project of absolute surrender is the essential one from which “Reason” is born.

46. Paris Manuscripts (1844); T. B. Bottomore, 203. After the publication of Hegel’s Jena manuscripts, it was clear enough that Marx was mistaken; and some important work was done on Hegel’s concept of labor by thinkers sympathetic to Marx. See for instance T. W. Adorno (1963) and G. Lukács (1975, 338–364); also Z. Kuderowicz (1975 and 1976) and S.

Benhabib (1988, chap. 2). In the most recent literature, the essay of A. Arndt (1988) is very valuable, though it deals with Hegel's earlier Jena texts rather than with the *Phenomenology*. Most discussions are too commonsensically "materialist" and not "dialectical" enough; they pay no attention to the "shapes" of labor that Hegel distinguishes and connects. Some are too carelessly dialectical; thus, for instance, Adorno writes as if we do not need to distinguish Adam's labor for bread from Eve's labor for birth. The best treatment is probably that of Sok-Zin Lim (1963). But it is interesting to see how (in spite of his emphatic adherence to the views of Marx) G. Stiehler gives an often insightful account of the "labor" theme in the *Phenomenology* (1964, 201–221).

Heidegger was more satisfied with Hegel's theory than Marx; and several "Marxists" (Marcuse, Kojève, Lukács) adopted *his* views on the question—cf. G. Planty-Bonjour (1983). J. Ritter (1968, 1975) tends to follow Marx in emphasizing actual labor in the human transformation of nature. Hegel's own interest is generally in the "self-making" of consciousness.

47. Matthew 12:46–50; Mark 3:31–35. The famous counsel to "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew 8:22; Luke 9:60) applies the same doctrine to the natural piety of Antigone. This is how self-consciousness *breaks* its own natural unity with its world.

48. Luke 2:41–50 ("Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" . . . "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?").

49. In the first chapter of John we read that the *Logos* created everything. Some streams of German mysticism read this as meaning that the created world is itself the Incarnation of the Logos. Hegel's adherence to this tradition is visible in the Triangle Fragment (see *Night Thoughts*, 184–188). But at this stage of the *Phenomenology* we are concerned only with the intuitive awareness of a devout believer. So we must not anticipate here the way in which the standpoint of devotion is restored in the speculative interpretation. The great sublation of Faith in Knowledge has to take place before any of that will be relevant.

50. The evidence that this is what Hegel means by the "sanctified" status of all actuality is principally his "Natural Law" lectures (1802–1805) (Rosenkranz, 137–141; Harris and Knox, 182–186). The validity of this moment, after its universalization to embrace non-Christians (and all of nature in a way that was only heretically maintained in the Christian tradition) is also asserted in the second "Philosophy of Spirit," which belongs logically with the *Phenomenology*—see *G.W.* VIII, 286; Rauch, 181 (or *Night Thoughts*, 518–519). That the life of *every* worshipper is a contribution to the universal sanctification of nature is clear in that text also—*G.W.* VIII, 283, lines 27–28; Rauch, 178, especially note 6, but the editorial supplements must be ignored. (Hegel himself liked to extend his birthday celebration past midnight, so as to share Goethe's birthday. Hence we know one of *his* "saints.")

51. Q. Lauer says paragraph 220 is a "burlesque of Christian religion" (1976, 122, n. 40). But on the one hand it is not a "burlesque" at all, because all of the separate assertions that it contains are quite orthodox (and even "non-denominational," since the "devotion" of the Unhappy Consciousness is that of "universal Christendom"). On the other hand, the unorthodoxy springs from *our* bringing the separated thoughts together in such a way as to make a rational whole. The principle of *our* rational "burlesque" is that "without the world, God is not God." That may not be "orthodox" but it was Hegel's doctrine; and if it makes a burlesque of the Christian faith, that is only because (without it) the faith itself is a *burlesque* of consistent thinking.

W. Desmond (1992b, 105) speaks of "Hegel's propensity to paint in dangerously negative hues the other that is recalcitrant to complete mediation." But *Hegel* does not "paint the

other” at all. He *characterizes different experiences* of “the other that remains other”; and so far as he exhibits any preference, it is for the medieval Catholic experience that is positive towards utterance, rather than the modern Protestant one that is negative. (To find anything that I would call “painting in negative hues” we have to wait for Schopenhauer and Nietzsche—but perhaps I am misunderstanding the metaphor.)

52. Even when the “unhappiness” of consciousness is quite sublated in Reason, and survives only as the necessity of reconciliation with our natural death, this “factual” character of consciousness remains untouched. It is a logical necessity that *while* there is something properly called finite consciousness, there must be the “absolute consciousness” of the Shaped Unchangeable. But there is no *natural* necessity that consciousness should exist. Just as every embodied rational consciousness *must* die, so the whole rational genus *can* die. One element of our “absolute knowledge” is the awareness that “Science” itself is only a *fact*. Hegel almost certainly *believed* in the “eternity” of Nature, as an order upon which our free action would never have more than a “superficial” effect; but his *logic* is based upon the *absoluteness* of “freedom”; and we can now see, more vividly than he ever could, what this entails with respect to the existence of “Reason” as a “fact.”

53. I suppose that Hegel calls the ringing of the bell “shapeless” (par. 217) because it is not tuned to any definite note. But “devotion” is a kind of tuning. The whole soul is tuned to *one* note (hence the “melody of the Good and the True” is “posited in one note” in par. 522). Harmony—and even melody—can only belong to a community in action.

54. In other words, consciousness must make an act of faith that the Unchangeable moves. We do not yet know *how* there can be motion from the point of view of the Unchangeable in and for itself; we do not even know that it is there to move itself. That knowledge itself is the first posit of “faith.” But we make that act of faith *in order to understand* the contradictory situation revealed by Scepticism.

55. The worst difficulty about the transition from Unhappy Consciousness to Faith is caused by the fact that Faith is *unselfconscious* thinking. It takes itself still to be thinking about the *Beyond*—the “other world.” But *there is no “other world” for knowledge*, so no true thinking can refer to it. The Unhappy Consciousness, for which the reference to the *dead* Savior who has gone ahead of us to the other world is essential, is only a “musical” thinking. It has no *objective* sense; it “means” something that cannot be experienced. Faith knows that the Resurrected Christ is present *here and now* as a proper object of experience. But until it becomes speculative knowledge, Faith continues to keep company with the Unhappy Consciousness as an “also.” Every statement of Faith *also* refers to an object that is only “meant,” and not truly experienced.

56. *Inferno*, canto XI.

57. The Pauline text explains Luther’s panic during the celebration of his first Mass as a priest (1507) “weil kein Glaube da war” (*Tischreden* IV, no. 4174). The revelation of Christ as the mediator who could save him even in this extremity came (about 1513?) on the *cloaca* (O. Scheel, ed., 1929, no. 238). See further Erik Erikson (1958, 201–206).

58. The holy book only becomes crucially important when it *replaces* the “minister” as the immediate presence of the “Shaped Unchangeable.” At that point the consciousness of the “inner Teacher” is essential.

59. A. Shanks (1991) has produced an interesting book on the contemporary forms of the Unhappy Consciousness as spiritual *authority*. In two ways he is somewhat unfair to the *Gestalt* as Hegel develops it. First, he does not take account of how “Original Sin” is transformed into the “Infinite Grief”—a transformation which establishes the Unhappy

Consciousness as a necessary moment even in our speculative reconciliation with finitude. Secondly, he does not give proper weight to the closure of the *Gestalt* in the giving of *advice*. This provides a positive future for the *Gestalt* in the rational religious community. (Shanks is like a latter-day enlightened critic of “superstition.” But the “unhappiness” of finitude is *not* just a superstition.) W. Desmond (1992a, 108) half agrees with Q. Lauer (see note 51 above) that Hegel’s picture “risks caricature.” But for the most part he agrees with Shanks.

60. There is a useful essay on paragraph 230 by S. Landucci (1976, chapter 4).

Chapter 10

Critical Reason

V: Reason's Certainty and Reason's Truth

Between the last sentence of chapter IV and the first sentence of this chapter, an enormous step forward is taken: Self-Consciousness moves from the intellectual Vorstellung of itself to the pure thought of itself, the Gedanke.¹ Our first task is to understand the logic of what happens. This is a transition that is visible only to us. Unlike the motion of Unhappy Consciousness (which is visible to that consciousness) the move to Reason takes place "behind the back of Consciousness." The Unhappy Consciousness, coming freshly shriven to its devotion on Sunday morning, is well aware that it has "let its unhappiness go from it"; but the "release," the falling away of the burden of sin, is only completed "in principle" (or implicitly), because the devout consciousness knows that as soon as Divine Service is over, sin and selfishness will triumph once more.

This consciousness thinks only in an abstractly reflective way; it represents the thought-world of the Unchangeable to itself as "Heaven." But when it goes to the altar-rail for its "communion," it has grasped one vitally important thought in that mode: the Unchangeable has a "shape" just like our own, and that shape betokens its own salvation in the world of the Unchangeable. This salvation of the "immortal soul" (or "image of God" which it is an sich), will take place only in the Beyond. But we have seen how in its own process of devotion in this world, it has "wrenched its being-for-self out of itself" and has "posited [itself] as the negative of itself, namely as the objective extreme"; and "in this process its own unity with this universal has also come to be for it," (as Hegel says here in par. 231). The devoted soul proves its absolute devotion, by freely alienating itself from its own freedom of self-expression. It becomes a thing, a mechanical memory in the service of the Unchangeable; and it is assured by the mediating "minister" that this whole process of self-expression and self-alienation is the will of the Unchangeable. We have seen how this free supersession of its own singular self-will establishes the free self as the universal identity of thought and being; and even the consciousness we are observing knows that it has become united with God, although this happens (for it) only in God's kingdom of thought, and only by God's grace.

This unity has come to be only through the mediation of the priest. The activity of the mediator enables the devout consciousness (including the mediating consciousness) to hide from itself the fact that the existence of God's Will is dependent upon its own voluntary self-renunciation. For it, the crucial means for the existence of God's Will is the mediat-

ing counsellor. "God's Will" is that the Church should exist as his agency in the world; every natural consciousness that comes into the world is baptized into that community; it is to the Church that goods are renounced for God's service; and it is in Church that sceptical Reason and desirous self-will are renounced voluntarily in favor of God's authority.

The Unhappy Consciousness does not take itself to be God's Will, because God's Will is what is presented to it by the "middle term," i.e. by the priest; and behind him there is this universal community through which God's Will is present on earth: the Church. But again, the Church is not truly here on earth. It is the Church Triumphant, the community of the saved. The real "unhappiness" of Consciousness is the absolute loneliness of the pilgrimage of salvation. We cannot be saved here; and since every one of us must die her own death, we must go alone through the portal of salvation to join God's real community. This is the consciousness that must now be transformed into its opposite. The true community of humanity, the community of "the Spirit," exists now and here. It needs only to be recognized; and the appearance of singular "Reason" is the first step in its recognition. We see why Reason cannot fail to be born when we observe how the Unhappy Consciousness sublates its own unhappiness. Let us briefly recapitulate the evolution of Reason's self-recognition up to this point.

In Stoicism, the ideal of universal recognition is formulated. Every human being is recognized as a spark of the Divine Reason. Already at this point, "the singular consciousness is in itself the absolute essence." But the grasping of this thought is illusory; for, as the Sceptic points out, the God to whom everything is referred in thought is not actually present in our experience. What we observe in the world is a freedom of thinking that arbitrarily creates conventions of inequality everywhere.

The Unhappy Consciousness overcomes this contradiction between Thinking as Reason, and Thinking as Freedom, by projecting the authority of Reason over Freedom into the Beyond. In this way the Stoic ideal of universal brother-and-sisterhood becomes possible once more. But it is possible only in "another world"; and the thought that has resolved its contradiction by positing another world of thinking freedom is still the activity of a singular natural consciousness. So we can only reach the community of Reason through the lonely sacrifice of that natural consciousness, which we must each perform by ourselves. That is how the Unhappy Consciousness sees its own situation.

But just as the Understanding was logically obliged to let itself go free from the great syllogism of Necessity, in the shape of the naturally self-assertive will of the organism that desires to understand, so the Unhappy Consciousness has to let the singular Reason that recognizes its own identity with the "Will of God" go free. No singular consciousness in the world of Unhappy Consciousness is going to have our retrospective awareness of how and why it knows that it is identical with the Will of God. But the "other self" in whom the identity is visible, and ready to be conceptually grasped, is the singular consciousness of the priest who mediates the Universal Will for the Unhappy Consciousness. So the identity an sich cannot escape notice; and we must expect to find it recognized immediately in several different shapes. That is what we do find: an "instinctive Reason" in several forms.

As scientific observers, however, we must begin by going forward to the moment where the "instinct of Reason" becomes a fully self-conscious Concept. This is actually the same

moment at which Self-Consciousness recognizes itself as the “concept of Spirit” and the “homeland of truth.” The clear formulation of the Concept of Reason as the identity of the thought and will of man with the thought and Will of God is in Fichte’s concept of the Ego. So Hegel’s chapter V begins, like chapter IV, by invoking the Fichtean Identity Principle: “I = I.” We can see now that the difference between the identity in the two chapters is that in chapter IV the circular movement was at the level of Vorstellung, whereas in chapter V it will be at the level of Gedanke.

(a) Retrospect and Prospect

- 1./231. In achieving self-surrender to the Shaped Unchangeable, the Unhappy Consciousness has grasped that the singular self-consciousness is the absolute essence. For it, this essence is the Beyond, but in its process it has posited itself as its own negative: a thing. In the process “its unity with the Universal has come to be for it”; and for us, this unity is not outside it. The mediator connects the finite consciousness with the infinite. Thus he is *both*, and there is nothing outside him. He *is* Reason, or “the certainty of being all truth.”

Since we have now reached the self-conscious identity of the thinking self with God as Universal Reason, we really do have Fichte’s Ego before us (or at least a plausible interpretation of Fichte’s Ego). But we are not yet in Fichte’s world.² We are still in the world of the Unhappy Consciousness, the world of Divine Authority. “Reason,” as an immediate phenomenon, is the revolutionary critic of that world. It knows that it has within itself the absolute authority of Faith. This is the same sort of immediate certainty that the natural self-consciousness had about the universe of natural life which it had comprehended as Understanding; and it is destined for the same sort of disappointment, though one that is less radical. The singular natural Self-Consciousness sacrificed itself finally in order to bring God’s Will into the world; singular Reason will perish when it recognizes its identity with the rational will of the human community. At that point the Concept of Spirit will emerge out of the “antithesis” (or “judgment”) that has just now become explicit. In chapter IV we began with the *natural* antithesis between Life as the “universal individual” and Self-Consciousness as the “singular concept.” That was resolved in a supposed community of the Spirit beyond death; but the authority that sustains that ideal is the *divine will* mediated by a singular human speaker. So the antithesis that faces us in “Reason” is the contradiction between the singularity and the universality of the rational will. That an actual living man can speak the will of God was shown to be the keystone of the arch of Unhappy Consciousness. The inadequacy of *that* concept of Reason will now be demonstrated.

The ideal of serving God is identical with the ideal of serving humanity. This is the “actual consciousness” of “unity with this universal” (i.e. with the “will of God”). Consciousness of one’s own rationality is consciousness that one must act here and now as the saved spirit that stands in the presence of God. *My* Reason is not my personal interest, or even my personal freedom; that is now sublated in my

awareness of the universal human good as the proper object of desire. The experience of “absolution” is a *Vorstellung* of the certain knowledge that it is achievable. The cycle that works itself out from Stoicism to Unhappy Consciousness is the cycle of “loving fate,” or of resignation to the will of Providence. But when Providence takes on a singular human shape, the will of Providence becomes something that the single human being can know and do. What the priest can say and do, any human consciousness with the conscious will to be rational, or to look at everything in the context of the universal human vocation, can do likewise. If two of us can stand in the presence of God in Church and be “justified,” then either one of us can go out into the world and act with the confidence of that justification. So Reason has the absolute certainty that it does not need the Church at all. As Recha says (in Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise*), “Wherever Moses stood, he was before God.” Self-Consciousness reached its climax in religion; Reason has no religion at all. The certainty of Reason is that it can unite the “will of God” with the “Infinite” of natural life. That is the unity that it implicitly *is*.

Man is *immediately* the *zōon logikon*, the living thing that reasons. As a singular self-consciousness, she is aware of herself as *living thing*, as *zōon*: and because it is her life to reason, she necessarily reasons about herself. We can now recapitulate the evolution of “Self-Consciousness” from this standpoint. Perceiving herself in the other, the reasoning being demands recognition of herself, because she is instinctively certain that rationality is the capacity to recognize free self-assertion. The contradiction of demanding recognition, while refusing to accord it, was already overcome in Stoicism. But that *formal* birth of Reason was immediately self-destructive. The contradiction of the two sides of self-consciousness: the living being-for-self, and the thinking or pure being, had to be pushed to the extreme of the voluntary self-surrender of the finite living being, before Reason could emerge into reality, that is to say come forth (universally) as the same self-assertive *will* that Self-Consciousness was (singularly) born as. The Stoic taught simply that we must recognize what we control and what we do not; and that the rational attitude of the will (which is the only thing that we do control) is to *love fate*.

The Sceptic laughed away the pretence that we can know there is any universal Logos there to be loved. Access to absolute truth became dependent on a leap of faith. Self-Consciousness escaped the inevitability of its own ignorance by dividing the Stoic certainty from the Sceptical certainty, projecting the Stoic certainty into the Beyond, and accepting it as a spontaneous revelation from there. Because of the *broken* state of its certainty, the insoluble theoretical problem about both knowing and not knowing that it is ignorant (or neither knowing nor not knowing) becomes the problem of uniting its being-for-itself with the Unchangeable being-in-itself. The conviction that this happens in absolution and the Eucharist, is the *implicit* sublation of the Unhappy Consciousness.

The recognition by the rational self that the mediated absolution of sin is a *Vorstellung* of what Reason really is; it is the birth of self-conscious Reason. In other words, mature Faith and Reason are born together. Reason is not a state, but a process—the process of realizing the *Vorstellung* as a *Gedanke*. The Reason of Stoicism

was not real, because it did not need to make itself real. It was a “thought” that was already perfect as the “object” of our finite thinking. At least that was what we thought, until the Sceptic showed us that because we were only finite thinkers ourselves, we could not be sure that this object was there at all. Now, in the proposition that “Truth is what has to make itself true by thinking itself” (or “Truth is a union with being that thinking must *achieve*,” i.e. it does not and cannot subsist as a pure “object”), we have the definition of a thought whose very being is its *self-realization* in human thinking.

The pre-rational stage of absolute trust is the necessary foundation for Reason’s evolutionary career, because the self-realization of Reason can only take place in the singular consciousness. “The sublated singular is the universal” means here that the devout consciousness successfully gives itself to God. When the identity of thinking with being is recognized as the self-consciousness of Reason it is still true that this self-conscious identity can only come about because the singular sublates itself. The crucial moment in the theological image is the “counsellor” who links the penitent sinner with the dead Saviour, and presents to her the glorious destiny of membership in the Risen Body. The voice that can do that must be *implicitly* “risen” already.

Here we touch again the source of Luther’s terror at his first Mass.³ The voice of the mediating priest *makes* the unity of all reality because it links the Changeable with the Unchangeable in this positive way. To do this, or suppose oneself to be doing it, without “the certainty of being all truth” (or in theological speech, the certainty of being “risen in Christ,” the Logos “by whom all things were made”) is terrifying. If one has only the *broken* certainty that there are these two sides in one’s consciousness, then one is presuming to speak “in God’s name” while still standing at the Judgment Seat waiting to hear one’s own doom. Reason is the unbroken certainty that the two sides are really joined. It is in this sense that “Reason is all truth”—and as Hegel said already in paragraph 230 “it is all reality.”

Obviously the “contrite consciousness,” as Royce correctly but proleptically called it, does not know that it is “all reality.” It has “wrenched its being-for-self out of itself and made it into being” in the passive sense of becoming an instrument, a mouthpiece of God. It does this by making its speech into an unintelligible mystery. “Reason” is the comprehension that *absolute* speech is not unintelligible. We should think of Descartes, because there is no properly *religious* consciousness in this chapter.⁴ We have moved into the sphere of finite *Spirit*; “Reason” is *subjective* Spirit, the selfhood that is aware that whatever it truly knows, it knows with God’s knowledge.

There is one oddity in the paragraph which appears to be intended to help us over this transition. Hegel exaggerates what the mediating consciousness does, when he claims that it “says out loud (*auspricht*) to the Unchangeable Consciousness that the singular consciousness has renounced itself.” As far as I know this is not literally correct. The penitent does this for herself. Hegel is treating all of the speech involved as “mediation” because that makes the mediator into the self-contained *Gestalt* of Reason. He wants us to see that if the penitent believes that her

words can certify their own truth to God (and that is what *sincere* penitence *means*) then she can equally have the certainty of God's forgiveness without any mediator. It is precisely the penitent who *can* take over the mediating function; and there is no "mystery" then about forgiveness (as there must always be about the speeches of the priest in the Mass).

(b) *The Idealism of Reason*

- 2./232. When self-consciousness becomes universal Reason, its negative relation to otherness turns over into a positive one. Instead of wanting to save itself out of the world, the world now for the first time exists for it as its own truth. This beginning of the world came after the failure of the Crusades, and after the Reformation, in the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*.

The effort of living self-consciousness was to assert its own independence of natural life. The Unhappy Consciousness was the last extreme of that effort. The God-seeking sinner turned her back on nature, as completely as possible. But even for the Unhappy Consciousness, the world of the pilgrimage was "sanctified"; and according to the authoritative revelation: "In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth."

For the Reason that is no longer "formal" (as it was in Stoicism) but self-creative, the meaning of this aspect of the *Vorstellung* is the first problem. As the self that is one with God, Reason must seek first to *know* the world-order. It is like Adam before the Fall, except that the God who walked in the Garden in that story has vanished. God and man are now *united*, so all that remains of the impersonal, creative Father is the "order" in the natural world.

The religious *Vorstellung* gives us the key to Hegel's curious language about "being all reality." But for the moment it is best to forget the *Vorstellung*, and concentrate on the one world of the here-and-now as Hegel does. The doctrine that Reason is "all truth and all reality" means, first of all, that there is no other world than the one in which finite rational consciousness actually exists. This was already true for naïve self-consciousness. But for the natural self-consciousness, the singular self is the criterion of truth, so that the natural world is just a collection of "instruments" for its purposes; whereas now the order of nature is the *reality* of the universal self, which it must know in order to validate its certainty of being all truth. Reason is the Self-Consciousness of Understanding.

If nature "truly is" (which was the assumption of Understanding), then Reason must be its "Creator." Hegel has the grace to use an "as if" here. The certainty of Reason that it is all truth and all reality is what he means by "idealism." I do not think there was any idealism before Hegel's that expressed the concept of Reason like this. So from here onwards our observation will be explicitly "speculative." But we are still observing a singular *Gestalt*. Reason is before us as "*subjective* Spirit." The paradigm for this is Fichte's self-positing Ego, which posits the non-Ego as the condition of its own conscious finitude. This doctrine of Fichte's was a reinter-

pretation of the dogma that God created the world “out of nothing.” Hegel’s “as if” is necessary because all that is meant by the “creation” or “positing” of the world, is that it has an absolute status, an eternal nature, of its own. It is not just a practical reality, an occasion for desire and enjoyment, for work and suffering. It is an object of knowledge, and it will achieve its true reality, when it is truly known. This does not mean that we have to know it *all*, but only that we have a categorical conception that enables us to *get* reliable knowledge, and to correct our errors as they emerge. This was the Concept that emerged from the dialectic of Consciousness. Reason begins its self-creative work with the Infinite of Understanding as its secure foundation; but now it comprehends the whole sphere of Life.

The “reality” of the world ordinarily signifies the certainty of consciousness that it is *there* waiting to be known. The Sceptic *broke* the confident certainty of the Stoic on this score, but at the level of “sense-certainty” our confidence rebounds unscathed from every experience of cognitive “despair.”⁵ The broken certainty of rational consciousness, even in its sceptical phase, that the world is there *to be known* (not to be fought with, manipulated, used and reformed to satisfy desire) is the fundamental truth of Reason. It is by grasping or positing this concept of theoretical objectivity that Reason “creates” its world in thought. Without this concept, we could not recognize reality properly as what it *is*. This is the essential frame within which the unknown can become known. Just as the consciousness that mediates between the finite and the infinite self “is all truth” because it joins the extremes into a unified continuum, so Reason is “all reality” because it establishes the continuum between the unknown concept and the self-knowing one. The unknown concept is only “realized as a concept” when it becomes an actual moment in that continuum. The “certainty” is “created” because it exists at the level of thought, not at the level of sense; and in the process of Reason’s self-creation, the naïve concept will invert itself comprehensively just as the concept of Understanding did.

This “creation of the world” (or its coming into being for Reason) presupposes several crucial developments in the precedent realm of the Unhappy Consciousness—or, more accurately, in the “culture” of European Christendom, since the transformation of the Unhappy Consciousness into Faith proper is one of the events that is involved. The sphere of natural “Self-Consciousness” is clearly identified in this paragraph as the culture of Catholic Christendom. In that culture, the world of nature was “fallen” and “lost.” It was a place of desire and labor, but the desire was evil, and the labor was penitential. “After the grave of its truth had been lost [the failure of the Crusades], the abolition of its actuality had itself been abolished [the dawn of Faith in the Reformation] and the singularity of consciousness has become (in itself) absolute essence for it [Descartes’ *Meditations*], it discovers the world herein [i.e. in the withdrawal into self], as *its own* new actual world which has an interest for it as abiding, just as previously it was of interest only as passing away; for its *permanence* becomes for self-consciousness its own *truth* and *presentness*; it is certain that it experiences only itself therein.”

According to this interpretation of history, the second relationship of the

Unhappy Consciousness perished in a proper dialectical sequence. The loss of the Holy Sepulchre symbolizes the failure of the attempt to “reconsecrate” nature—to give it back to God, and accept nature’s gifts with thankfulness as coming from Him (while still also regarding the eating of our daily bread in the sweat of the brow as part of the the penance of original sin). In the “consecration” image the “sanctification” flows to every part of Christendom from the central focus of the Saviour’s example. The *Laudes creaturarum* of St. Francis (“Blessed be my Lord for sister Water . . . brother Fire . . .” and so on) is a perfect expression of how the universal consecration extends even to subhuman nature. But the downfall of the sanctified world which the external might of the Saracens begins, is completed by the iconoclastic zeal of the Reformers within the community. The declaration that all reverence for *images* is idolatrous restores the original negative purity of the Unhappy Consciousness in a way that facilitates the “abolishing of the abolition of its actuality.” The “empty tomb” is the “abolition of the actuality” of the Incarnation. Luther’s discovery of the “witness of the Spirit” is the “abolition” of that first abolition.⁶ Christ is “risen again” in the *present world* of the Spirit.

The coming of singular consciousness to be “absolute essence” is twofold. On the one hand (within the religious context of the Unhappy Consciousness itself) it is the transition to “Faith proper” (the *third* relationship of consciousness to the Unchangeable [par. 214] established by a Lutheran Christian finding the “witness of the Spirit” in his own reading of his German Bible).⁷ But this is the advance that takes place at the level of spirit proper; and it is not conceptualized successfully until the writing of the *Phenomenology*. At the present stage it is still a “negative” motion—the “abolition of the abolished actuality” of the Saviour in the tomb. The fully conceptualized advance at this point, the advance to Reason proper, is the dawn of the Enlightenment in Descartes’ doctrines of the self and of the intellectual light.⁸

Luther’s Reformation abolished the significance of the Holy Sepulchre, by resurrecting the Saviour in Faith. This “abolishing of the abolished actuality” of the Unhappy Consciousness will itself be brought to an unhappy self-abolition once more by the newborn light of Reason, before it can come to birth as Absolute Spirit. For the present, “Reason” is spirit only in its subjective moment. Hence it can still be presented in singular *Gestalten*; and in spite of its completely positive programme (which is to recognize itself everywhere in the world, and so to appropriate the world as “its own *truth* and *presentness*”) it remains essentially a *negative* actuality. The project of self-recognition in the order of Nature will lead us only to the skull that was *not* there in the Holy Sepulchre; and the final *Gestalt* of Reason is the “test of laws,” the Kantian ethical category that applies to everything and to nothing. This chapter is the story of how *cogito ergo sum* turns into *cogito ergo non sum*. But the “abolition of the abolished actuality” will go far beyond that. The Unhappy Consciousness, with its “empty tomb,” was implicitly far wiser than subjective Reason already.

3./233. Idealism says that Reason is the Ego’s certainty of being all reality. This is different from the “I = I” of *Desire* or from that of Stoicism. This certainty of Reason is dem-

onstrated historically by the path we have traced. But the traversing of this path is an historic achievement that lies behind it, so when it appears, it is only a certainty, and does not comprehend itself as Truth. To anyone who has not followed the path (as we have) the assertion of Idealism is gibberish. Yet everyone makes the claim *concretely*.

It is clear that the “idealism” Hegel is speaking of is Fichte’s. The formula *Ich bin Ich* makes this unmistakable. But we have to remember that this formula was introduced already as the primitive assertion of self-consciousness (par. 167). The most immediate historical reference there was to the establishment of a feudal system in Germany (or what Hegel called in 1798 “the saga of German freedom” in the days when “the singular [leader] was unbowed before the universal”).⁹ At that stage it was even further from the general tenor of Fichte’s idealism, than the claim here that “the world’s *permanence* becomes for self-consciousness its own *truth* and *presentness*.” This claim (or rather the *resolution* that it is so) is one side of Fichte. The resolution does accurately typify the enthusiast for the Revolution, the utopian socialist, and the prophetic vision called “Faith” in the *Vocation of Man*. But everything that mattered most to Fichte—the otherworldly side with its *postulational* emphasis on the bad infinite of endless moral progress—transcends the sphere of Reason, even more radically than it transcends “Self-Consciousness” (which does at least culminate in an *irrational* access to the Beyond). This indicates that Hegel is using the terminology of Critical Idealism (Kant and Fichte) for what the consciousness that we are observing expressed in the language of Bacon and Descartes.

By employing the Ego-category of post-Kantian idealism Hegel justifies the outrageous (or at least outrageous-looking) claim that his doctrine of objective inversion obliges him to make about the advance from “authority” to “Reason.” It is intuitively appropriate to say of Fichte’s “Ego” that it “is the certainty of being all reality.” In the *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1794, the positing of the *difference* between Ego and non-Ego (and hence between a reality that is mine and one that is not) is subordinate, and takes place only within the context of the absolute self-positing. But the “advantage” that Hegel gains by this is only a formal one, since Fichte’s doctrine of “self-positing” is as opaque and counter-intuitive as the claim that “Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality.” The real advantage goes the other way. One value of Hegel’s concrete interpretation of the transition to “Reason” is that it offers us a viable account of what Fichte’s doctrine means. To say that Hegel’s argument provides *one* viable account is certainly a weakened expression of what Hegel is claiming; for the next paragraph will show that, in his view, this path of historical recollection is the *only* one by which the meaning and truth of absolute idealism can be established (and the theme of these pars. 233–234 is one that he recurs to at some length in the Preface). But it is not necessary to preempt the possibility of other viable interpretations of Fichte.

It is the critical idealism of Kant and Fichte that is the “homeland of truth” spoken of in paragraph 167.¹⁰ But that idealism evolved out of what Kant called “dogmatism”; and the dogmatic advent of “Reason” is in the *Cogito ergo sum* of

Descartes. "Idealism" makes the proposition "To think is to be" *convertible*—as Descartes did not. But it is the *sum* of the Cartesian *cogito* that is present in Hegel's rewriting of Fichte's "Ich = Ich" as "Ich *bin* Ich."

It must be admitted that it is only in Leibniz that the Cartesian dualism of thought and thing is superseded in a theory that still does justice to the *singularity* of the Cartesian *Cogito*. It is obvious enough that Spinoza's "Reason" is "the certainty of being all reality"; but his *cogitatio* cannot account for the fact that it is articulated in the *Ethics* of a *community* of finite reasoners. The truth is that we cannot leave any of the dogmatic rationalists out of account—even if Hegel himself seems to do that—because we find the emphasis on the *substantiality* of Reason in all of them, and especially the emphasis on Reason's *permanent subsistence* in the order of Nature, which Hegel insists on in the last sentence of paragraph 232.¹¹

Having now said all that I can in defence of the view that the advent of "Reason" in the phenomenology of the World-Spirit is substantially identical with the scientific revolution, and the advent of scientific rationalism, I will not deny that for the most part Hegel's discussion of the standpoint of "Reason" in paragraphs 234–239 refers to the world-view that began to unfold only in 1781 with the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The present paragraph reviews the whole path that we have traversed so far in the book, in order to show the difference between the "I am I" of self-consciousness and the "I am I" of Reason. But Hegel's fundamental point is that the idealist philosophers of the *present day* do not comprehend where their rational certainty came from, and the present day reader cannot comprehend what the rational assertions of this idealism mean.

In spite of its concern with the *present*, however, the paragraph does validate my contention that Hegel means to restate the *certainty* of the dogmatic rationalists in the language of Fichte's post-critical idealism. There is no mistaking the fact that Fichte is the idealist who *asserts* the absoluteness of the Ego. But it was Kant who criticized the dogmatic assertiveness of "Reason," and claimed that its "certainty" was just one among the crowd of other certainties. That is what makes Fichte's repetition of the error of Spinoza and Leibniz so reprehensible. From the historical references that Hegel gives, it is clear that "Reason" comes on the scene before "Idealism"; and it appears *immediately* as the certainty of being all reality.

Spinoza's *Ethics* is the paradigm of this certainty, but it is Bacon and Descartes, with their contempt of all previous cultural tradition, who exemplify the "forgetting of the path." In Spinoza's adoption of the "geometric method" the long gestation of the "intellectual love of God" is so completely forgotten, that we are no longer conscious of the forgetting. Hegel's text does not contain either *für sich* or *für uns* (they would mean the same here since Fichte's idealism is "ours"). But the intended contrast between "an sich hat" and "spricht auch . . . sie aus" is plain when Hegel writes that "the consciousness that *comes on the scene* as Reason has that certainty *immediately* in itself" whereas "*Idealism* also gives it *immediate* expression." Just as Spinoza's Reason *has* this certainty implicitly *in itself*, so Fichte's Idealism *expresses* it immediately *for us*. Once this contrast is grasped, the fact that the rest of this paragraph reviews the emergence of Reason in its "imme-

mediate" shape, while the next paragraph deals with the failure of "immediate" Idealism (and with the *reflective* appearance of Reason) can be properly comprehended. "Idealism" is not tautologically identical with "Reason" either in its "immediate" or in its "reflective" shape. It is the self-conscious movement of Reason in its "immediate" shape, the negative or dialectical moment which brings forth the "absolute reflection" of Reason; and this "absolute reflection" is the speculative Concept that expresses itself in the *Phenomenology*.

Hegel's review of the path that Reason has forgotten contains some helpful clarifications. The comment that the Ego, which is the primitive object of self-consciousness, is "just *empty* object simply" is not new. It means that primitive self-consciousness does not really want any definite object at all; it just wants to get its own way about whatever objective occurs to it. "I = I" means "I can be whatever I like." This self just wants to be *master*. But the definition of *free* self-consciousness is more illuminating. Here the Ego is "the object that withdraws itself from the others, which are still valid beside it." This is an acknowledgement that Stoicism is the philosophy of equal recognition: the Stoic regards those who do not dwell in the light of Reason, as brothers and sisters nonetheless—sparks of the same divine fire and hence proper objects of rational concern. But their goals are *irrational*. Freedom from the bondage of desire is the only rational goal.

For the consciousness of "Reason," on the other hand, every goal that it can recognize at all, it recognizes as reasonable. The formula which sounds *exclusive*: "the Ego . . . is object, with the consciousness of the *non-being* of any other object, it is the unique object, all reality and presentness," is actually *inclusive* of everything that can be desired by rational humans. Its difference from the Stoic who desires "to be reasonable" as a formal goal, separable from any content is exactly here. The Stoic is willing to sacrifice any content, even life itself, if its retention threatens her hold on her "reason." But of course the comprehensiveness of modern Reason does not extend to all possible objects. The goal of faith, for example, being beyond "reality and presentness," is not rational.¹² Reason has the "consciousness of the *not-being*" of this Beyond.

It is from the standpoint of Reason that we can see why the "Science of experience" must begin with Consciousness, rather than with Self-Consciousness. The path by which this universal comprehension of all real being has demonstrated itself to be the implicit being of Self-Consciousness goes right back to the first moment of Consciousness. Reason *begins* with the sense of being the only truth *for* itself because in the dialectical movement of Sense-Certainty, Perception and Understanding, all otherness vanishes (as being-in-itself) for consciousness itself. Reason has forgotten that disappearance, and it must recollect that too, if it is to become *speculative* Reason.¹³ But, of course, ordinary "observation" takes place from the standpoint of consciousness; so unless that is first overcome, the consciousness of Reason itself is a *broken* one. We shall see the result of this in the Enlightenment.

In recalling the path of Self-Consciousness, Hegel leaves out Desire (of whose "object" he has already spoken). But it is the desire to be a free self which moves "through the independence of consciousness in lordship and serfdom." What

Hegel says here confirms our view that “independent consciousness” is realized only in lord and serf taken together. “Independent consciousness” arrives at the conception of freedom in Stoicism, but it is not actually liberated until it arrives at the Sceptical standpoint. That liberation is clearly only a “relative” one, since the Unhappy Consciousness is now called “the struggle for the *absolute* liberation of the inwardly divided consciousness.” Thus it is clear that “Reason” is the “absolute liberation” of self-consciousness, and that it is the internalized and reconciled union of the two sides that appear to be independently related to one another as Stoicism and Scepticism; just as it is also the integration of the truth-criteria of “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness.” The “truth” of Reason is “the being-in-itself that is for-me as my real self.” This is the proper *formal* interpretation of the primitive natural certainty that “I am in the world that is mine.” What we still have to discover is just how the experience of the world can be actually rational in this sense. How can the world become “my real self”?

Through the movement of Self-Consciousness, “otherness vanishes for consciousness itself inasmuch as it is only for it.” So in the two phases together, otherness has vanished (as something that subsists in itself) for the Understanding; and it has vanished (as something that only is for consciousness) in the rational comprehension of Unhappy Consciousness. The two processes taken together demonstrate the *transcendental* character of reality—i.e., that being is identical with thinking, in the sense that they are aspects or sides of one reality. The opposite significance that they have in their abstract separateness is secondary to, and dependent upon, the primary identity of the opposites. Cognitive Reason, and the world known and unknown, refer to the same reality in its subjective and objective aspects. The disappearance of otherness as a being-in-itself arose from the discovery that what is “in itself” only is so, insofar as it is “for consciousness”; and conversely, what is “for consciousness” only is so, in virtue of being “in itself.” “Being in itself” and “Being for another” are reciprocally necessary aspects of “being” simply (or absolutely).¹⁴

This identity is what Reason *knows* when it appears. Reason is in fact the immediate “certainty” of this. Consciousness (as Understanding) knows, like Parmenides, that “It is.” Self-Consciousness knows that “I am.” Reason knows that “I am it, and it is I.” But at its first appearance it does not know how to express this certainty consistently. Only with the advent of Fichte can Reason formulate its position without generating the pseudo-problem of the Absolute’s “going out of itself.” But when Fichte does formulate it, common sense cannot understand what he says, and he cannot explain it. On the other hand, the educated common sense of our world can understand Descartes; and it understands the scientific optimism of the Enlightenment well enough. This is the “concrete *Gestalt*” in which the consciousness that has not travelled with us can recognize the proposition of “Reason” that it is “all reality.”

4./234. Thus [Fichte’s] idealism does not comprehend itself and cannot make itself comprehensible. It is faced by the rival certainties (which we have left behind on the road).

That “I am I” is certain, but so is “It is It.” We have to *start* from the latter to come to the former conviction comprehendingly as the *truth*. The immediate entrance of Reason is only as a present abstraction. Consciousness defines itself in *various* ways at each stage. At every stage, its immediate shape depends on what course of development lies behind it.

The transcendental idealism that has turned this instinctive certainty into reflective awareness cannot make itself clear to others who say “It is” or “I am” (or more plausibly, with Descartes, “I am and It is, but the modes of rational being are quite different”). Yet if they can read Descartes intelligently, all of them have the certainty of Reason too. The impossibility of their communicating and moving one another shows that none of them comprehends the certainty of Reason with which they speak. The great critical reasoner, Kant, declared that they are *all* dogmatists, and that their disagreements must continue forever, until they admit that Reason cannot say *what is* in any absolute sense.¹⁵

Kant thought Reason could say what must be assumed in order that there may be a common world for us. Yet when Fichte claimed to be doing that, with his “I am It and It is I,” Kant did not accept his “Science of Knowledge.” And when Schelling asserted that “It is I and I am It,” it was clear that he meant something different (which Fichte in his turn did not accept). At that stage it began to look as if Kant’s hope that *critical* philosophy could be the prelude to philosophic science was another will-o’-the-wisp. The new “transcendental” philosophy was as dogmatic as ever; and the *dialectic* of Pure Reason was simply emerging in a new shape.

The *Phenomenology* aims to validate Kant’s hope by showing how the dialectic of Pure Reason can be overcome. The “other certainties” facing Reason “have got lost on the path” that brought Reason to birth. Not only the dogmatic rationalists, but the whole earlier history of western thought has to be recollected and repossessed as part of the necessary prehistory of Reason. Transcendental Reason appears as idealism, i.e. as having a built-in bias toward the side of self-consciousness; “idealism” as Kant understood it was the proposition that only the subject of experience is truly real. Fichte’s “Science of Knowledge” boasted of being idealism, and his language exhibits an extreme bias towards the principle of self-consciousness. Fichte’s Self-positing Ego, however, is only a *self* in the sense that *God* is a self—the self to which all finite selves surrender in the Unhappy Consciousness. Hegel is expressing Fichte’s doctrine better than Fichte does himself when he says that “Reason appeals to the *self*-consciousness of every consciousness: ‘*I am I*, my object and my essence is I.’” For it seems clear that “Reason” is not just a *singular* self, although it is the *unity* of all singular selves.

There is a dialectical ambiguity about the “I” that is the “object and essence” of the singular subject. As the objective of Reason’s appeal, it must at one and the same time be singular, yet not singular. It is obvious at this point why Hegel is logically *obliged* to recognize Fichte’s idealism as the explicit consciousness of Reason. For this “appeal” of Reason is the promise of membership in the “body of Christ,” shorn of its aspect of grace and miracle, and of seeming to be the motion and gift of

the Unchangeable. In Fichte's idealism the Christian hope is transformed into the voice of the "free self-consciousness" of Stoicism which knew itself to be a spark of the divine Reason. But it has still to achieve something more than the *formal* status of Stoicism, surrounded as it is by other certainties that have to be respected as equally valid in their immediacy.

Reflective Reason must begin again with Sense-Certainty, at the extreme of the "It is," and traverse once more the forgotten path to self-possession. Otherwise, as the direct transformation of the "trust" of the Unhappy Consciousness into rational certainty, it would still have to maintain the contempt for this world, and the infinite desire for the Beyond, that typifies the self-consciousness that has identified Freedom as its only satisfactory objective. This was the weakness of the immediate shape that Fichte gave to Reason. Schelling's Identity Philosophy, which went back and repossessed itself of the heritage of the dogmatic rationalists, corrected the mistaken direction of Fichte's rational attention. But Fichte's idealism will reveal itself as an error that turns round into a much higher truth than the philosophy of nature can give us.

Hegel was working with Fichtean concepts, before he came under the influence of the Identity philosophy (first the "Absolute Identity" of Hölderlin, and then that of Schelling). He returns now to a Fichtean standpoint as the proper conceptual schema for the repossession of the whole tradition since Bacon and Descartes; in other words, his goal is to sublimate the very opposition between "dogmatism" and "idealism" that Fichte took to be the ultimate concern of rational judgment. Like Fichte, Hegel accepts the Christian intuition that human individuality is the ultimate value, so that philosophy must be the logical guard and guide of the sacred right and duty of every *singular* consciousness to define its own vocation. That is why we heard the *leitmotif* of the Fichtean Ego as soon as we entered the "homeland of truth" (par. 167). The insight of Schelling (and even more crucially the poetic insight of Hölderlin) must be reintegrated into Fichte's idealism in order to overcome the Protestant yearning for the Beyond from which Fichte still suffers. But Fichte was the thinker who saw how the new speculative philosophy can be founded successfully upon Kantian principles.

The discussion of this new foundation that now follows is highly critical. "Idealism" is handled almost as sarcastically as Stoicism was, and for the same reason: it has only a formal truth. But that formal truth is the actual concept of Spirit. As the articulation of Hegel's own Table of Contents shows, we are here entering upon the third and final movement of the whole. Spirit, which made its first appearance at the dawn of Self-Consciousness, achieves its own Concept in the singular Reason. Reason is *subjective* Spirit; and the thesis of the book is that "the True is to be expressed not as *substance*, but equally as *Subject*" (par. 17).

The *Phenomenology* grounds the Fichtean theory of the Ego in a reflection out of the opposite certainty that "the object and essence [i.e. reality and truth] for me is other than I." We have already seen how the certainty that "It is I" *can* arise from this opposite certainty in principle (that is the path of consciousness); and how it *has* arisen from it in practice (that is the path of self-consciousness). Now, within

the certainty of Reason itself, we shall see it arise again (in the new sense in which it is for the first time correctly or adequately *comprehended*). “*There is OTHER for me*” indeed. For there is that in which I must fail to recognize myself, that which is less than I, that out of which I have risen, and which I am therefore “beyond.” But this other is also *myself* in the same sort of way that my forgotten history is myself; it is the substance, or foundation, of my subjectivity.

That forgotten history, the path that we have already retraced as the evolution of consciousness, will eventually be recollected again as the Substance of Spirit proper. It is the objective self from which self-conscious singular Reason has emerged, because the logical destiny, or the rational *Bestimmung* of the Spirit, is to be cognizant of what it has been. In the light of that cognizance we shall finally be able to know the not-self (in which subjective Reason will here strive unsuccessfully to find itself) as the necessary “otherness” of my “absolute” self. Thus, through his anti-Fichtean policy of identifying the Beyond of the finite Ego as Nature, Hegel finally arrives at the justification of Fichte’s Absolute Knowledge, and of the absolute self-positing of the Ego. His strategy was certainly suggested by Schelling’s quarrel with Fichte about the logical need for, and essential validity of, the “philosophy of nature.”

But the first encounter between Reason and Nature is not an experience of absolute Identity. On the contrary, the actual fate of the “instinct of Reason” recalls what the Earth-Spirit said to Faust in their encounter: “You are equal to the Spirit that you comprehend, not me.” We should recognize that Hegel is aiming to bring out the truth about our scientific study of Nature *as such*. It is not Schelling’s theory of nature, but Hegel’s own theory, that is the object of our critical observation. Much of it originated in Schelling’s writings; but that only shows that Hegel was aware (in 1806 at least) of a great debt that tended later on to be concealed by his polemic against “formalized” philosophy of nature. That polemic is already present here, and it became increasingly strident after the breach. The debt to Schelling is obscured even here by the great difference between Schelling’s view and Hegel’s about the limits of natural knowledge and the function of natural philosophy. But Hegel was always conscious of it; and anyone not obsessed by the polemical concern will be able to recognize this.

When it first comes on stage, Reason is like an actor with a speaking part, who has not yet spoken. It is just a visibly present shape, “the abstraction of its being in view.” This actor has learned his part; but he must go through it spontaneously *as if he had not learned it*. The World-Spirit is the “book” from which all “parts” are learned. But it is also the whole company of actors. So the part comes out in several versions as the World-Spirit advances. Hegel’s chapter begins with the final version—the part as acted by Kant (with Fichte as his understudy). But we should notice that what Hegel says at the end of this paragraph implies that the Kantian “Category” was presented in some earlier less developed forms.¹⁶ Fichte was the first to “comprehend” it speculatively. It was Descartes who played it at the first performance. But Hegel himself was the first to call the comprehensive unity “the Category.” (Kant and Fichte use that word only for its “distinct types.”)

- 5./235. The progress of rational self-consciousness thus begins from the pure abstraction of reality: *I am the category of Being*. The category of Being formerly embraced being-in-itself and being-for-me indifferently. Now it is the thinking of what is; and we must not let its two sides divide. Differentiation is present in it immediately as a plurality of the categories. This is even more incomprehensible than the original unity. But it means that Reason must leave immediacy behind and begin to comprehend itself. (Kant's procedure in this regard was an outrage.)

The "certainty" of Reason that it *is* all reality must necessarily have rather a distinctive character when it makes its first appearance. It is not like the certainty that $2 + 2 = 4$; or like G.E. Moore's certainty that "This is a hand." It is the certainty that *my* concept of the real logically comprehends what is real. I *know* what "being real" means.¹⁷ The implicit nature (*Ansich*) of whatever *is*, is just that same abstract concept of "Being" that thinking *is*. "Ego is just the *pure essentiality* of what has being, in other words, it is the pure *Category*." We can recognize the Cartesian doctrine that "Thinking is being" here; but it has been interpreted in the light of Fichte's doctrine that *all* being is *for* the Ego, and Kant's doctrine that "Reality" is a *category* of the Understanding. When we put Kant's theory of the categories into the context of Fichte's theory of the Ego, we can see how the "I think" which Kant says must "accompany" all our representations becomes the fundamental *category* within which all the others are to be found; and the category of "Reality" jumps out of its place in the Kantian list into an absolute preeminence because of Descartes' argument that the I that thinks must *be*.¹⁸

"The category," says Hegel, "formerly had the significance of the essentiality of what has being, without determining whether [the reference was to] what has being in general or what has being against consciousness." For this the critical editors refer us to Aristotle. But we should remember that Hegel often uses *sonst* to refer to the not so distant past, when the philosophy of Wolff dominated all the schools before Kant's awakening from his "dogmatic slumber"; and secondly, that in the Cartesian view from which Hegel's own theory of the "category" takes its rise, there were two kinds of "being"—that of the thinking consciousness in all its modes (from dreaming and doubting to clear and distinct ideas) and that of the extended world (which must somehow be raised from problematic status to reliability or *certainty*). The fact that Descartes does not use the word "category" should not blind us to the fact that he admits the two modes of "being" indifferently: what Hegel's theory (or Fichte's) declares to be *das Seiende überhaupt* and that which is only *das Seiende gegen das Bewusstsein*. In the transcendental theory of Reason these two ways of being in Descartes are united into "the essentiality, or simple unity of what has being only as thinking actuality." Descartes' "thinking being" becomes the self-conscious Category.

We must not jump to the conclusion (as the Critical Editors do) that Kant and Fichte are the primary targets of the immediately following attack on "the one sided, degenerate (*schlechte*) idealism" which "lets this unity come on stage on one side with an *in-itself* on the other." Hegel is not above describing Kant's view as

crassly as this when it suits him, but in the present context, he is thinking of a *degenerate* interpretation of Kant himself, in contrast to the one that Fichte gave. The opposition of the “Kantian spirit” to the “Kantian letters” is clearly in evidence here. Kant *failed* to provide a sound “deduction of the categories,” and his procedure is roundly condemned. But he understood the problem at least; so he must count as the thinker who rediscovered “speculation.” The “degenerate idealism” of the Kantian letters embraces views like the commonsensical “synthetism” of W. T. Krug; and the commonsensical “scepticism” of G. E. Schulze.¹⁹

The dialectical breakdown of genuinely transcendental idealism does not come about through degeneration into the dualism of what is “in itself” and what “appears.” The real problem is one that the degenerate idealists do not notice. The self-consciousness that knows itself to be the *real* category necessarily involves an internal differentiation which reaches the pitch of direct self-contradiction. In Kant’s table “reality” is paired directly with “negation”; and the triad of “reality, negation, limitation” is an evident guiding thread for Fichte’s theory of the Ego. For Hegel, too, the thesis that “thinking and being are identical” is matched by the contradictory assertion that “thinking is the absolute *negative* of all being.” The category of “negation” emerges because the being of the self is a “transparent” unity of different categories. The unity of “the category” contains a plurality of categories.

Hegel makes out that, for ordinary naïve consciousness, the plurality ought to be more puzzling than the unity was. But if we are willing to call the transcendental unity of apperception “*the category*” we can see that it must contain a plurality already in Kant’s theory; and this does not seem to cause any extreme intellectual discomfort. What it does imply is that—to follow the lead of Kant’s own table—a *totality* must be established. This is the problem of the “deduction of the categories.” If we are certain that there is one *real* category, we cannot just blandly accept the assertion that there are *also* many categories.²⁰ Kant solved the problem by turning to the table of the “forms of judgment” in his logic book. But he did nothing to show that *that* table was a proper “totality” in the first place. So at this point Kant himself does come directly under critical attack. His procedure was a “Schmach der Wissenschaft”—an outrage against transcendental logic. Hegel’s own “Science of Logic” is what appears when the outrage is put right. But the *Phenomenology* itself, as the self-sublation of the observational standpoint that simply *finds* the truth, is the removal of the blot.

- 6./236. Categories are not things, so there are no “things” in Reason’s world. But various categories differentiate themselves; and singular consciousness is exclusive both of this plurality and of the pure category of thinking (all are equally “other” for it). Singularity is the transition from pure thinking to externality; and “consciousness” is the schema for this, the intentional pointing to another. The first duality thus generated is that of pure essentiality [the category again] and pure difference [specific categories]. This refers us to exclusive unity in the singular consciousness, and that refers back to genus/species because it is conscious of their dialectical unity in its own experience of becoming.

The “bad” interpretation of Kantian idealism takes its stand upon the *thing*. It distinguishes between the “thing-in-itself,” and the things that appear. For the idealism of Reason, that problem is long gone. The attempt by common sense (and by Descartes) to divide what is “in itself” from what is “for us” must fail. The one-sided or degenerate form of the critical philosophy is just the rebirth of this error in the context of properly self-conscious Reason. The impossibility of relying upon this categorical distinction was demonstrated in the chapter on Perception; and now in the full light of Reason we can see that we must give up the concept of the perceptible *Ding* altogether. The *Ding* as one, was already the “negative of itself” as many. But now we know that the unity belongs to Reason itself (and the plurality likewise). They are opposite aspects of the Category (i.e. of the Ego). The categories are *species* of the Reason (or Thinking) that is their *genus*.

This logical language did not occur in the Perception chapter; there we had only time and space, the Kantian “forms of intuition” which were the universal shapes of sensible being. In Reason, we have the Self-Consciousness of the Understanding. Reason is “all reality and all truth” in the sense that it *is* the categorical *structure and motion* of all experience. In its *moving* aspect, Reason itself is “singular”. There is more to it than purely universal categories, because it is *active*, it is a principle of change in the world. So the dialectic of thinghood has now been displaced into the transcendental realm; and we shall need a new term for the *objectivity* of this world in which the thinking self subsists as a Subject. For Reason as Object Hegel uses *Sache* (which I translate as “Thing”); and the *Ding an sich*, the “thing in itself,” will be replaced by the *Sache selbst*, the Thing Itself.

Although the fact is not referred to, this higher level of objectivity is generated at this point. When the thinking reality reflects upon itself as a *unity*, it is necessarily conscious of itself as an activity that generates differences. These *differences* form a *world* for it, but its own unity does not positively comprehend them all; it only becomes aware of itself as a “pure unity” because it excludes them all and negates them, by denying its identity with them. Reason, as a “thinking reality,” is what is *free* from all finite being; its real being is an act of freeing itself from, and transcending, finitude. This exclusion both of the actual concrete “difference” of immediate experience, and of the original immediate unity (which comprehends or includes the differences that emerge in it) is Singularity.

Whether or not Hegel has Descartes in mind it is instructive to compare his argument with that of the *Meditations*, which is probably more familiar to most readers than any of Fichte’s arguments—and in my own opinion much easier to follow. Descartes identifies himself as the “being” of the pure thinking, by following to the limit the hypothesis that every apparent being may be an illusion. Hegel’s argument takes a further step. The thinker cannot identify herself with the pure thinking (any more than with the “thoughts”) because she is *the being that is appeared to*. This step undercuts the Cartesian *dualism*. The “certainty” of Reason is simply a singular agent in a world of *external* sensible appearances; and as we saw in “Dependence and Independence,” I cannot think myself free of my body (as Descartes pretended).

As a transcendental category—the category of rational actuality—this singularity is synonymous with “freedom”; and it is inseparable from the *negative* capacity of thinking. But since it is not the exclusion (or negation) of a plurality of “things,” but rather of a plurality of “experiences,” the original comprehensive unity of experience, from which the singular self-consciousness *frees* itself, is necessarily a world of other free (i.e. rational) selves.

The “external world” (which arises logically at this point) appears immediately to be a world of *things*. Even the other selves are things for the consciousness that cycles between sense-certainty and perception. But the reflectively thoughtful self knows rationally what animals know at the sensory level, and what self-consciousness knows in its instrumental activity as understanding: that *things* are not real “in themselves.” That is why Self-Consciousness is, from the beginning, an interaction with other selves. Things gain their objective status, which exacts absolute respect, only because they belong first to an embodied Lord, and then to God.

Since “otherness” and “thinghood” coincided in their immediate appearance as Consciousness, the evolution of Reason must now retrace the journey of consciousness on the basis of its certainty that thinking and being are *not* “other,” but are actually identical with each other. The singular thinker is the *schema* of this identity.²¹

As a “schema”—an intellectual *middle* between “thought” and “sense”—the thinking ego necessarily refers (*hindeuten, verweisen*) to its substance, its content, i.e. to the world of experience that is to be comprehended. This “referring” is the reflective (or transcendental) repetition of the naïve “pointing” (*aufzeigen*) of sense-certainty. But whereas in sense-certainty it was the “singular” that was pointed *at*, here it is Singularity (the negative unity) itself which refers us to the excluded moment of simple (positive) unity. Each moment in the cycle refers to the next. We go round the circle from the positive unity of Reason with all reality, to the differentiation of experience, to the negative unity of pure thinking, and from that back to the positive unity again. There is no real otherness in this progress; it is a sequence of “distinctions that are no distinction.”

These are the moments of Reason as “the Category.” The cycle is not the self-deceiving cycle of perception because no “otherness” is involved. To use one of Hegel’s favorite metaphors, the process is transparent to itself. But as we shall see this claim *is* programmatic. Rational consciousness is *supposed* to have this clarity (e.g. by Fichte). But the experience of it is more like the self-deceiving procedure of perception than one might expect. We shall encounter the moments separately as rationalism, empiricism, scepticism; and they are only successfully united in Hegel’s revision of transcendental idealism. The formal “schema” that Hegel derives from Fichte has a long way to go before its “certainty” will become “truth.”

7./237. Thus the two-sided dialectical character of consciousness revealed by Scepticism is preserved. Rational consciousness is a quest for *itself* in the otherness of the excluded not-self. It *is* the whole process in which it also *appears* to itself as the opposed terms.

The historical split between rationalism and empiricism is what Hegel now introduces into the discussion. One can read what he says in terms of a contrast

between Kant and Fichte, but the more historically comprehensive interpretation is the one indicated by his scientific project. Locke's "way of ideas," and his "historical, plain method," is the "restless going back and forth that runs through all its moments, and has the otherness floating before it in them that sublates itself in the grasping." The self-sublating "otherness" is Locke's "substance, I know not what" which becomes in due course the Kantian *Ding-an-sich*. The certainty of Reason appears as the certainty that "the mind knows only its own ideas." It is because of this doctrine that "otherness" is necessarily sublated in the grasping of it.

Rationalism appears full blown only in the theory of Spinoza. Spinoza's God is the tranquil unity of Reason; and the goal of finite consciousness is to achieve just this tranquillity, since the "intellectual love of God" is also "the love with which God loves himself." The "other" of Reason in Spinoza is the *imagination*. This is precisely Locke's mind furnished with a great stock of "ideas" that are its own; while for Locke the "other" is that "substance, I know not what" which the mind can never reach. Just as the cycle of Reason recalls sense-certainty, so the "alternation" (*abwechseln*) of consciousness and object between these determinations in the two traditions, is very like the *self-deception* (*Täuschung*) of the perceiving consciousness. It is Locke who moves out of the positive unity, and seeks the "pure in-itself" beyond the realm of difference; and it is Spinoza who moves back from the negative unity of thinking to the positive (comprehensive) unity of rational substance. But, of course, it is Kant, Fichte and Hegel who put the moments together and bring about the recognition that "consciousness as essence, is this whole process itself." What the theory of Reason in the *Phenomenology* reveals is that there is more truth in the schematic presentation of the history of Idealism that Hegel canonized in his *History of Philosophy*, than those of us who have worked through every twist and turn of his intellectual development are usually disposed to admit nowadays. Only Schelling's influence (and behind him the more powerful figure of Hölderlin, whom Hegel did not canonize) is not evoked in the evolution of "the Category." Schelling and Hölderlin are part of the story of *die Sache selbst*, i.e., of Spirit as *Substance*. But if we draw a curtain over that story (which fills the years 1797–1803) the continuity of Hegel's struggle with the rational self as the concrete "category" (and hence with the predominant influence of Kant and Fichte) is instantly apparent.

- 8./238. Idealism is initially the identification of the rational self with the *first* term, the "pure category." But this formal idealism is equally a radical empiricism. [Fichte's] idealism is a kind of Scepticism with opposite labels. The achievement of absolute knowledge is deferred *ad infinitum*, and we are offered only the forms of knowledge we have analysed in Consciousness. At the same time, this is stigmatized as "knowledge of appearance only." The "absolute knowledge" on which this bounding of our cognition is founded is a contradiction: "what is in itself" is on the one hand the transcendental unity of apperception, and on the other hand the *Ding an sich* (or the Absolute Ego is the unity of pure Ego and *Anstoss*).

In the history of the *Weltgeist* (rather than of Hegel himself) the story of Reason's certainty begins with Locke. For Locke "the humane Understanding" is the

“pure category” that embraces all possible reality. What we can know is only “our own ideas”; and our rational certainty is that they are indeed all ours. This is the return of “sensible certainty” at the level of Reason. The standard of sensible certainty is the foundation stone for Empiricism as a philosophical position. Hegel fixes our attention here upon the way that Fichte took over Locke’s empiricism wholesale. Locke’s “substance, I know not what” reappears without change as the *Anstoss*, the limitation through which all finite consciousness arises. In this empirical aspect, Fichte’s idealism is far more primitive than Kant’s philosophy of science.²² Hegel says that it “becomes a self-contradictory ambiguity just like that of Scepticism.” Idealism expresses itself positively, and Scepticism negatively; but both are caught up in the self-deceptive shifting of the perceptual consciousness. Both assert on the one hand that consciousness is the only reality, and on the other hand that there is an *external* reality; but Idealism asserts that the real can be known, and Scepticism denies it.

The nemesis of this purely formal identity of thinking and being comes upon it when when it is caught in the “bad infinite” of sense experience. A repetition of the cycle of “Consciousness” is inevitable here—with the difference that Reason knows that it is dealing only with itself. The opposition between “self” and “other” is now internalized, because the rational self distinguishes between the moment of self-identity (or unity) and the moment of difference. The rational idealist knows that only the “unity of apperception” is the true self; so the empirical knowledge of the world that belongs to the self as finite is not *true* knowing. The vital knowledge that the self gains in this sphere is the understanding that it is free from the determinism which reigns within the realm of appearance; and because this “true” knowledge is so important, the “untrue” knowledge is “essential” to the rational consciousness.

Hegel’s critique of Fichte here is an abbreviated repetition of the argument of *Faith and Knowledge*; and we can see that he was there depending on the exposition given in the *Vocation of Man*. In virtue of Fichte’s intellectual debts, the views of Locke (who would not have called himself an idealist at all) and of Kant (who called himself a *critical* idealist) fall within the scope of Hegel’s attack. All of them, so Hegel is saying, are “critical idealists.” That is to say, they assert a “doubled” essence with opposed (i.e. contradictory) sides. He gives the contradictory sides in Kant and Fichte: the unity of apperception, and the *Anstoss* or *Ding an sich*. The “empirical essence, or sensibility” is Locke’s “substance”; and “the mind” with its “ideas” is the missing term for the “unity of apperception” in Locke.

- 9./239. This contradiction arises because the abstract concept (the “pure category”) is asserted to be the true. Reason condemns itself to be a search in which it is known *a priori* that there can be no success, no finding. Actual Reason however knows how to comprehend this critical self-defeating experience, so that it may advance from Reason’s “certainty” to its “truth” [i.e. from “critical” to “speculative” idealism].

The “degeneration” of critical idealism begins at its point of weakness. It takes truth to be a correspondence of concept to thing. But the concept is only a “form” and the thing is external to it by definition. So the Concept of Reason is “the truth”

but it is not what *is* true; and even when critical idealism is not allowed to degenerate, it comes to grief upon the resulting contradiction. The “unity of apperception” is only the *form* (or the “abstract concept”) of Reason. It is the moment of simple or positive unity, which comprehends all the differentiated content. But the *content*, all of the “differences,” has to come from outside, i.e. from “experience” and through “the senses” (as opposed to Reason). Truth is in the mind; but reality is out there in the world. The task of uniting them is an endless one; and we can never know that we have found the real truth. Actual Reason is therefore bound to abandon this empirical, observational stance, and to move on from its naïve expectation that truth is to be discovered or *found*. “Reason’s certainty” is a fundamental and absolutely permanent aspect of experience. It is as fundamental as Sense-Certainty, or any Desire except the desire for absolute knowledge. But it is *not* “absolute knowledge.” When it claims to be that it falls into contradiction.²³ The *certainty* that my experience is “mine” must give way to the *truth* of my experience as the experience of my *self*; and we have already seen why the “truth” of self-experience must be the experience of a community of selves.

At the end of the chapter, Hegel returns to the criticism of Kant’s theory of practical reason. This confirms that the critical theory of Reason is the main theme of chapter V as a whole. But not all of the *Gestalten* of Reason encountered in the body of the chapter belong to the quarter century before the battle of Jena. So the ambiguities that I have claimed to find in the introductory pages are genuinely present and necessary. The world of Reason is the world of the Enlightenment generally. But, being *subjective* spirit, its shapes are still singular; and because the science of the experience of consciousness is the comprehension of the time of the actual observer, the present exercises a strong pull once we reach the maturity of rational self-consciousness. The warning issued in the Preface that we must *linger* with the “shapes” and *recollect* the great labor of the *Weltgeist*, implies that we ought to listen carefully to the echoes in every sentence in these pages about the *Ding an sich* and the *Anstoss*. We must expect the echoes to go back to the times of Bacon and Descartes; for otherwise there would be an inexplicable gulf between the unmistakable historical references to the Crusades, and to Luther, in the discussion of the Unhappy Consciousness, and the appearance of Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre* in 1794. It is, after all, Fichte (rather than Kant) who is the presiding genius of *both* chapters. The “formal” idealism within which the coming procession of singular *Gestalten* has to be comprehended is his. But also we must remember that this formal idealism itself has been reinterpreted by Hegel. He has been meditating on it (and on the creative reactions of Schelling and Hölderlin to it) ever since 1794.²⁴

Notes

1. O. Pöggeler has advanced a double thesis about the *difficulties* of chapter V (1966, 46–48). He says first that “it does not fit itself into the articulation of the *Phenomenology bruchlos*”; and secondly that the requirement of chapter VII (par. 679) that the moments of

“Spirit” must display themselves as a sequence in time is fulfilled for “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness,” but not for “Reason.” I hope to show that he is wrong on both counts. (For a sympathetic summary of Pöggeler’s view in English see R. B. Pippin, 1993, 56.)

Our evidence is too fragmentary, in my opinion, to allow a reconstruction of how the conception of the *Phenomenology* “evolved.” There is only enough evidence to show that it *did* evolve (and it probably *began* with moments corresponding very roughly to chapters VI, VII, VIII). But the Introduction shows that the mature conception (in which the triad “Consciousness,” “Self-Consciousness,” “Reason” forms the *basic* structure of “Phenomenology”) was clear in Hegel’s mind when he began to produce our text. So whatever stylistic inadequacies may remain, there ought not to be a *conceptual* “break” at this point.

The *historical* problem is created by the fact that “Reason” is, beyond question, “the daylight of the [post-Kantian] present,” referred to in paragraph 177. Nevertheless, I shall try to show that the experiential content contained in this “present” Concept is historically *continuous* with the Unhappy Consciousness (not contemporaneous either with *it*, or with “the present”). Thus the requirement of chapter VII *is* met.

2. It is the circularity of the motions that makes the sequential development of the *Phenomenology* from chapter to chapter so hard to follow. Hegel wants us always to know that our starting point is also our point of arrival; but there is a difference of aspect between the beginning and the conclusion. This is obvious in chapter IV, where no one is likely to take the Ego of Desire to be *directly* identical with Fichte’s Ego. But the Ego as “category” *is* the Ego of Kant and Fichte; and we meet it at the beginning of chapter V (as well as at the end). Hence it is tempting to think that the Ego of Observing Reason is Fichte’s. We must ask what the *difference* is; and the answer must begin from the ambiguously identical *midpoint* which makes it possible for Hegel to cite the “I = I” principle already at the beginning of chapter IV (par. 167). The self of the absolved Unhappy Consciousness is the self of fulfilled Desire on one side; and it is the *instinctive* self of Fichtean Reason on the other. The *instinctive* self of Reason still has to discover what rationality involves. It is only “the Category” *for us* (not yet *for itself*).

For an interesting attempt to correlate the Nuremberg Logic with the *Gestalten* of the *Phenomenology* chapters I–V, see M. N. Forster (forthcoming, Part 4). His Appendix XIII provides a translation of the Logic texts.

3. See chapter 9, note 57.

4. Compare the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Haldane and Simson, III, 228.

5. Reason will gradually explicate itself as the certainty of being the self-conscious rational interpretation of the infinite life of the whole “for itself.” For naïve consciousness the “truth” is the objective concept that is there simply, and does not require our participation. As I understand it, Hegel’s “idealism” is the denial of this assumption; but there is no need to change the ordinary usage of “reality.” Our Concept will look after itself as we watch.

6. Compare Rosenkranz, 138–139 (Harris and Knox, 183–184). We can of course reasonably doubt whether the successful maintenance of a Christian kingdom in Palestine would seriously have affected, or delayed, the breakdown of Papal religious authority in the “Holy Roman Empire” of Christian Germany; and we can even question whether Hegel himself believed this. His “recollection” of history here is essentially “Romantic,” in that it focusses on symbols that have meaning for “the present” (i.e. for the world of Napoleon) rather than on the symbols that had meaning for consciousness then. Of course, the Crusades were crucial in the revival of classical learning; the iconoclasm of the Reformers, with their insistence that all holy relics and pictures were “idols,” was a “purification” of the Unhappy Con-

sciousness to the last extreme that was necessary to drive self-consciousness “into itself” (and so into Faith); and finally, of course, Descartes found his *Cogito* argument in Augustine.

7. The “third relationship” of paragraph 214 must be distinguished from the “third relationship” of paragraph 224—Jean Wahl confused them (1951, 145). The latter is the sacramental relationship of *penitence*. In terms of paragraph 214 this is just the third moment of the “second relationship.” It offers us only an externalized *Vorstellung* of the “third relationship” proper. Its moments are visibly separated into God, the sinner, and the counsellor. In the third relationship proper, the moments are all “internal.” For although the Book is an outward and visible “counsellor,” there is only the single reader for whom its words have “meaning”; and if that meaning is still an external *authority* in her mind, she is still an idolater and has not properly achieved the “third relationship” of paragraph 214 (for which I use the Pauline expression “the witness of the Spirit with our Spirit”).

8. Cf. Q. Lauer (1974, 31). In the Preface, Hegel seems to acknowledge the empiricist contribution to the birth of Enlightenment for which the *Grande Encyclopédie* made Bacon emblematic (par. 8). So perhaps Bacon is in his mind as well as Descartes, when he speaks of Reason’s certainty of *experiencing* only itself in its “new actual world.” (He did not know any Renaissance philosophy at first hand—cf. W. van Dooren, 1991, 89.)

9. *Sollte das Resultat, T.W.-A. I*, 453. Conceptually the formula expresses the “desire” to be *free*, which is the contradictory determination *not* to be anything determinate.

10. The relation of the *Phenomenology* to Kant’s Critical Philosophy is extremely complicated. It needs a book in itself (and that book cannot be written intelligently until the project of the *Phenomenology* has been understood properly in its own terms). But Fink (1977, 205–206) is correct in claiming that there is a parallel of sorts between the ground plan of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and that of the *Phenomenology*: chapters I–II give us something that corresponds to the Transcendental Aesthetic and Analytic. Chapter III corresponds to the Transcendental Logic; and chapter V to the “Dialectic.” Chapter IV is a foreign body in any parallel (this is where “Fichte’s contribution” begins to be crucial in Hegel’s own view). And—as Fink himself is not slow to point out (see pars. 255–256)—“Reason as Observation” is a settling of accounts with the *Critique of Judgment* rather than with the first *Critique*. (This should serve as a sufficient warning against putting too much faith in external parallels.)

11. How the “certainty of Reason” can break forth in an *empiricist* who has consciously broken with “Hegelianism,” is beautifully illustrated by D. Lamb’s quotation from Russell’s *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits* (1948, 177):

What we know of the world we know by means of events in our lives, events which, but for the power of thought, would remain merely private. The little dots that an astronomer sees on a photographic plate are to him signs of vast galaxies separated from him by hundreds of thousands of light years. All the immensities of space and all the abysses of time are mirrored in his thoughts, which in a sense, are as vast as they are. (Lamb, 1980, 100).

Russell is, of course, no run of the mill empiricist. He probably knows that he is echoing Pascal; and certainly that he is agreeing with Spinoza.

12. Hence the Inquisition was bound to become a target of rational attack.

13. “Reason as Observation” will recollect the whole world of “Consciousness” first.

14. Flay (1984, 330, n.2) quotes Hyppolite's summary of paragraph 233 (1946, 220; 1974, 228) with grudging approval, and comments that it must not be interpreted "in the anthropological framework." Hegel's framework for "warranty for the claims of absolute idealism" is certainly a *humanly historical* one. It was the philosophy produced by Greek culture, and inherited by the Hellenistic Roman world, that actualized the evolution of "Consciousness" (striving to think the Parmenidean identity of thinking and being and arriving at the "infinite World Soul" of Stoicism). The downfall of Rome (and the world of feudalism and the Universal Church) was the time of "Self-Consciousness"; and the Reform, national sovereignty, and (crucially for the evolution of singular consciousness) *scientific rationalism* mark the advent of Reason (cf. Hyppolite, 1946, 223; 1974, 232).

What is produced in this history is the conscious grasp of an actual structure that has an *absolute* status. It is not "culturally relative" (if *that* is what "the anthropological framework" implies). It is "in itself" (i.e. ontologically necessary); but it does have to produce itself in historical actuality. With the supersession of Church authority, the essential *loneliness* of the pilgrimage to God's kingdom is overcome. From the standpoint of Reason we can return to the beginning and comprehend the political and religious evolution of our culture; and that is what we must do, because the rational human being is still *alone* in this world. The conflict of rational intuitions (including Flay's) can only result in "relativism."

15. This is a good moment to comment on Pöggeler's thesis about the difference between "Reason's certainty" and "Reason's Truth." His case is that we have arrived at the formal concept of "rationality." This amounts to arriving at a *conceptual* understanding of the "correspondence theory of truth" (what Pöggeler calls "the empty correspondence of *Rich-tigkeit*" [1962, 286; 1966, 226]). Hegel will justify Kant's scepticism by showing how little actual truth this formal "correspondence theory" affords. Then in the advance from the "certainty" to the "truth" of Reason, he will use his own dialectical concept of the "correspondence of the concept with experience" to transform our naïve (or "instinctive") view of "correspondence" so that the *actual* unity of human cognitive experience becomes visible. This view of what Hegel is doing disposes of old-fashioned criticism like that of Arthur Berndtson: "It is necessary then to appeal to a reason that transcends or precedes the process of the finite mind" (1959, 45).

16. Neither Baillie nor Miller provides an *accurate* version of the last two sentences. Lauer has made good their failure: "Consciousness will determine its relatedness to otherness or to its object in different ways, according precisely as it stands on a level of the World-Spirit coming to consciousness of itself. The way spirit (*er*) at any point finds and determines itself and its object *immediately*, or the way consciousness (*es*) is *for itself*, depends upon what spirit (*er*) has already *become* or what it already is *in itself*" (1976, 129). Hegel put in a *Gedankenstrich* to mark the fact that this is a *prophetic* reflection (from the standpoint of chapter VIII so to speak). Lauer notices this, and suggests (with sound insight as I think) that "what began as a 'Science of the Experience of Consciousness' is now manifesting itself as a 'Phenomenology of Spirit.'" "But he did not see that what validates this "editorial comment made from the vantage point of the journey's end" (1976, 128) is the fact that *at this particular moment* we are very near the journey's end. Fichte's theory of the Ego, rightly understood, is the *ultimate* (now present) "shape" of singular consciousness. "The Category" is the *Sache selbst*; it has only to recover its "substance," without losing the "subjectivity" that has now been perfected.

17. This is quite different from the *sense-certainty* that "Reality is." The experience of *that* certainty teaches me precisely that I *do not* know what it means to be real. The world in

which I am comprehended is unknown. That experience arrives at formal conceptual clarity in Scepticism; and although it is now “sublated” we must not suppose that it is simply denied or abolished. What we have now is a *formally* adequate logical concept of “being.” We still have to come to terms with the concrete sense that “what *is*, is unknown”—for we can never lose *that* certainty also.

18. The reorganization of Kant’s theory on the foundation of the Ego as “productive imagination” was accomplished in *Faith and Knowledge* (G.W. IV, 327–346; Cerf and Harris, 69–96). *This* (rather than any work of Kant or Fichte themselves) should be appealed to for the interpretation of Hegel’s doctrine here.

19. For Hegel’s views of these two see G.W. IV, 174–187, 197–238; Di Giovanni and Harris, 293–362. Behind this “degenerate” idealism there lies the commonsensical assumption of the empiricists that truth is the correspondence of our “idea” (*Vorstellung*) with the “thing.” This is the identity “through comparison” which Hegel dismisses in the previous sentence. The recognition that the comparison is impossible *in principle* was the sceptical problem involved in Locke’s “way of ideas.” (But we should remember that *comparison*—the comparison of the subjective concept projected with the objective concept found—is the essential structure of “observation.” We ourselves are the transcendental [or absolutely reflective] consciousness of “Reason as Observation” in our phenomenological observation of consciousness. Naïve Reason fails to find itself by observation; but that is exactly what our observation of it succeeds in doing.)

20. For the unity of the categories in Kant see e.g. *K.R. V A* 398. It is precisely because he will not allow the degeneration of Idealism that Hegel insists that ordinary consciousness ought to find both unity and plurality puzzling.

21. This is a speculative transformation of the Kantian doctrine of “schematism.” Kant’s own “schemata” are “sensible universals”—i.e. one kind of “property” of “things.” The example Kant gives is:

Thus the empirical concept of a *plate* is homogeneous with the pure geometrical concept of a *circle*. The roundness which is thought in the former can be intuited in the latter . . .

Obviously there must be some third thing, which is homogeneous on the one hand with the category, and on the other hand with the appearance, and which thus makes the application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure, that is, void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while it must in one respect be *intellectual*, it must in another be *sensible*. Such a representation is the *transcendental schema*.

(*K.R. V B*, 176–177; Kemp Smith, 180–181, with Vaihinger’s misguided “correction” removed).

22. Compare the critique of Fichte’s natural philosophy in *Difference* (G.W. IV, 48, line 4–54, line 5; Harris and Cerf, 135–144; and especially in *Faith and Knowledge*, G.W. IV, 388, line 9 – 409, line 10; Cerf and Harris, 154–181).

23. Several commentators have misinterpreted this “contradiction” (in different ways). Flay calls the standpoint “self-destructive,” and cites Lauer and Hyppolite in support. See Flay (1984, 322–323, n. 16; compare 118–119); Hyppolite (1946, 220–222; 1974, 229–231) and Lauer (1976, 129–131). But Reason *never* reduces itself to *destructive* “contradiction” in any formal sense at all. “Observing Reason” arrives at an “infinite judgment” (“Spirit is a

bone”) which I would be willing to call “contradictory” without dispute; but this is the moment of internal antithesis, where it becomes “self-realizing.”

In its practical shape Reason arrives not at “contradiction,” but at emptiness, futility, lack of any *grip* on reality. This apparent disappearance into nothing, is not self-destruction, but a direct turning over into “Spirit” in the shape of “the law of human nature”; and when we look back to the moment of genuine “contradiction” we see that Spirit in this sense provides the context of Reason’s practical career all the way; i.e., at the end of the chapter an illusion about *where* Reason substantively *is* is dissolved. It would be disastrous for Hegel if the Self, the “category of Idealism,” were “contradictory” in a formal (or vicious) sense—as opposed to “comprehending its own opposite” like any “true” (i.e. non-contradictory) category. It is no accident that this part of the book is marked C and proceeds in one unbroken dialectical flow. H. Kainz (whom Flay castigates for undue “gentleness” here) is in the right (1976, 101).

Hyppolite’s error arises from his failure to appreciate the revolution in Hegel’s attitude to Fichte between 1801 and 1806. He uses the critique of Fichte in the *Difference* Essay to interpret the present section. But it is only the constructive and appreciative sides of *Difference* and *Faith and Knowledge* that are now relevant. The analysis of “Kantian Philosophy” in *Faith and Knowledge* is, in effect, the first draft of the theory of “Idealism” as presented here.

Loewenberg’s version (1965, 115–118) of the “destruction” of Kantian idealism is the most amusing (but also very influential). He claims that Kant’s “categorical idealism” is *attacked* here, because it *fails* to meet “the standard *Hegel* brings to it.” He ignores completely the fact that this “standard” is simply Hegel’s reinterpretation of Fichte’s Kant. But he is right about the identification of Rationalism with Idealism in this “standard” (“Reason is the conscious certainty of being all reality”).

Lamb speaks loosely of the “Berkeley-Fichte thesis” (1980, 96) as “abstract idealism.” But he has grasped Loewenberg’s *true* insight. (The critique of Kant does not interest him.) As far as I can see Kainz has also taken *his* leaf out of Loewenberg’s book here—see H. P. Kainz (1976, 101–102). And Lauer may have been influenced by Loewenberg too (as well as by Findlay, 1958, 104). Lauer’s mistake is, in essence, the same as Hyppolite’s. He sees only the *criticism* of Fichte, and not the appreciative appropriation. Nothing that he says is wrong, but he is uneasily conscious (I think) that a great progress has happened, and yet there seems to be nothing in Hegel’s discourse except “futility” and “contradiction.” My guess is, that when he speaks of the “obscurity” of Hegel’s language, he means that it is invalid and unjust. If it were not also *reconstructive* that would be my own verdict. The language is plain enough. It is only the giving of a non-sophistic interpretation to it that is difficult. What Lauer claims it really means is not what it *says* at all.

24. For a different account of the “negative” progress of individual Reason, see J. E. Russon (1993).

Chapter 11

Instinctive Reason

V A: Observing Reason

After his introductory discussion of the “formal” idealism that Fichte constructed on Kantian foundations, Hegel’s chapter on “Reason” is divided into three main sections. The first, which is our topic in this chapter and the next, deals with the standpoint of empirical scientific observation. The Kantian critical philosophy is the most adequate expression for this, but that self-recognition of Reason, comes only at the climax of its “instinctive” development. Hegel will return to the critical idealism of “the Category” in the final stage of his fifth chapter; and we shall see that that “return of Reason into itself” is the advent of “Spirit proper.” Critical Idealism as a self-conscious position is the final development of “consciousness” as a singular phenomenon.

The introductory paragraph both warns us that the immediate standpoint of rational observation is one that looks like that of Consciousness, and reasserts the reflective transcendental standpoint within which the whole evolution of Reason is to be understood.

(a) The Project of Rational Observation

- 1./240. The consciousness for which “to be is to be mine” returns *self-consciously* to ostensive meaning and perceiving, but now it is observing and identifying *itself* in the structure of the thing-world. Reason seeks its own closure, or its “infinity.”

Observing Reason is a “return” of Sense-Certainty and Perception together, because it is concerned with the “essence” of real things.¹ It wants to *conceptualize* them, but it is *naïve*, like the Understanding. This naïveté involves it in a conscious contradiction, because (unlike the Understanding) Reason knows that truth and reality properly belong *to it*. This is the difference made by the mediation of “Self-Consciousness.” But also (like the Understanding) Reason knows that its truth is that of an “unconditioned universal”; and it is involved in contradiction because it knows that its truth is real (or *objective*). Unlike the Unhappy Consciousness it cannot escape from this dilemma into the Beyond. It has discovered that that escape rests upon a self-contradiction; so it advances “instinctively.” What the empiricist tradition calls “the problem of induction” is the necessary consequence of the contradiction involved in the attempt of Reason to regard itself as a mode of “con-

sciousness." Reason is "instinctive" partly because (and for as long as) it does not bring its "logic" into line with its actual procedure.²

Thus, Locke's standpoint differs from that of Sense-Certainty and Perception, both because he insists that the mind can know only its own ideas, and because what he calls the "historical plain method" is a descriptive technique that aims to uncover the universal laws and principles of rational epistemology. The fulfilment of this aim would actually result in the transformation of the perceptible *Ding* into a *Begriff*. But Locke himself can only accept the last sentence of Hegel's paragraph in a theological sense. Finite rational consciousness seeks "infinite" in the rational order of Nature, in the sense that it seeks the infinite Author of nature behind it. The infinitude of Nature is different from that of its Author; and in neither case does it properly belong to the observing mind. Only rationalists like Descartes can say what Hegel says on behalf of Reason;³ and only Fichte can say it without qualification in the way that Hegel formulates it here. But both Fichte and Descartes would agree that finite Reason can only discover a negative (or "bad") infinity in its quest.

- 2./241. Reason takes possession of the actual world confidently. But this confidence is only a presentiment that its own essence is deeper; for the pure Ego simply *is* and it has to demand the intuition of itself as a perceptible actuality or thing. But that is *not* how Reason is actual. Before it can experience itself in observation, it must complete itself.

The rational consciousness has initially only a "presentiment" (*Ahnung*) of its own presence in actuality. Its certainty is a generalized one. But it goes ahead and "takes possession everywhere," planting the ensign of sovereignty like an explorer (Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, or English) in the New World. Stoicism already had a general presentiment of the universal order of nature. It is vividly expressed in Cleanthes' "Hymn to Zeus," for example. But "the instinct of Reason" is a *practical* one; the modern scientific revolution is a quest for power. We should remember Bacon's vision. For the later Enlightenment, and especially for the Encyclopedists, he was a cult-hero.

In view of the *theoretical* character of Observing Reason, one might argue that it is a mistake to bring in Bacon at all. There are Galileo, Kepler and Newton for the "heights"; and those who perfected and used the microscope for the "depths." But the cycle of singular Reason closes in chapter VI with the "transplanting of Heaven here on Earth below" (par. 581). It is appropriate to see the planting of Reason's ensign all over the Earth by its first discoverers as a foreshadowing of this; and in that case a reference to Bacon is here intended, since it was he who taught the enlighteners to regard scientific discovery as the initiation of actual conquest.⁴

What is difficult is to decide what the "ensign of discovery" signifies in scientific terms. I have mentioned Kepler and Newton above, but it would be cavalier (to say the least) to dismiss their theoretical achievements as "this superficial 'mine'" which "is not Reason's ultimate interest." We have to remember that the setting aside of the Ptolemaic spheres (with their angelic intelligences) in favor of a purely mathematical theory of the "laws of motion" does constitute, in Hegel's view, only a "superficial" kind of rationality. The Newtonian mechanics always remained an

abomination in his eyes because it alienated matter from life, wrongly ascribing to “inertia” (and so to “death”) a primacy that makes life itself incomprehensible; and in this way it gave rise to an alienated metaphysics of the Understanding. We shall meet this metaphysics again in the “truth of Enlightenment” (in the twin forms of Materialism and Deism). So it is a plausible suggestion that the conception of matter or extension as a passive medium for rational intelligence is the superficial “mine” that is meant. We should remember that this “superficial” view of the object was never even allowed to enter into the evolution of Understanding; the evolution of Reason is a more comprehensive process in which Understanding itself appears in an external (and hence a negative) aspect.

On this view of what is meant, the claim that “the joy of this general takeover finds still in its property the abstract other that abstract Reason does not have in itself” is a truism. For the discovery itself consists in denuding the natural world of every organic or human aspect. This stripping of the world to the pure concept of matter or extension, is the *abstracting* of “pure Reason” itself—the “spirit of mathematics” as we might call it. This alienated opposition of spirit and matter contradicts the “presentiment” of Reason that thinking and being are identical in a much *deeper* sense than that in which the visible diagram is “identical” with the proof in geometry: “it must demand that difference, the *manifold* [world of] *Being*, shall come to be for it as its very own.” The instinctive goal of Reason is to “intuit itself as *actuality*, and find itself presently out there [*gegenwärtig*] as shape and thing.” Reason cannot be satisfied with the universal mechanism of the Understanding. It needs to find its own self-assertion everywhere in its world.

So the “instinct” of Reason is looking in the wrong direction. There is an ambiguity about the meaning of the *Wirklichkeit* that it is seeking, which the rest of the sentence deliberately clarifies in exactly the wrong (i.e. the *superficial*) direction. “Observing Reason” is Rational *Perception*. *Surface* actuality is the “thinghood” of what keeps its *shape* stably. This is the extended matter that can be ordered “in weight, number and measure” (to quote the Scriptural anticipation of Rational Observation). For Reason to seek itself at this level of external observation logically involves its eventual focus upon the human head—the “thing” within which Reason can literally *find* itself. Hence the quest for Reason as a determinate *shape*, the quest of mathematical reason for *itself*, is foredoomed to failure. The real significance of the great work of scientific discovery must remain hidden from the scientific discoverers themselves (even if they read Fichte) because neither they nor he know what Reason *is*. So they cannot recognize it when it gushes forth from the veins and entrails of the world that they cut open in search of it.

Newton is an accurate consciousness and conscience of scientific observation, when he admits that there *are* “occult causes,” but declares that they are not his proper concern. The presentiment of Reason is precisely that it is concerned with the causes that really *are* ultimate. “Observing Reason” knows *instinctively* that these causes are not “occult.” But will have to must observe *itself* from the standpoint of the consciousness that has realized the formal emptiness of “Reason’s truth” (and has passed on to the experience of Objective and Absolute Spirit)

before we shall be able to appreciate the significance of scientific observation fully. We shall have to comprehend the identity of thought and reality and observe Reason as the *Weltgeist*, the *Wirklichkeit* that actually *works* to produce a world of motion and life, not a world of mathematically measurable *effects*.⁵

- 3./242. Observation is the matching of concepts with sense-perceptions. So it is concerned with the essence of “things,” not with itself. When it becomes self-conscious Reason it will know that it must observe itself *first* and be led to comprehend the world from there. But it begins with the *simple* concept of Being, and conceives a unity of Being and Self in which they have not first been separated. Thus it now discovers what *things* are. They are actual concepts. *We* discover what rational consciousness is; and finally it will come to be for itself what it is in itself.

Here Hegel gives us a clear indication that the naïve attitude of “Observing Reason” is *not* that of Kant and Fichte. The *result* of the motion of Reason will be that it comes to be “for itself” what it is “in itself.” Thus the initial statement of Reason’s Certainty, which was couched in terms of Fichtean idealism, only tells us where we shall *arrive*. The “Category” will, in fact, emerge as the *Sache selbst* in the third movement of the chapter. Here at the beginning we are faced by a Reason that wants to know not itself, but the world of things. If it knew already not only that Reason is equally the essence of things and of itself, but also that Reason is only present in its proper shape as the *activity* of consciousness, then it would take the “transcendental turn” properly; it would examine itself as an activity first, and would come back to the cognition of things as a necessary moment of the realization of itself as the Concept.

In fact, Reason only becomes a problem *to itself* when it runs into difficulty over its cognition of the rationality of things. And then it comes to its self-examination with the concept of rational “being” that it has already formulated in and for the cognition of the world of “things.” Thus Locke comes to his study of “the humane Understanding” with the conviction already formed that it is “limited,” and that its limits need to be investigated; and Descartes begins with the problem of our being deceived or mistaken. That Reason is *more* fully revealed in the self than in the world is *not* what they assume. Descartes does discover the absolute “certainty of Reason” in the self; but the “knowledge” that his self-certain Reason shares with God is the mathematical knowledge of the thing-world.⁶

In this immediate or intuitive shape, Reason has not yet “divided the moments of being and ego, and united them again.” That was what Kant did. We see opposite aspects of the *failure* to do it in Locke and Spinoza. In Locke the moments are divided *inside the mind* (as “my self” and “my ideas”); but we cannot reach the intelligible essence of “things” at all. In Spinoza, the mind begins with the certainty of its identity with God; but it cannot get from the mathematical world of Reason to the existential world of sensation and desire.

For the scientists themselves, whether they were empiricists or rationalists in their philosophy, the necessary reduction of their data to mathematical terms was achieved by way of Galileo’s distinction between the “primary” and the “secondary”

qualities of bodies. So, as Hegel says, their Reason “approached things with the opinion that it truly perceives them as sensible things opposed to the Ego.” But this *Meinung* was contradicted by the essentially conceptual character of Reason itself. At the level of mechanics, the direct reduction of thought to being (or being to thought) is possible through the “schematic” employment of the “primary qualities.” As we know, *this* kind of “schematism” is a dangerously misleading abstraction in the philosophy of nature. Even in the sphere of “infinite mechanics” it leads to false concepts of motion and gravity, and to mistaken pseudo-problems about “occult causes.” The proper “schema” of the transition between conceptual thinking and sensible being is the singular rational consciousness.

Hegel is unjust to the conceptual achievements that we owe to the mathematical schematization of Nature. His antipathy to Newton’s *metaphysics* certainly led him to adopt mistaken views in optics and color theory himself. But we can hardly deny that his metaphysical objections were sound, and that his insistence on the *dynamic* concept of force as a “unity of opposites” was right. He is now going to show us that the Kantian concept of mathematical schematism (which is a direct descendant of Galileo’s distinction) fails completely as a bridge between the observed data and the conceptual structures used by the scientific “observers.” The observing consciousness of Reason itself is now going to learn what *we* learned when we observed the perceptual consciousness. It will learn that the *thing* is a *Hegelian* concept (not a Galilean or Lockean one). The consciousness we are observing will discover that the *Ding* *cannot* correspond to Reason because it is essentially and necessarily *dead*. But we ourselves shall discover what Reason objectively *is*, as a result. *We* shall achieve the awareness of Reason as the *Sache selbst*. That Concept will then be the contextual frame for our observation of Spirit as it appears in its objective, and finally its absolute shape.

The last sentence of the paragraph is ambiguous: “The result of its movement, however, will be this: to become for itself this, that it is in itself.” If we read it in terms of the contrast that Hegel has just drawn between what the “observing consciousness” learns and what we learn, then we can interpret “diss zu werden” as “to become This” (i.e. the dead skull). For the dead skull is the only logical end of Reason’s quest for itself within the concept of Thinghood. But the *aber* directs us to read the *Resultat* as the coincidence of what “observing Reason” becomes “for us” with what it becomes “for itself.” This moment of coincidence is closer than we might expect. For at the end of this section (V A), Reason becomes for us the *Sache selbst* in the objective shape of the “custom of the *Volk*”; and this is what it comes to be “for itself” at the beginning of the next chapter, after the subjective *Sache selbst* (as the supposed “Test of Laws”) has reduced itself to the logical futility of accepting whatever law it *finds*.

- 4./243. The stages, therefore, are (1) observation of nature, (2) of spirit, (3) of their connection as soul and body.

The movement of observational reason is as naïve and obvious as the standpoint itself. Everywhere it observes *things*; but what it seeks is their Concept, or the law of their behaviour. Rational structure—or general law—is what Reason itself is. It

will observe first the natural world, then itself (as subjective spirit); and finally it will observe the relation between subjective spirit and its natural embodiment. But because the object of observation must always be a stably inert *Gestalt*, an observable thing, the results achieved become less satisfactory at every step.

It needs to be underlined that although the content we are going to observe is the scientific content of Hegel's own philosophy of nature, the "immediacy" of the standpoint means that we are not observing it in the proper way. The speculative way of viewing it (which is no longer the rational observation of "perceptible things") is indicated in paragraph 242. Consciousness must first descend into "its own depth." Thinking must discover what it is, as an activity; it must discover the dialectical logic that is its own "living spirit." Since thinking is "free," its final act of self-discovery is the "letting go" of its own internal antithesis. Thus the completion of logic directs consciousness outwards to the world of actuality in order to behold its own sensible expression there, while at the same time, the "actuality" of Nature is taken essentially as the "unconditioned Universal." For "actuality" is the "schema" of rational consciousness that is the true middle between thinking and sense-experience.

This description of the proper method seems not to follow *logically* from the grasping of the premiss that "Reason is equally the essence of things and of consciousness itself"; for that premiss seems to imply that there ought to be no preferential order in the self-discovery of Reason. The logical priority of "consciousness" as the "own proper shape" of Reason can only be established by the *reductio ad absurdum* of the alternative route through "things." It must be established in this way, because the structure of "consciousness" determines that Reason will *naturally* begin by trying to find itself in "things." It is the "science of the experience of consciousness" that is the descent into the depths; and the naïve quest for the rationality of the *world* has its proper place in that descent. It is quite true that the logical science that is found in the depth of consciousness is experienced *equally* as the rational truth of the knowing self and of the known world.⁷ But it is experienced from opposite sides. Hence it is *part of the object of the present chapter to show* that we cannot make a *direct* descent into the depths of consciousness as subjectivity. If we try to do this (as Kant and Fichte did) what we discover is only an *abstract* essence of Reason which is perfectly valid, but almost completely useless. Its only real use will be to serve as the guiding light for the subsequent descent into the depths of our *cultural world*. We have to experience both the quest for the "essence of things" and the quest for the "essence of consciousness" before we can properly embark upon the discovery of the self in its thing-world. The "experience of consciousness" is obviously the topic of a "subjective" science. But the depths of this subjectivity already contain the world that will become the topic of its own "science of spirit" in the final phase of Hegel's "real philosophy."

V A(a) The Observation of Nature

Hegel's discussion is articulated into three moments. First comes the observation of our natural environment piecemeal; then the consciously systematic observation of the organism (which cannot be rationally observed at all unless it is recognized to be a whole);

and finally the observation of the "living infinite" (life in its environment recognized to be a whole). "Observation" itself develops in step with its object. So we shall observe some aspects of the development of scientific method; and we shall discover some important truths about the far from "absolute" character of "natural philosophy."⁸

In the first subsection of the "Observation of Nature," we begin with Perception itself as a rational concept. We observe the movement of the observers through three moments: (a) Description and Classification (passive observation); (b) Experiment (active observation to discover the unobservable); and (c) Theory of the unobservable (Matter and Matters).

The result of the direct observation of our environment is the discovery of its inward side (the "matters") and its purely conceptual substrate, the "matter" which is not observable at all (not even indirectly through the mediation of experiments). "Descriptive classification" is direct observation of what is immediately available in Perception; "Experiment" is the "experience" of Observation as a formal concept. It inverts it because it is grounded upon the action and thoughtful control of the investigator, who ceases to be a passive observer, and uses observations to construct an intellectual theory of the rational reality behind the observable appearances. With the ultimate, purely intellectual concept of "Matter" we reach the absolutely unobservable, the simple negative, or direct inversion of the Concept of Observation. After that the concept must comprehend itself as a "doubly inverted" unity of opposites.

This is the beginning of a new phase of observation (see section c). The comprehensive inversion of the directly observable and the unobservable together, is the concept of the organism. Force and Utterance becomes Life; and the material substrate, becomes the mind of the Author of Nature. The Concept of Observing Reason is now complete. The instinctive method of classification and experiment has negated itself in the concept of the unobservable, and comprehended the resulting dialectic in the total concept of organic life in its environment.

Observing Reason projects the totality as the "design" of another Intelligence with its own occult purposes. But this *Vorstellung* is simply the objective image of Reason itself as an End in itself. From this point onwards we know that Observing Reason is observing itself. But it is observing itself as the "inner" that is "behind the curtain." The totality of life in its environment refers us to the organism as the true "end-in-itself"; and when we come round to it again, it will refer us to the observation of ourselves from inside. But the consciousness that we are observing does not have this experience. It takes itself simply to be observing the most interesting object that it has come upon in its classifying and experimenting: the *Naturzweck*, or natural end-in-itself.

This rational end is present in the organism as a "soul." It reveals itself to the observing intelligence through the activity of the organic "body." So the problem of Observation is to construct the Concept of the soul by employing the logical law of "expressive identity." The observable variety of outward behaviour expresses the inward unity [section d below].

We should notice that the empirical observer goes forward with us, just as if she had our Concept of the organism. That is because she instinctively does have it. Like the "occult" cause of gravity, the questions of why and how the Author of nature created the

*living order, and the intelligence that knows it, remain mysterious. But, for the theologically bewildered observer (just as much as for us, who know that these problems have been wrongly formulated) the organism is observed to be an “end in itself,” which can be scientifically comprehended. The crucial difference between us and her, is that we have a self-conscious grasp of what scientific comprehension is while she has a merely instinctive one. Like the reconciled Unhappy Consciousness, Instinctive Reason has only a *Vorstellung* of what Reason is. But it is seeking to construct the Concept in this life, not to relate to God in the other one.*

(b) Direct Observation (the “Outer”)

- 5./244. Naïve empiricism forgets that the “experience” from which it derives all knowledge is already conceptualized and categorically related; but when challenged, it will readily admit that it is seeking general truths.

The primitive position of rational observation is that of Bacon, or of Locke’s empiricism.⁹ That it is an “empiricist” stance is what Hegel means by calling it *gedankenlose Bewusstsein*. It cannot be “thoughtless” in the radical sense of not thinking at all; it cannot even be as thoughtless as Perception was. But it has no *pure* thoughts; it has only the Lockean “ideas” that are formed in any mind by perception. Hegel’s technical name for these is *Vorstellungen*. In his general classification scheme *Vorstellungen* are one type of *Gedanken* but they are not *Gedanke* proper. Thus “red” is a *Vorstellung*; but “color”—which embraces “red” and “not-red” indifferently—is properly a *Gedanke*. For Locke on the other hand “red” is a “simple idea” (and hence fully concrete); while “color” is an “abstract idea” (and a very awkward and puzzling thing to explain). But when the empiricist admits this—and he has to admit it, because he is well aware that his observations of green leaves turning brown (and so on) are made for the purpose of a general theory of leaf “coloring”—he is forgetting that there was already an act of the mind involved in determining that the rose is “red,” the leaf “green” or “brown,” etc. Red, green and brown are not “simple ideas” *given* by sense-perception. They are already names for ranges of perception: “red” is already the name of a universal that embraces *this* red R_1 along with many not- R_1 s (which can be arrayed as R_2, R_3 etc.).

The doctrinal foundation for the empirical observation that is *programmatically* “gedankenlos”—i.e. it aims to begin with “ideas” that are really “simple,” or *Vorstellungen* that are completely singular and determinate—is the doctrine that all knowledge and truth is “derived from experience.” In this formula “experience” means what is “given” by the five senses. But, in fact (as Kant was the first to insist), this “sense-experience” is a “synthesis”; it is *given* on the side of content, but mentally determined (or *categorized*) on the side of form. The concern of Reason (as the most naïve empiricist will readily admit) is with the higher categorical relations that can be established between the perceptual objects of this unreflective activity of categorization. Locke’s view only begins to be coherent when it is interpreted in this Kantian way.

This point—which was already valid at the level of Perception, although we could not have made it in Kantian terms then—is only a preliminary criticism of the empiricist position now. The further criticism that distinguishes “Rational Observation” from the simple “Perception” of prescientific Consciousness, is that Reason is explicitly concerned with universal essences. We do not just want to know how there can be different things, but what the essential nature of this *specific* thing is. We have to be efficient perceivers. We must be able to distinguish “penknives” from “snuffboxes.” But the reason why this penknife is beside this snuffbox is not likely to be scientifically interesting; and it certainly will not throw any light on their *particular* natures. So ordinary perceptual “observation” does not count as “rational observation” at all.

- 6./245. What is first observed is resemblance and repetition of cases. Classification is an endless task, because we can always go into more detail, and in the end we reach the point where we don't know whether the detail is significant or not. But we *began* with remembered cases.

The establishment of the Kantian position is what enables us to distinguish the standpoint of Reason from that of Perception. The rational observer takes himself to be perceiving a *thing*, but he is actually determining a Kantian concept (which is a true *Gedanke*, a universal, but not yet a Hegelian Concept). Between the two positions lies Understanding which postulates *pure* universals that manifest themselves phenomenally but not as things. The first categorical determination that “rational observation” involves is that of *identity*. Everything that I am aware of is equally an “idea” of *mine*. The Universal here is the identical self, which Hume could not derive from experience because he could find no “impression” for it. As the observer, this Universal is the monotonous repetition of the act of observation, with the knowledge that every observation is “mine.” But the act of observation is the *intention* to set up identity in the object.

Based as it is on perception, ordinary observation does not reach the level of fully rational Understanding.¹⁰ The identity of the observed thing is one that is based on the memory of repeated observations that were “similar.” This is a very superficial mode of identity. The categorization of things by “description” takes the thing that has been rationally determined to be identical, and lists all the characteristics that memory holds for our observation. The only movement is in the mind, and it has no dynamism; it does not bring or drive us to any deeper level of understanding. When we have distinguished all that we can about one type of thing, we must forget about it, and go on to the next one. But the process is endless; even if we have only a limited range of things to observe we can be like the Sisyphus of Camus, who had a world in his rock.¹¹ What was originally determined as one thing can become many. Major discoveries are a matter of opportunity and luck.¹² But the only logically important thing is that observational discovery is an inexhaustible program of inquiry.

This is one aspect of what Hegel calls the “impotence of nature.” We must admit that, in the perspective of a “Science of experience” that aims to compre-

hend its own world in its own time, *impotence* is all that it is. We shall not improve our comprehension of our general place in, and relation to, nature, by concentrating on the ever-moving frontier of descriptive knowledge, or on any part of that frontier in its *moving* aspect. But the fact that as the frontier moves, the general picture itself becomes transformed—sometimes with dramatic suddenness—is important. Hegel was aware of this, since he recognized that Newton's work had transformed the picture, and his own lifelong polemic against Newton certainly aimed to transform it again. It is plausible to hold that he assumed the perpetual transformation of our understanding of nature to be a logical principle of the "Science of experience." Certainly this is the only plausible assumption *for us* (now); and it does not conflict with anything I can find in Hegel's "Science." The Understanding, if I have understood it correctly, must posit "eternal rest." So we have here a logical difference between Understanding and Reason.

The way in which Hegel characterizes the limit at which scientific description arrives, points fairly clearly to the example of geology as conceived in his natural philosophy: "What bears on it (*an sich*) the impress of a confused or immature formation, of a weak one, or one that is scarcely emerging out of the indeterminacy of the elements, cannot for that reason make any claim even to be described." Anyone who turns to the "Real Philosophy" of 1805/1806 can soon confirm that what emerges from "elementary indeterminacy" in Hegel's overall conception of nature is the geological formation of the Earth. The elements themselves (fire, air, water, earth) are essentially unstable; they pass through cyclic processes of transformation into one another. But "the Earth" is a system of stabilized images of living process. Any actual history that its formations may have is scientifically irrelevant. It is only as a frozen picture of the dynamic processes of organic growth and development that geology has any rational interest.¹³ Geology is peculiarly the "descriptive" science for Hegel, since only the description and comparison of naturally occurring arrays of rock formation is possible; and the limit of rational description comes where what the array pictures is organic "degeneration." This is not a philosopher's armchair pipedream about the science, for Hegel himself was an active and enthusiastic field observer and specimen collector. But the fact that his view of the aim of geological observation is so completely alien to us, makes the case into a perfect illustration of his point. It is the goal of the observer that determines what is worth describing, and how far the attempt at description should be pushed.

- 7./246. *Significant* detail is what we are after. The perceptible thing needs all of its properties but its rational definition needs only the right ones, the specific differences. This raises the question of whether rational definitions are only nominal. Not so! Reason instinctively looks for the *differentia* through which the thing distinguishes *itself*. We can see this in biological classification [Aristotle, Linnaeus, and Blumenbach]. It is logical therefore that plants are less adequately differentiated than animals, and at the chemical level of inorganic being we find actual transmutation.

Having defined the *limit* of empirical investigation, in terms of the general (i.e. the "universal") goal of science, Hegel now moves to the "particular" goal of

observation and description: the classification of species. Here, what is crucial is the identification of the “specific difference.” But classification is only rational if it is guided by the way that the order of nature specifies itself.

As Hegel puts it: “This seeking and describing does not run on as far as sensible perceiving.” The world of perceptible things is a world of singular entities. But whereas it was a logical weakness of Perception that it could not “truly take” the singular thing, Observing Reason knows quite well that it is concerned with *species*, and not with individuals. The distinction between “essential” and “nonessential” properties (which Perception could not justify) now becomes the clear indication that Observing Reason is just as much concerned with *itself* (i.e. with concepts) as it is with things. Observation operates “instinctively” in distinguishing what is “necessary” from what is not, because no necessity is apparent to sense-perception. It is simply bad logic to go from “all observed crows have been black” to “all crows are black”; but the “instinct of Reason” (or what Hume calls the “*feeling* of necessity”) tells us to include “blackness” in the “concept” that is to be comprehended.¹⁴

This “instinct” does not pretend to be logical except in a pragmatic sense. We set aside whatever is not empirically reliable. So the ambiguity of the “essential” and the “non-essential” gives rise to a sceptical concern over whether our classifications are “real” or only “nominal.” The rational criterion for a “real” distinction is pragmatic in a deeper sense. It accords with the “schema” provided by the self-individuation of the singular consciousness.

For this reason we must seek our paradigm of “real difference” at a level of the natural order where specification has developed to clarity and completeness. In rock-formations specification does not even reach the level of explicit particularity (the physical separation of different species). Even in the vegetable world, where we do find this separation, it has not reached the pitch where the separation is dominant over the generic continuum. Hence the general utility of grafting in horticulture. Hegel was a serious field-botanist, but it is from zoology (where he was perforce confined to book learning) that he derives his paradigm of specification. It is right to specify the animal types in terms of their means of mutual attack and defence (or escape) because that is how the animals distinguish themselves.¹⁵

In paragraph 245 Hegel calls the drive to describe and classify new species of “things” a “restless instinct, never at peace” (*rastlose, unruhige Instinkt*). Now he makes clear that this “desire to know,” this insatiable curiosity, is the “instinct of Reason.” “In this observing,” he says, “Reason behaves only as instinct.” It does not have a clear consciousness of itself, it cannot explain itself, but it *instinctively* knows what it wants. It, the observing Reason, *wants to find itself in another*.¹⁶ The natural Self-Consciousness *needs* to find itself; in order to be “self-conscious” explicitly (or “for itself”) and not just potentially (or “in itself”) it must recognize itself in another being. But we cannot say that it *wants* to do this. Indeed, that is the last thing it wants, and its instinctive reaction is that the experience is impossible and must be shown to be unreal: “*I am nowhere, except here.*” Reason wants to find “itself” everywhere, because it “instinctively” *knows* that it *is* everywhere. What is it, then, this “self” that Reason wants to find?

The answer is that Self-Consciousness evolved from a “self” that could not tolerate the *independent* existence of anything else, into a self that takes “self-definition” to be the “will of God,” for itself and everything else alive. In “the will of God” it has the properly inverted shape of the Understanding itself as “alive.” But this Unchangeable whole is itself envisaged as a “self-consciousness” opposed to the world which is the finite stage for the realization of “desire.” Thus, the *identity* of the “inverted world” of freedom with its resting shape as determinism has not been achieved. The world of Consciousness and the absolute Self of Self-Consciousness—with which “Observing Reason” knows itself to be identical—subsist independently.

It is out of the *independence* of the world of Consciousness that the conscious distinction of Reason from Understanding emerges. Originally (in pre-Socratic philosophy before Democritus) there was only “instinctive Reason” (or the awareness of the “divine life”). But the Understanding—the consciousness of the world-system as a dead (mathematical and mechanical) “whole”—emerged gradually as a necessary aspect of the assertion of Self-Consciousness as “truth” (for which the whole world of Consciousness had only an *instrumental* function).

Now, the newly emergent “Observing Reason” instinctively assumes that everything (including the “things” which it knows to be “understandable” as part of a mechanical system) is *rational*.¹⁷ Everything is “self-defining,” just as the observer is; and every “thing” is *conceptually* (or “by definition”) *rational* as well as understandable. What this means is that it has its own “essence,” in virtue of which it distinguishes itself from other kinds of “thing.” This essence is distinct from the *universal* “inorganic,” mathematically schematizable, properties that the Understanding can homogenize into “force.”

We ought *not*, therefore, to refer to this subsection as “the observation of *inorganic* nature” because Reason, being itself essentially organic, cannot “observe” *anything* as “inorganic.” That this editorial subheading is a mistake is obvious, because from the first the kinds of living organism are prominent among the “things” that “instinctive Reason” classifies and describes. But it should also be clear why Hegel identifies the classifying urge as the “instinct of Reason,” at the very point where he advances the thesis that animals should be classified rationally according to the way that they “sunder themselves from the Universal.” Whatever does not *effectively* “sunder itself from the Universal” will not, in the end, establish itself as a proper “thing” at all. Whatever rational significance we may discover in it, it will fall back, finally, into the domain of the Understanding; it is the domain of successfully self-defining things—the range of the lordship that God gave to Adam to call everything by its true name—which belongs properly to Reason.

There are some important lessons to be learned at this point, from a comparison of Hegel’s classificatory biology with modern evolutionary theory. The standpoint of rational classification established here is accepted in Hegel’s systematic “real philosophy” at every stage.¹⁸ So there can be no doubt that, as far as he was concerned, it was final. But it is the standpoint of “external reflection”; and Hegel only employs it to account for the moment of particularization.

Our evolutionary theory starts from the fact that a living species individuates itself not by repulsion, but by sexual attraction—i.e. by forming a breeding community. This is the internal standpoint of life itself, which we have already seen at work in Hegel's phenomenology of Life and Desire. He ought to be delighted with a biological theory that begins from this moment, and incorporates the moment of competition for survival as the crucial process by which species are differentiated. But the acceptance of this internal standpoint involves the abandonment of the standpoint of direct observation. A "species" is a gene-pool.

At this point, we need to distinguish between two aspects of Hegel's debt to Aristotle. The theory of observational classification belongs to the *phenomenology* of life-science only. It is the speculative theory of the species as a self-realizing "form" that is the foundation-stone of science proper (or of the system of "real philosophy"). Hegel did not see this because of another (more pernicious) aspect of his Aristotelian heritage. He accepts "eternity" as an essential moment of the concept of *nature*. Because of this, nature can never be more than an objective *Vorstellung* of the Idea; and for this reason the observational standpoint of external reflection becomes logically ultimate for natural science. That is what the doctrine of the "impotence of Nature" really means: that nature has no significant history, and it does not make any logical sense to want to know it "from the inside." That conviction is a heritage, not only from Aristotle, but from the Judaeo-Christian dogma of "Creation." Hegel could not have arrived at his conception of Spirit without positing the eternal order of nature as the stage backdrop for it. But the best evidence of how significant his achievement was, is the fact that it does not merely survive the dissolution of that backdrop. It visibly anticipates that dissolution, and prepares for it. The concept of Spirit (as what "makes itself" in the light of its experience) is *evolutionary* in principle. The "eternity" of Nature depends upon the abstract sun-dering of logical from real evolution into an externally imaginative parallel.

The controlling conception in Hegel's mind is the self-individuation of the Aristotelian form. This is shown by the way that he contrasts animals and plants here. For true individuation, sexual division is necessary. In the males of many species sexual rivalry produces a visible "demand for recognition." Hegel was impressed by this biological anticipation of the phenomenology of the Spirit.¹⁹ He regarded the sexuality of some plants as a similar foreshadowing of animal life: "The plant, on the contrary, does not arrive at *being on its own account* [i.e. the demand for recognition] but only touches the edge of individuality; so [it is only] at this edge [*Gränze*, the logical category of "limit"] where it exhibits the semblance [*Schein*, the first category in the evolution of "Essence"] of *splitting* into sexes, [that] the plant has been taken up and distinguished for this [i.e. as sexed]."²⁰ The implication that this is a limiting case, which I have made explicit, is clearly contained in the categorical negative (with its reinforcing *dagegen*) in the first clause. Plants do, of course, *specify* themselves; the specification survives even in grafting. But they do not *individuate* themselves.

At the level of "chemical affinity" (in which Goethe and others had seen an important anticipation of spiritual life) the situation is quite different. The para-

digm of “chemism” in Hegel’s natural philosophy is sulphuric acid. One only needs to splash a spot of that onto one’s hand, or even one’s clothes, to be made vividly aware of the conflict between “resting being” and “being in relationship.” The acid is a “thing”; it certainly looks like a “resting being,” but there are so few other “things” that it does not actively “relate” to, that its storage is quite difficult.

Here again, we should notice that Hegel uses “individuation” as the standard against which all other descriptively definable states are to be measured. Acids and bases “confuse cognition” at this level. (Are red and blue litmus paper two species of the *same* thing or two *different* things? Litmus is “something else” in the chemical sense, than it appears to be empirically.)²¹ In the sexual relation, on the other hand, the individual asserts itself and maintains itself.

This emphasis on self-assertion makes the animal kingdom into an anticipation of spiritual life, just as geological formation is an anticipation of organic life. But the image/object analogy (which goes back to Plato) belongs to the standpoint of *external* rationality. A Hegelian biologist could recognize what is called “homology,” and could even grant fundamental importance to it as the self-differentiation of the fluid continuity of life *from within*. In fact, “homology” was fundamental in the comparative zoology of Cuvier, who believed in the permanence of species, and regarded life as a *logical* continuum. Hegel adopted Cuvier’s zoological position as soon as his *Règne animal* appeared in 1817. But a Hegelian biologist has to concentrate his attention on individuation, and hence on *functional* distinction, because the science of living nature gets its significance only from the “reflection” of human existence in it.

In *our* cultural and scientific situation the perspective has changed. The standpoint of evolutionary biology is that of internal rather than external teleology. So a contrast can properly be drawn between the “phenomenological” view imposed by the standpoint of observation, and the “systematic” view in which the evolution of life (being a real temporal process) is directly continuous with the evolution of Spirit—instead of being an eternal reflection (or image) of it, as it had to be according to Hegel’s own Aristotelian eternal world conception of it.

- 8./247. This essential fluidity of nature means that the hope of a classification system which exactly mirrors the order of nature is doomed. The universal and the specific moments of the concept are a dialectical unity of opposites; hence the self-specification of nature turns into fluid continuity wherever the limit of a conceptual sphere is reached. Every classification is bedeviled by exceptions, and the classifier is driven back to empirical observation and description.

This is the appropriate moment to point out that “Observing Reason” begins from the general concept of “Life” stated at the outset of chapter IV. We do *not* traverse again any of the territory that the Understanding was able to handle successfully in formulating its concept of the Infinite (or the unconditioned Universal). The references to “chemism”—and the closure of the *Gestalt* of Observing Reason in “specific gravity,” when we reach it (pars. 287–290)—form the only real overlap. These are only the moments that must be repeated in order to exhibit continuity.

The Understanding operates properly in the inorganic sphere, and makes no necessary appeal to the *organic* concept of Life.

Reason *begins* with the universal logical concept of Life. This organic assumption is only an “instinct” in “Observing Reason”; and we could plausibly argue that the conception of the “unconditioned Universal” as Force displays that same instinct in its process of formation. But the logical distinction is that the Understanding deals with what can be “schematized” effectively in the Galilean-Kantian fashion; while “Reason” (even when it is operating “instinctively”—i.e. with the false consciousness of itself as Understanding) deals with what can only be schematized properly on the model of the rational self-consciousness.

With this distinction in mind, let us examine how the “impotence of Nature” is characterized in the present paragraph. Because all of the describable order of nature is just the phenomenal side of the fluid universality of Life, *no* system of classification based on observation and description can ever achieve the exhaustiveness and finality that the instinct of Observing Reason aims at. In Hegel’s logical theory, the specification of a concept is the sundering of the species (two or more) from the original concept; and, since the concept still subsists in antithesis to the sundered species, the genus is necessarily a species of itself. In the case of Life it is the human species that is identical with the *genus* from which the others are (logically) sundered. This was the view of Plato in the *Timaeus*, and Hegel took it over from him. It is easy to account for the disorder of living nature, because the *generic* character of life is a negative activity, a rebellion against all boundaries, a drive beyond nature, towards freedom. Thus the generic aspect of every living species was necessarily in conflict with its specification.

The disorder in the physical world, which Plato ascribed to the “wandering cause,” becomes in Hegel’s view an aspect of the divine Reason itself. “Identity” passes *necessarily* into “difference.” The disorder that defeats the scientific classifier, is one that must exist, if her own existence (with her instinct for rational order) is itself to be explicable. Hence, the ideal of an observational science in which the self-identical thought-elements exactly match the self-identical elements of the natural order is unachievable. The observers are forever beginning again; so that perceptual observation goes round in a circle.

With these Platonic tools Hegel overthrows the Aristotelian dream of a world of perfectly stable species (“*self-same abiding determinacies* each of which stably describes the sequence of its emergence”). He only overthrows the stable species in the interest of a stable universal continuum; but his acceptance of the essential *fluidity* of nature as an image of Reason, his willingness to admit that the exuberance of nature was essential, not accidental, implies that he was conceptually prepared for the Darwinian revolution long before it happened. He could have saved Darwin himself from the intellectual discomfort that the admission of genuinely random variation caused in a mind shaped by the dogmatic physical determinism of Newton and Laplace. Hegel had studied more than one system of classification, and he had observed the natural world, especially the plant-world, quite carefully. But it was probably his preference for Plato and Aristotle over Newton that made it feasi-

ble for him to reunite the Kantian worlds of freedom and nature in his basic concept of Life.

- 9./248. So Reason has to pass on from this *inert* concept of specific determinacy to the dynamic concept of it as continuous with its opposite. Specific differences are moments of a cyclic process. Recognizing this, the instinct of Reason, seeks for the *law* and *concept* of the cycle. It still thinks that they are observables, but this illusion will be dissipated.

When the observer realizes that a finally satisfactory classification of *things that are perceptually given* is impossible, rational observation moves from its foundation in Perception to a foundation in Understanding. This is the unself-conscious beginning of the “transcendental turn.” The foundations of science are now seen to be its concepts and laws, not its empirical observations. “Color” is more fundamental than colors. The laws that we seek must necessarily cover directly contrary cases; and the concepts must embrace whole ranges of contrary instances. Thus, for instance, if we are looking for *perceptual marks* that distinguish “Man” reliably from other animals we can fasten first on bipedal locomotion. But then, of course, we have to distinguish Man from other bipeds. The distinction on these lines that became notorious was the “featherless biped.” But if we must prefer the perceptual characters by which this biped asserts itself, then we ought rather to say that Man is the “handed biped.” When a wider knowledge of nature teaches us that there are other handy animals in warmer parts of the world,²² we may find ourselves saying that Man is the only biped who has not only a reversible thumb, but also earlobes. And now we have violated our *functional* principle (since earlobes have no discoverable function).

At this point we may as well return to the “featherless biped” mistake (where the *lack* of a function was relied upon). It is clear that the Cynic who (according to report) released a live plucked chicken in the lecture room was pointing toward the talking and reasoning that went on in that room—and he was pointing at how *bad* it was. “Talking” is a perceptible activity, but it is not a reliable “mark” of humanity because it can become no more demonstrably significant than the gibbering of the monkeys. The rationality that distinguishes significant talk, is not a *perceptible* thing at all; and it can express itself without speech (as it did in the perhaps apocryphal action of the Cynic Diogenes).²³

Talking is a paradigm for the *perceptible mark* that shows us what all observational marks are in principle: “vanishing moments of the movement that takes itself back into itself.” And what is true in the limiting case of Man, the rational animal, is true of all animals, all plants, and even of acids and bases. The observable phenomena have to be fitted into patterns of behaviour that express the inner life (or chemical essence). Because this contrast of outer manifestation and inner force is essential to the Understanding, every scientific concept is “the opposite of itself.” Reality itself is “contradictory” because it is both inward force and outward manifestation. Science is the theoretical construction of the inner world of laws and concepts; and the thinking consciousness is the comprehensive inversion of the

understandable order. Both the order of nature and the upside down world of freedom belong to the rational self; the “indifferent stability of sensory actuality” has been “wiped out” by the *Begriff*.

- 10./249. For observing consciousness the truth of the law is as empirical as sensation. But a law must be grounded in rational necessity; and this does not prevent its being observable, but rather makes its thereness necessary. What is universally *gültig* (valid) is universally *geltend* (effective). What *ought* to be, but *is* not, has no truth. This is part of the instinctive knowledge of Reason, part of its “certainty.”

Although Reason is now operating with genuine concepts, it continues to have an essentially false consciousness of itself as “Understanding.” The *truth* of the law is still out there in the world in the way that the thing was. The *concept* that the rational observer forms must be made to *correspond* to it. As we have already seen in the case of “Force”—the one concept that the Understanding can schematize in Perception—this involves a false conception of what the Concept *is* in and for itself. Instead of being duplicated into the objective law and the subjective conception (the two “forces” involved in the Understanding’s concept of Force) the true Concept must be conceived as a unitary process involving both mind and world, both observer and object. In order to see how knowledge is consistently possible at all we must change our natural view of what it is, and of what is known in it.

The experienced object remains a vitally necessary *moment* of the process of cognition when it is conceptualized in a consistent fashion. But we can no longer say simply that it is “what is known”; instead we know (logically) that there can be no true knowledge without it. Natural consciousness with its observer/object structure is a necessary aspect of cognition, and empirical verification is a necessary moment in it. But the structure that gives our scientific inquiry its aspect of logical necessity is a different, more comprehensive, concept of what “cognitive experience” is.

The need to stress the importance of empirical verification as a necessary condition of the truth of a hypothesis leads Hegel into a brief attack upon the Kantian (and Fichtean) conception of the noumenal world as a practical postulate that requires no verification in experience, but is the standard of “pure Reason” by which the phenomenal world of “experience” is to be judged.

This is the conception of Pure Reason that will be reduced to futility and absurdity in the chapter as a whole. Hegel is a “spiritual empiricist” in ethics, just as he is in natural science; we need to examine at this point what his “empiricism” implies with respect to Hume’s famous contention that “ought” cannot be derived from “is.”

Hume’s standpoint is that of the Understanding: We *know* what a statement of “fact” is, and what a “desire” or an “imperative” is; and we can see that they are logically independent. Hegel’s response has been to show that in terms of our ordinary assumptions about what “facts” are, we cannot have any proper knowledge; so we ought to reconsider our supposed certainty about facts. Then he showed that “truth” is essentially an object of “desire”; and now he is saying that an “ought”

statement that is *not* founded in “what is” is “without truth.” This is a claim that we must also reconsider our supposed knowledge of what “ought” means, because only “ought” statements that *are* derivable from “what is” could possibly be “desirable.”²⁴ In other words, he is not saying that Hume is wrong or mistaken about the ordinary understanding of language, but rather that Hume’s obvious rightness shows the inadequacy of that ordinary understanding.

Implicit in his position, there is also the logical consequence that it would be quite absurd to suggest that the “ordinary understanding” of language “ought” to be changed. The “ordinary understanding” will change (if at all) only slowly, and not through the proclamation of the philosophical insights of singular consciousnesses. What “ought” to be changed, is what we know empirically *can* be changed: the philosopher’s conception of the relation of philosophical knowledge to ordinary consciousness. We do not establish imperatives about how consciousness and its language *ought* to be. We establish as coherently and logically as possible *how it is*; and for this purpose we must develop a pluralistic, permissive, and non-imperative kind of logic. For it is obvious that the logic of the understanding, which invalidates what happens all the time, and declares to be impossible the only objective that could conceivably be desirable, is not the one that we need.²⁵

- 11./250. Although the real law is something other than its own concept, Observation does not identify it with actual phenomena; and the law is posited when there is still only a limited body of data to support it. The claim that it is only a *probability* for the future is a philosophical doubt arising from the fact that no conceptual necessity has been discovered. The instinct of Reason rejects this scepticism. It knows that we are looking for conceptual laws of experience, and that this is what immediate experiences contain.

Hegel’s view of the problem of “is” and “ought” is that the philosophical conception of what “ought” means has to be different from that of common logic, but in a kind of accord with ordinary usage. His view of “necessity” and “probability” is similar, but this time the controlling influence of ordinary usage is more evident. The “problem of induction” which has been so prominent in empiricist discussions of “epistemology” ever since Hume is here declared to be a pseudo-problem. The doctrine that because we can only “know” what *has* happened, we can only have subjectively probable *expectations* about what *will* happen rests on a mistaken view of the “logic of experience.”

To say that it is only probable that a stone will fall is a misuse of the word “probable.” When a card is dealt from what we know to be a full deck the probability is nine to four that it is not a court card or an ace. Hegel, who played whist, understood that well enough; and we can therefore assert with security that his “conceptual *a priori*” theory of physical necessity is not meant to outlaw objectively *statistical* conceptions of the behaviour of matter. He did not anticipate anything like “quantum theory”; but his concept of the Understanding is necessarily ready for theories of that sort, because the freedom of the observer is a *necessary* moment in it.

But the fall of the stone, or the rising and setting of the sun, are not probable in that objective sense. They belong to the complex of *certainities* that make the nine to four probability “objective.” It is this kind of real necessity that is logically involved in the concept of experience as rational: and that integral concept of experience is the “whole” that is the ultimate criterion of what “truth,” “reality,” “necessity” and “probability” mean. We can agree with Hume that no physical necessity is a *formal* necessity; and further that to call something a “physical” necessity is to imply formally that it *cannot* be a formal necessity. But this says nothing about the real status of “physical necessity” as such. That can only be decided in an inquiry of a different kind, involving a criterion of “logical necessity” that is *neither* “formal” nor “physical.”

What Hegel is claiming here is that Reason presupposes the Understanding; it is a conceptual necessity of Reason that there is an *understandable* order of nature. We must not lose sight of that just because of the difficulties we encounter in discovering empirically what the order of Nature is. We are going to watch “Observing Reason” embark on a quest for “understandable necessity” in places where it is not to be found. This makes it all the more important to insist that it *does* and must exist in its own place.

The “problem of induction” only arises (in the form in which “probability” appears as the only route to an answer) for the mind that obstinately refuses to admit that “something of the sort that its ‘law’ is, is an essence of Reason.” Hegel would certainly admit that *analogy* does operate in the formation of our empirical beliefs. But it is so easy to frame misleading analogies that without what he calls the “instinct of Reason” we could not reliably reach any conclusion by the use of analogy. We should only learn that analogies are not to be trusted. In fact, it is precisely because we do form so many empirical beliefs which we subsequently discover to be mistaken, that we begin to distrust the “instinct of Reason,” and to pretend that it is not, or ought not to be, there at all.

Hegel’s view is that “mechanics” is the sphere of observable necessity. It is the real concept of gravitational force that we are sensibly conscious of as “weight.” Other physical forces he will consider in the following paragraphs. But, of course, this direct correlation of sense and intellect does not hold for organic phenomena. There is no feeling of sensible necessity about the blackness of the crow. The sphere of the Understanding, we can now say, is the sphere where the “instinct of Reason” operates without the experience of contradiction. If it runs into difficulty what is proved is not its essential unsoundness, but only the need to revise the assumptions upon which it habitually operates.

- 12./251. Scientific observation necessarily seeks to turn its laws into conceptual necessities (though it does not know it is doing this). That is what experiments are for. The aim is to formulate the law properly, to state its range and conditions of operation. This involves separating the conceptual polarities from their phenomenal covering altogether. But in accord with the standpoint of observation the discovered concepts are supposed to be “matters” even though they are not *bodies*.

I have already suggested that the proper objective distinction between the sphere of Understanding and that of Reason is through the type of "schematism" that is possible. But I also argued earlier (in the commentary on par. 147) that experiment is properly the work of "Reason" because it involves the *free* activity of the observer. That view is confirmed here; and the field of polarized forces is now shown to be an ambiguous no man's land between the Understanding and Reason because of this.

The conception of "instinctive Reason" envelops the sphere of the "Understanding proper" as well as that of "Reason proper"; and we need this general conception not because "Force" is already a Concept, but because of all the experimental activity involved in distinguishing and defining "forces."

"Force" is precisely the concept that can be schematized in the Galilean-Kantian way. So it is an objective synonym for the Understanding (just as the title of chapter III would lead us to expect). But because we *postulate* forces, and seek to define them by experiment, this is also the sphere of "instinctive Reason." In this paragraph, Hegel lays too much stress on the rational function of experiment, and fails to give proper recognition to its understandable side.

The ideal of "unified Science" is certainly important to Hegel; and he sees the theory of gravitation as the intellectual foundation in perception of a dialectical theory of the sciences in which the ground floor above this basement is constituted by polarity in all its forms. This is as far as the Understanding reaches, because this is where direct confirmation by observation stops. But in his theory of "controlled experiment," which is summarized in this paragraph, there are two opposite moments which he has not clearly distinguished. On the one hand, the contention that experimental investigation aims to discover the "*pure conditions* of the law" is a good way to characterize the isolation of a variable that is to be observed and measured, by stabilizing and controlling (as far as possible) all the others. These observable variables *must* be "understandable" in the sense that they can be isolated and measured.

On the other hand, the experimental confirmation of a theoretical structure (a real Concept) involves generalizing its application. Primitively this means recognizing that phenomena which occur separately are manifestations of the same conceptual process. This separation of what is purely conceptual from what is phenomenal dominates Hegel's account, because it is how self-conscious Reason emerges. We are passing here from the sphere of "mechanism" to that of "chemism." The name of the category indicates that the paradigm case is the phenomenal occurrence of two types of apparently "simple" (i.e. stable) being, called "acid" and "base," which are actual beings only in relation to one another; they achieve stability only in the neutral form of the intermediate "salt." But in the phenomenological perspective, the forces of magnetism and electricity are equally important. Hegel interprets the "chemical process" in the light of the discovery that "resin-electricity" and "glass-electricity" are just aspects of a single "force."²⁶ "Acid," "base" and "salt" are not in his view descriptive (or observational) terms but theoretical terms referring to a dynamic *process* which is only momentarily observable. "*Acid and base have truth only as universals.*"

This insistence on a sharp separation between observable “things” and theoretical concepts has some notable virtues. In Hegel’s time there were no straightforwardly *energetic* theories of matter. Instead, the “universals” that were supposed to underlie the stable world of things were conceived as “fluids.” The paradigm case was heat (which does perceptibly flow from a source to the surrounding environment, being absorbed and retained in different degrees and at different rates). “Acid” and “base” were conceived in this way also; and a supposed confirmation of the fluid continuum between them was found in what the “discoverer” Winterl called “synsomaties.”²⁷ The general category for these conceptual fluids was that of “matters.” There was heat matter, electrical matter (two “matters” according to Lichtenberg, only one according to Franklin); and in the theory that Hegel learned from Henry Cavendish, “air” was a “chemical” matter that could take on the forms of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon dioxide.²⁸

- 13./252. “Matter,” however, is a *concept* not a thing, a theoretical entity or non-sensible object of sense, an incorporeal *Gegenstand*.

Hegel’s adoption of the phlogiston hypothesis (and of the Cavendish theory of the “forms of air” that went with it) is enough, all by itself, to prove that the concept of “matters” was essential to his own philosophy of nature. I am not sure whether his confident declaration that “one certainly takes care not to call oxygen, etc. . . . bodies” is enough to prove that there is *necessarily* a no-man’s-land of ambiguity between theoretical and observable terms. But we have already seen how he restated Aristotle’s theory of the senses in terms of “matters.” The concept is a necessary bridge between Perception and Understanding. The universal concept of Matter, as Hegel explains now, is not a “subsisting thing,” but “being as *universal* or in the mode of the concept.” This means, in effect, that it is a subsisting contradiction, a sensible thing that cannot be sensed, an extended being that is without body. It is clear that this contradictory character attaches to “matter” only in its phenomenological aspect. Once the “instinct of Reason” becomes the self-conscious Reason that does philosophical logic, the *sensible*, or externally objective, side of the contradiction must be given up. “Matters” (the intermediate concept) are *observables*, but not “things.”²⁹ Pure Concepts (such as “matter” and “energy”) are “moments” of natural laws—not beings that can be sensed. This is the turning point where “instinctive Reason” sublates itself and becomes properly self-conscious Reason; and as the inner (or intellectual) side of sensible things, the concept of “matters” provides our transition to the *organism*.

- 14./253. So the *truth* of observation is non-observable reality: a law that is a concept which determines itself freely, so that it presents the observing Reason with its own concept as an object; but this advance comes as another kind of object which can be observed.

This paragraph makes the transition to the theory of organism; and the transition to the realm of “theory” *simpliciter*. The object of the experimenting observer is now a law that is present in the observed phenomenon, but “free” from it. It can-

not be conceived as a “matter” like heat (which is gained and lost in a *continuous* way) or like electricity (which is induced and discharged under the experimenter’s control). It is independent (unlike heat) and unbonded (unlike electricity).

The direct transition from Matter to the Organism is valid because the whole experience of the formal concept has to be comprehended as a cumulative process. The Matter at which we arrived was an empty blank for the consciousness that we are observing; but *for us* it is the explanatory ground of all of our simple observation and experiment. In other words it is what we now call *Energy*; and the different “matters” are its *specific* types. Reason operates from the first with the concept of Life that it inherited from the Understanding. But it has now developed that concept with respect to all of the *particular* things in the sphere of perceptual observation. The Understanding becomes Instinctive Reason, when it inverts the concept of a mechanically necessary concept of “Force” into that of a free activity which comprehends necessity as a necessary moment. Instinctive Reason has now completed its cycle of development, and discovered *itself* as the *self-explanatory organism*. But it observes itself as merely “instinctive”; so it will need to postulate an external intelligence as the ground of its actual existence.

This is the *result* (of the observer’s inquiry) because the experience of observation has cumulatively developed into this formal concept of the rational *thing*. The free concept of life, as a self-generating form, is Reason’s *essence*, or what it truly is. But we cannot pass straight on to self-observation from the *inside* of consciousness, because the concept we have formed presents itself to us as an object. Indeed, it is an immensely varied object which requires the full development of our observational method.

The paradigm of the organism as an object of rational observation is easy to identify. If we follow Hegel’s discussion of the organism with *our own bodies* as the supposed object of our observation, we shall find his argument easy enough to follow. We shall only need to return to the naïve observational experience of consciousness (which simply *finds* a great variety of organisms in its world, and has to face the fact that they strain its concepts and methods beyond their limits) when we move on to unite the concept and object of natural observation in the next stage. Our concept will then be generalized to comprehend all living organisms as a community inhabiting the Earth. That will be the “comprehensive inversion” of Observing Reason. For the moment, our methodical progression requires that we should turn directly from the Macrocosm to the Microcosm. Reason is now going to observe *itself* as an object.³⁰ The value and significance of the knowledge that will be set aside here as “not absolute,” can best be appreciated by using Reason’s own finite objectification as our model from the first.³¹

(c) *Indirect Observation (the Organism)*

- 15.254. This new object is the *organism*. Inorganic things constitute conceptual wholes only in chemical complementarity (a process in which the complements are themselves transformed). But the organism maintains itself in all of its interactions.

I have clarified what Hegel says here about “the inorganic thing” as well as I can in the analysis. Let us concentrate therefore on the self-maintenance of the organism. When we observe a living organism in the full knowledge that it is alive we are observing a *free* process. We know this because we know what we ourselves are. Whatever further specification the living thing we are observing may receive, we start from this. Otherwise there would be no point in observing the behaviour of relatively simple organisms such as the octopus, for example, with a view to creating or checking a “model of the brain.” The organism is said to be *alive*, because it maintains itself as a closed system independent of the environment.

If I fall from a height, so that gravity takes over, the determinateness of my weight comes to the fore; and when I hit the ground, various other determinatenesses are affected by the *other* for which I exist. My bones are likely to break, and if the height from which I have fallen was great enough I may cease to be a living organism altogether. In these circumstances a bottle shatters; it will shatter even in a fall from which I can recover instantly without losing my feet. But if I do survive the impact with the ground, I shall adjust and keep my life going as well as possible. The bottle falls as it must; there is nothing which, for it, could correspond to my effort to land on my feet. Experiment relies upon the fact that the inorganic thing exists “in itself” in the totality of ways in which it exists “for another.” But the organism exists primitively “for itself.” Most cats will succeed better than I can in preserving their “being-for-self” in a fall. This observation opens up the *general* problem of finite organic theory.

- 16./255. So what has to be formulated is the law of interaction with environment. The environment is a cloud of loosely-bound determinacies into which the organism is dissolved at death, and from which it sunders itself in life. The different media and climates form environments with appropriately adapted life. The law of this adaptation cannot be stated in any necessary form. There are always counter-instances to all but the most superficial generalizations; and the connections remain empirical; they produce no insight into necessity. Hence arises the hypothesis that adaptation is produced *not* by natural law but by external design.

The whole object of rational observation is living Reason in its physical environment. This is the fully developed Concept to which we shall return in the final phase of the “Observation of Nature.” Hegel needs to state it here, because although the naïve consciousness is now turning *away* from inorganic things, its progress is just as consciously holistic at this point as our own. All biological observation takes place in the full knowledge that an organism exists in a total environment constituted by the natural elements, and by other living things. This natural totality is the objective concept that is evolving; so we must already take note at this stage, that no necessary truths about the organism-environment relation can be discovered by direct observation. When we have developed an observational theory of the organism as a microcosm, we shall find that we are no better off; but at that point we shall be observing the same totality from a different standpoint.

The only laws that can be reliably formulated through the direct observation of

life in its environment, are first that every living thing dies and becomes part of the environmental process; and secondly that new living things take the place of those that are gone. Air, water, earth all sustain life in various forms; and in every climatic zone the forms of life are different. The appropriate element and climate are essential to each type of organism; but for each type there is some degree of flexibility and variation.

It was the biologist G. R. Treviranus who produced the general theory of the "influence" of the environment upon the organism.³² But his generalizations all had to have their "exceptions." And what is even more important from Hegel's point of view (and ours) is that they are simply descriptive generalizations, not theoretical hypotheses. There was no way in which they could be fitted together into a general theory. The evolutionary hypothesis was available. But it was unattractive because, in the context of the prevailing physics and cosmology, it led to problems about the *origin* of life (and the necessary "beginning of time"). The Aristotelian biology avoids this problem; and Hegel's commitment to it arose naturally enough from his acceptance of the concept of "internal teleology" as the principle of "objective rationality."

In connection with Hegel's critique of Treviranus, we should notice that our zoological gardens provide a good illustration of how far "independence" and "indifference" can dominate over environmental "influence." Polar bears and camels *can* live in the same climate, though we don't *find* them doing so. And the independence and indifference "passes over to abstraction" only gradually. Thus the dependence of man upon green vegetables and fruit declares itself only after an extended period of deprivation, in the shape of the deficiency condition which deep water sailors once called "scurvy." The laws that present themselves to direct observation are obvious truisms. If they are not quite in the category of conceptual implications like "bachelors are not married," it is (at least partly) because they are not laws at all. Birds do not all "belong to the air," because some are flightless; and birds are not the only animals that fly. The human organism is a notable lawbreaker in this respect. We find ourselves saying that birds were *meant* to fly, and camels to live in the desert. But these *oughts* are not *laws* at all; and when it comes to man we cannot say what she was *meant* for. The nature of the problem represented by *scurvy* required a considerable effort of imagination to discover.

I have brought in *scurvy* because it illustrates the fact that "laws" can be empirically discovered at this level. The seamen who discovered that lemons and other such things that would keep for a fairly long period would prevent scurvy were not discovering a law of rational existence. They were only discovering a *limit*; and they had no insight into *why* lemons etc. had this sovereign virtue. But their discovery led on to the whole general theory of vitamins; and the proposition that "vitamins are necessary to health, and ultimately to life" is important even if it still gives no insight into what life is, or what health is *for*.

These are the questions Hegel is interested in. That is why it will not do to say that this chapter of the *Phenomenology* contains his "philosophy of science." If we think that, we shall have to add that it is a very *inadequate* philosophy of science,

marred by a misguided emphasis on “necessity” (i.e. on *perfectly* reliable predictability) which makes the “life-sciences” altogether unachievable. The briefest examination of Hegel’s systematic philosophy of nature—in which the content of a fairly long shelf of science books is analysed for the construction of the theory of the organism—suffices to show that the attribution of *this* bias to Hegel is a mistake. Like Aristotle he thinks that every science has its own built-in limits; like Aristotle he is apt to think that the limits are narrower, and the achievable certainty less, than we have found it to be, because he despises mathematical methods and the abstractness of mathematical expression. But like Aristotle he believed in the unity of science as the final goal of human intellectual endeavour. It is from his attempt to achieve this that we must infer what his “philosophy of science” was, not from the negative critique of the positive sciences that is offered here in the interest of the “science of consciousness.”³³

The actual order of organic nature is not lawlike. But there is a kind of free design in it which takes the place of law. Hegel calls this “teleological connection” the *Gegenteil* of a law, because it is not implicit in the order itself (in the way in which the laws of physics and chemistry are). It gives order and regularity to the whole in quite the opposite way. As in the works of the human designer, the order seems to be imposed by a thought which is quite free from the necessity of nature. It operates upon the lawful order from outside, and from “above” it, like the sculptor turning his block of marble into a statue. Bats appear to have been freely *designed* for the air, and whales for the sea. No law can be stated about what goes where.

- 17./256. It is, indeed, the concept of *telos* that we need; but it is *internal*. The organism is its own *telos*. It adapts to its environment in order to preserve itself (which is its *telos*). The equilibrium of nature is reflected into the concept of life as a cycle that only produces its own perpetuity.

The view that the order of life in its inorganic environment has been *designed*, Hegel treats as a “necessary mistake” through which the object of the new experience is made plain. The hypothesis of the “Author of Nature” is the shape in which the double inversion of direct external observation is comprehended by the empirical consciousness. The terrestrial environment is the “true infinite” of Understanding seen from its free side. Out of the marvellously reliable, and understandably predictable, totality of free gravity and polarized forces, there emerges the mass of “determinacies set free from bonds” which forms the living environment of the rational life that has comprehended its own mortality and transcended the unhappiness of its mortal condition. Looking at the totality of “universal blood,” circulating perpetually in the forms of life that are spontaneously adapted to the variety of elements and climates (the mechanical and chemical contingency of which is matched by the living forms in their own variety of independently self-contained shapes) the rational understanding arrives at the “argument from design.” The infinite whole is seen to resemble the results of its own free projects.

But this “argument” is a simple externalization (or duplication by projection) of the truth. *We* can see that the experiencing consciousness only arrives at this

hypothesis of external design, because even the simplest organism in the supposed “design” is *self-designing* in a manner which the understandable whole only “pictures.” The concept of the organism was rightly grasped by Kant: the organism is a *Selbstzweck*—it is its own end.³⁴ Only in the rational organism does this definition unfold into the explanation of a purpose that goes beyond the maintenance of natural life itself. For the natural organism as such, its own life, and the perpetuation of its kind beyond the death that belongs to that life, *is* the goal. It is a *Selbstzweck* that maintains itself in the “others” who are its descendants. This is the “self-reflection of nature into the Concept.” The simple self-maintenance of the organism in its struggle with the environment (and its natural enemies) is “self-maintenance in the connection with something else”; but it is not yet “reflection into the concept” because it is a losing battle. For the singular organism the Concept appears in its primitively negative shape as death.

Self-maintenance is essentially a struggle, because life is free. It is not, and cannot appear as, the result of necessity. Only death is the “result of necessity.” But the goal of Life is life itself. It comprehends death by making a new beginning its goal. The death of the older generation is necessary to the perpetuation of life as the achievement of maturity; and maturity is precisely the capacity to generate a new cycle. What maintains itself is the Aristotelian form, the natural species. The apparent “design” of the whole order of Nature (now fully comprehended) is “for the sake of” the self-conscious rational intelligence that observes it.

- 18./257. Instinctive Reason here finds its own concept [true Infinity] without recognizing it. The purposive activity of the organism appears to be contingent with respect to its external object [e.g. hunting, eating, sex]. But all of it makes sense as an aspect of self-maintenance which is what the organism is aiming at, and which (at its highest level) is the *feeling of self*. And what it always aims at is also what it already is (as a Concept).

This is a crucial turning point. Hegel warns us that we must study carefully in order to observe what the observing consciousness itself does not see.³⁵ Reason as observation is seeking to find itself as a thing. Here in the organism it *has* found itself; what the “instinct of Reason” is subjectively, is precisely what the living organism is objectively. Reason as an instinct is conscious purposiveness observing itself as an instinctive process in the world. The self-maintaining organism is objective purposiveness. But instinctive Reason does not recognize the identity of observer and object. Being only *instinctive* it is externally, or contingently, purposive in its consciousness (as the organism is in its activity). The clear implication is that from this point onwards Reason can only go *wrong*. When it comes to the study of “logical and psychological laws,” for example, it understands that it is studying *itself*; and we might well suppose that it is right on that score. But this is precisely the mistake made by Reason as observation: to suppose that it can be observed as a *separate* object. Only the whole organism in its environment is the objectivity of Reason. The living body that we observe is not an “external connection” of Reason, just as the “purpose” is not an “external connection” of the rational agent.

The living organism does have purposes that appear to be contingent relations

with something in the environment. The hound pursues the hare, and one of them *must* fail of its purpose if the other is to achieve it. If it is the hare that succeeds this time, then (for the moment) both of them survive the chase—which exhibits the apparent contingency of their activity perfectly. But if the hare is *never* caught, then both the predator species and the hare species itself will suffer. In the case of sex, the apparent contingency masking actual necessity becomes directly internal to the species-process itself. This is how “in what happens, the necessity is buried, and shows itself for the first time [in or] at the end [*am Ende*], but in such a way that precisely this end shows that it was also the first thing.” In the life of a species for which copulation results in the death of the male, and/or egg-laying results in the death of the female, this coincidence of *Ende* and *Zweck* is exhibited without a mask.

Hegel’s own doctrine that in the natural (i.e. domestic) education of the children, the parents are “preparing their own death” raises the coincidence to explicit consciousness in the case of the rational organism.³⁶ Here (in the rational organism) we have the end which “is already returned to itself as the first moment, or the end that is *in and for itself*.” But even among the mammals, whose “self-feeling” Hegel offers as his example of the “result” in which the whole process is contained, but forgotten, we can find a sense of identity between self and other. That is what is expressed in the instinctive defence of the young.

The instinct of self-preservation Hegel interprets as an urge to maintain a “self-feeling” which is just the absence of any external stimulus. The drive of “hunger,” for example, is a desire for fodder, which vanishes when the beast “feels itself” because it has had enough. There is room here for “play,” and animals do observably play (especially before sexual maturity); also (as any observer of caged beasts can testify) they exhibit feelings of boredom and frustration. But in the defence of the young, we have the “semblance of a distinction that is no distinction.” Hence we can speak here of a “feeling of the Concept.” Lorenz was right (on the Hegelian view) to say that Tinbergen’s jewelfish (which carries its young in its mouth) was on the verge of “thinking” when a conflict of instincts arose because a truant young one appeared, while its mouth was already full of a prey ready for swallowing.³⁷ The “self-feeling as result” reveals here something of what is implicit in its depths. Objectively the *Begriff* is observable in every organism. But we can only say that “the Concept *feels* itself,” where we observe the defence of the young.³⁸

- 19./258. This is how self-consciousness is constituted too: but here we have intentional self-awareness, in addition to “feeling.” This division in the self causes instinctive Reason to hold that the organism is essentially different from itself, and hence the self-adaptation of organism and environment must be the design of *another* intelligent self-consciousness like its own.

We can see now how the structure of self-consciousness (as self-recognition in the other) is mirrored in the animal organism, and even prefigured as “feeling.” So rational observation *does* find itself as a living thing in the organism. Being the instinctive Reason that operates with the assumptions of Understanding, it makes a distinction between what it is and what it observes; but that is a mistake. Ironi-

cally when it comes to observe *itself*, and therefore does not make this distinction any longer, it will be mistaken again (in a complementary way). For what it then observes will not in fact be “itself,” but only a disembodied abstraction. At present, it is like the animal that looks for fodder because it feels hungry, but actually secures its own life and growth (without “meaning” to do that). Healthy eating terminates when the beast “feels itself,” i.e. when it feels satiated rather than hungry.³⁹

In the rational organism, this is just where the theoretical interest of Reason supervenes. But the primitive sundering of self-consciousness from bodily feeling causes the same error in Reason that we saw in the *lordly* consciousness. We might perhaps call Descartes a Homeric hero of the intellect, because he posited “thinking substance” as essentially distinct from “extended substance.” But of course he was only articulating the general conviction that mind and matter are quite distinct. The “argument from design” in all its forms—for instance the Newtonian view that the celestial clock could not exist without a clockmaker—depends upon this “instinct of Reason.” A purpose is a mental thing; but it is realized in the outer world of matter. Hence if we find purposive organization in the material order of things it must originate in another mind, greater than ours.

This sundering is an error. Reason must comprehend itself as the “self-consciousness” of the whole living organism developed from the immediacy of “feeling,” to its comprehensive fullness. But the way Hegel formulates the distinction between “mind” and “body” is complicated by the fact that the necessary embodiment of the rational consciousness is the entire Solar System (at least). I shall translate the passage literally, inserting the best interpretive glosses that I can provide: “The Reason-instinct in contrast is at the same time Self-Consciousness [i.e. the self-awareness of universal Life for which the realm of Consciousness is merely instrumental]; but because it is only instinct it is set on one side in opposition to consciousness [i.e. it is ‘the mind’ as distinct from ‘the body’] and has its antithesis in consciousness [the antithesis of thought and extension]. Hence its satisfaction is split in two by this antithesis; it does indeed find itself, namely the *purpose* [i.e. the conscious mind] and likewise this purpose as *thing* [i.e. the living body]. But in the first place [i.e. as mental] the purpose falls for it *outside the thing* which displays itself as purpose. This purpose as purpose is in the second place [i.e. as embodied] at the same time *objective*, so that for the Reason-instinct it does not fall in itself as consciousness [I am not the designer of my own body], but in another intelligence.”⁴⁰

- 20./259. To be an end with reference to itself is to be a free activity of self-preservation concealing the necessity [of species-maintenance], and exhibiting it only as if it were accidental. Reason has to go through this stage, too, where the concept that is its real purpose appears as a thing (to which it is indifferent). So in observing the living body, it recognizes an end in itself, but it does not realize that an *end* can just *be* without a mind that conceived it. It distinguishes between purpose and self-preservation. The organic activity seems not to *have* a purpose, but to produce the result without meaning to.

It is natural, and even necessary, in Hegel's view, that Reason at its instinctive stage should develop a theistic "argument from design." First, because it conceives *itself* as a designing "mind," externally related to its own body and the physical environment; and secondly, because non-rational living things do not act with mechanical reliability, but do not *plan* their activities in this externally teleological way. The real target of Hegel's criticism is the *half-hearted* criticism of this dogmatic rationalist position produced by Kant. Once we get rid of the idea that purposiveness *presupposes* a mind (instead of being a necessary presupposition of the existing mind that can observe it) we can dispense with the *postulational* use of practical Reason that is typical of Kant and Fichte.⁴¹

Kant argued that because we cannot know what the "end of Nature" is (or even that there *is* one, or an agency that has one), we can only employ the concept of teleology "subjectively." This curious language (with all of its variant forms, such as the "as if" terminology) springs from the failure to understand what it means to say that the organism is an "end in itself." There is nothing *hidden* here, except that the goal of *self*-preservation conceals the goal of *species*-maintenance. The *concept* of the living organism is the Aristotelian "form"—the stable biological species that cycles on from generation to generation. Since individual organisms need not fulfil the cycle of reproduction, and some do not; and since how they mate, if they do, is contingent, the concept appears to be external to the "self-preservation" which is admitted to be definitive of the organism. But this contingency is a mere "show."

Hegel is definitely thinking of the distinction between the human mind and the human body, or the freedom of Reason and the "strength" of the passions. The self-conscious organism which originally split into "life" and "selfhood" has now come to the rational recognition of itself as *two* selves (or a higher and a lower selfhood). The *subject* of Self-Consciousness has become the *object* of Observing Reason. In the observation of animal life the interpretation of behaviour in terms of "instinct" is the direct abolition of any show of freedom there may be in it. But the arbitrariness of *human* desire is more radical. The human animal can voluntarily face death. This proves that what is preserving *itself* in human behaviour is something *other* than finite life. But this *freedom* also appears to be something other than Reason. The "nature" of the rational animal is "to conceal the necessity [of its rationality] and to present it in the form of contingent connection." Just as the instinctively free self-consciousness acts indifferently towards its life, so the instinctively rational self-consciousness acts indifferently towards its Reason. But this is only the "cunning of Reason" for it is precisely the true "necessity" of the rational nature that is realized through this indifference. But it is only the indifference, and not the necessity that is apparent to Observing Reason. The primitive freedom of the naturally self-conscious organism appears to Reason as something alien to it; but the life of *instinct*, the life of the body and the passions, actually is "the instinct of Reason." As Spinoza put it, "the object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body."⁴²

The phenomenology of the natural self explains how Kant's problem arose. Reason as Observation instinctively takes itself to be independent of its embodi-

ment; and the living organism presents it with the objective realization of purposive rationality. We should remember that the Stoic reasserted the indifference of the rational consciousness towards living embodiment; and the Sceptic points out that life is completely indifferent to Reason's concept of the world-order.

"As instinct, Reason too stays stuck within this *being* or the *indifference* [of thought and being] and the thing that expresses the Concept remains for it something other than the Concept, the Concept something other than the thing." Reason cannot recognize itself in the living body. The existence of Reason in this body is a mystery that forces it to postulate (whether "dogmatically" or "critically" makes little difference) an "Author of Nature." The action of the organism is self-preservative in a selfish sense ("the agent behaves therein as something indifferent subsisting on its own account"). So the "necessity that is hidden in it [the necessity of acting *rationally*], and ultimately the "necessity" of the Kantian moral law] falls outside the organism itself" and must come from a separate source.

We can see that the whole standpoint of the "indifference of thought and being to one another" is a mistake. The organism is self-preservative, in a morally selfish sense, because it is the Concept of Reason (or of the self-sufficient "end") in an objective shape. So there is no need for an "Author of Nature" (and all the problems of his moral authority and responsibility can be obviated). The distinction between the "concept of purpose" and "free self-preservative action" is only the distinction between formal and real existence. But to Observing Reason there seems to be an enormous difference because what it sees is not the identity of concept and actuality, but an organic activity which appears to have nothing to do with the rational observation that comes into being because of it. For Instinctive Reason this is the mystery of how the "body" and the "soul" are united; and that is a pseudo-problem, because they should not be conceived separately.⁴³

- 21./260. On this view the organism acts only to preserve itself as singular (or its progeny). This is a blind and purposeless activity. It can do anything at all. So organic activity is less purposeful even than a machine, and is more like acid or base, which are not self-sustaining. The organism does maintain itself, however (even against death); it is a self-contained purpose, not turned inwards by an alien check.

For the instinct of Reason, its own instinctive life appears to be a spontaneous and unselfconscious activity that persists blindly and pointlessly, without aiming at anything. Descartes is a good model of the instinctive reasoner, here, since he holds that "the lower animals" are automata. Whatever they do arises from some "singular or contingent necessity." Their behaviour is quite "lawless," and they have no "purpose." The Author of their being has some purpose, but they simply go on blindly from the moment of birth to that of death. We ought not even to say—as the Cartesians did say—that they are machines; for a machine that we have made, has a function that we can explain. But the living organism has none. It is more like a chemical force; and its death is the moment of arrival at "neutrality."

When we reject the machine analogy, and substitute the chemical one, our mistake becomes visible. For the living organism actively avoids its neutral destiny.

There *is* a purpose in its blind self-assertion. *It aims at itself*. It is not an activity that becomes self-conscious because it is *checked* by an alien not-self. It turns back to itself, and spins upon its own axis, quite unself-consciously. Life is not like the Fichtean self-consciousness. It does not have to know what it is doing.

The instinct of Reason distinguishes itself sharply from its own objective correlate. When it serves the needs of life, it is externally teleological; but the instinct of life does not *have* a purpose in that sense. Living organisms maintain themselves and their species by an animal instinct, and not by a consciously rational one. From the standpoint of Observing Reason, even the maintenance of a singular human self (or of her family) is “an altogether singular or accidental necessity.” The famous exchange between the Abbé Guyot Desfontaines and the Comte D’Argenson illustrates this “accidental necessity” perfectly: “Il faut que je vive,” says the Abbé. “Je n’en vois pas la nécessité,” retorts the Count.⁴⁴

Our methodical advance has taught us that what is called “animal instinct” is the objective side of the “instinct of Reason.” “Self-preservation” is the preservation of the species. The living activity of the singular organism is “nothing but the pure essenceless form of its being for self.” The circle that opens with birth, closes at death; the singular living organism has no essence, because the death it strives to avoid belongs to the essence of its life. But while it maintains itself in maturity, it does (or can) generate progeny. So the *species* is what is maintained. Thus “the universal, its *purpose*, does not fall outside it.”

Observing Reason can see that every living species preserves itself. But that is just like the human action which has only the maintenance of the singular organism as its end. It is rationally pointless. There is no reason why there should be foxes. Frau Bauer would think the world a much better place if there were none. Something *more* than the preservation of the species is required as its “universal purpose.” The necessity for the species to go on is like the Abbé Desfontaines’ need to live; he could feel it, but the Comte D’Argenson could see no rational ground for it. This pseudo-problem arises from the standpoint of a Reason that has universal purposes of a higher order. The living thing is “pointless,” in the same way that the concept of rational experience itself will turn out to be self-enclosed and “circular.” Kant’s problem arises from his failure to understand what internal teleology, or the concept of a “*free* self-purpose,” entails. “Nature” does not have any “purpose” beyond the one that becomes fully explicit in the “appearing” of human Reason.

(d) *Body and Soul*

- 22./261. Observing Reason does not see the conceptual unity of living activity and purpose. So it converts the antithetic moments into terms that it can handle.

The new standpoint has our understanding of the organism in its own instinctive way. When it is observing foxes, it knows that the only “purpose” of every living fox is that there should continue to be foxes; and it is quite satisfied with that concept. But now that we understand the difference between “grasping the Con-

cept” (internal teleology) and postulating a designer (to complete an externally teleological explanation) we can forget about foxes. It is our own self-concept that we have to grasp. So our proper concern is with the *medical* theory that is founded on the recognition of the living *human* body as an autonomous “end-in-itself.”

The instinctively rational observers in this field want to produce a theoretical *concept* of the living organism. But they do not have our concept of the Concept; they have only the Understanding’s concept of polarized Force. They want to construct a “schematism” based on the physical working of the body that will mediate access to the intelligible concept of life. This is another conceptual mistake. Life cannot be conceptualized, like the chemical process, as a system of moments that are there, and that stably persist. In this kind of observation, the *difference* between the living body and the corpse, will be exactly what is left out; but the “experience” of this error will clarify it into a project that is, at least, less obviously absurd. That clarified project is essential to Hegel’s own philosophy of nature; so we shall discover here the very step that makes the observational programme viable and ultimately productive.

- 23./262. The organism now appears to have two fixed and observable sides: the purpose and the actuality. This is only a *Vorstellung* which gives us the logical principle: The outside expresses the inside.

The mistake that Hegel is attacking is a naïve philosophical error. We have now reached the observational philosophy of nature which he stigmatizes as “schematizing formalism” in the Preface. We can find a good pre-Kantian case of it in the medical theory of John Brown.

In the general history of culture, the view that we are now dealing with is generally called “vitalism.” The assumption is that there is a “life-force” which manifests itself in the living organism. This “life force” is not a designing intelligence somewhere *beyond* the physical world which infuses spirit and life into a material substrate (matter being all that is properly understandable); it is a sort of “ghost” in the machine that the Understanding studies in physics. It is a *necessary* hypothesis for all properly *dualistic* theories—those in which “mind” or “spirit” is assumed to be a different kind of “thing” (or “substance”) than “body.” But it is a hypothesis that has no function in a “science of experience” (which is *ex hypothesi* “monistic” in that it presupposes that experience has some sort of continuous unity).

The paradigm of this “vitalism” is precisely the degeneration that occurred in “Schelling’s School.”⁴⁵ What happened showed that the dualism of “mind” and “matter” (which dominated the cultural world from Bacon and Descartes to Kant and Fichte) had not been properly resolved. Hegel deals with this “schematizing formalism” in its “reborn” shape. But it is the longlived “antithesis” of body and soul, that he is now overcoming.⁴⁶

- 24./263 But the distinction of “inside” and “outside” is purely conceptual. The integrity of the organism is equally the content of both sides. The inside and the outside appear to be opposites; but the outer *expresses* the inner, so the content is really the same.

We have here the same relation of differentiated “Identity” that we observed in the case of Force and its Utterance. The living body is taken to be the “expression” of the life-spirit. But the “inside” and the “outside” are just aspects of the living body itself. G.E. Moore’s paradigm of commonsense observation “This is a hand” had already been used by Aristotle to make the point that it is not really a hand any more if it is cut off—though it will for a certain interval be easily observable that that is what it once was. Thus the “outer side” of a living organism is no more *outer* than the *inner*. The vital force of a living thing is not separable from the vital functioning of its members.

Also the “universal” life of the organism is not outside the organism in the way that forces like gravity and magnetism are outside the separate physical bodies that they relate. There was a time when the life principle was thought to be an observable force in the environment. For this is what the pre-Socratic thinkers meant when they said that water, air, or fire was *divine*; and the “Boundless” of Anaximander was peculiar in that, like gravity, it was observable only in its effects. Our clear distinction between the inorganic and the organic we owe to the Atomists. Along with it came the pseudo-problem (which we are struggling with at this very moment) of how they can be “united” (or “related”); and the logically incoherent problem of conceiving and explaining the organic in inorganic terms. We simply need to see the mistake here. We have to recognize that Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were right in distinguishing the *inner* of life and thought as a different *level of being* altogether. But the problem of how the outer existence of the observable organic thing is related to this intelligible world of our theories will still remain in need of the best conceptual account that we can offer.

At this point we can see why the standpoint of *observation* (of which our own standpoint is only the highest form) is *necessary*. Hegel may speak contemptuously (in par. 262) about “the concept as such being wiped out” and the antithesis between *telos* and actuality being “expressed in an obscure and superficial way, wherein thought is sunk and degraded in representing.” But it is not some benighted empiricist—some crass philosophical barber from Napoleon’s “nation of shopkeepers”⁴⁷—who sinks thought to this “degraded” level. It is life itself that comes to consciousness in sensation; the living concept is what utters itself in bodily expression, and Reason itself begins in Spinoza’s *imaginatio*.

What we have to shed are only the barber’s tools. We must not think that we can cut Reason up, and expect the pieces to behave like Galileo’s weights and balls. As Hegel points out now (in the very next paragraph after his jibe about the *law*) the rational observer takes an important step forward in speaking of the outward as the “expression” (*Ausdruck*) of the inner. Though still instinctive (i.e. empirically imaginative not speculative) this is the crucial move away from the Understanding (with its interest in the predictive control of *outward* phenomena) and towards self-conscious Reason.

25./264. How is this inner/outer distinction *observable* then? The inner itself must have an outer (observable) side.

Paragraph 264 turns the “immediate” law into a “syllogism.” In order to be observable the inner spirit must have an outer (observable) side. That the two sides *seem* (*scheinen*) to be given in observation was stated in paragraph 262. That the inner side *cannot* be given seems to be implied in paragraph 263: “inner and outer are opposed reality and a distinct being for observation.” The difficulty is resolved by admitting that the “inner” has its own observable aspect. This is the occasion for the introduction of an *internal* distinction between *inner and outer*. The “shape” of the “inner” (which is all that was mentioned in par. 262) is the “outer” side of the vital force. The real “inner” (the inner aspect of this internal “shape”) is the “concept” that has been degraded by observation into an observable shape. There is a logical implication here: the empirical “outer” must have an “inner” side also. But we shall find that that poses *no* problem, and has a familiar commonsensical meaning.

- 26./265. The inner as such is the living soul (*psyche*, life-principle) which *appears* observably as the *functioning* of the organism. The outer is its stable *structure*, so the law relates function to structure as parallel. The functions are sensibility, irritability, reproduction. (In plants all are embraced in the undeveloped final function.)

The “inwardness” of the real inner, which is the first thing defined in paragraph 265, is conceptual. Life is not more on the “inside” of the organism than it is on the “outside.” It is the overarching conceptual unity—the *simple* soul, the pure *concept of purpose*, or the Universal.” This is observable as a *process*. It is the “general fluidity” within which the parts and organs of the body are formed and dissolved. It is observable as an aspect of the inner organism because it is precisely the “inner” organism whose “shape” is formed and dissolved in it.⁴⁸

The “outer” shape is what lasts longest when death comes: skin and bones. This is the “inert being” of the organism, so far as it can have such a thing. “Inert” or quiescent it is *not* (as anyone who has broken a bone well knows); but the organism can survive the loss of a part of it, and the gravedigger can tell Hamlet how long it will last in the earth, when the true inner is gone, and the inner “shape” has decayed.

Even this stable “outward shape” is formed (in the twenty year process that goes from conception to maturity) by the “inner fluidity.” But once it has been formed, it subsists stably and distinctively for a comparative anatomist like Cuvier to study; and he could—so it was said—identify the species from a single bone. Of course, it is the motion and behaviour of the organism that is its real outward side, but Observing Reason makes the Newtonian mistake of granting priority to visible stability. Even *our* observation must accept the visible outward stability of the whole organism as a valid limit. We cannot observe more than Observing Reason does, for it would not be “Reason” if it did not do the best job of observation that is possible. But we are clearly aware that what we are observing is the stillness created by a dynamic equilibrium of motions. The real organism is a “Bacchanalian revel” in which the “universal fluidity” expresses itself as a stable shape.

The way that the inner fluidity is expressed in the system of stable organs, is first through the articulation of the three moments (Sensibility, Irritability, and

Reproduction) as visible organic systems; and secondly through the interrelation of these systems. But this articulation into three systems is typical of the animal organism only; it is not found in the vegetable kingdom, where there is only a reproductive system. The reproductive system has two sides (since Hegel regards self-maintenance and self-replacement as aspects of the same process). The plant maintains and replaces itself in a single self-contained process (except for the bisexual plants at the limit of the vegetable sphere). This is the genus-process of the organism. In the animal kingdom this single process opens out during a nutritional period of growth which articulates the three systems; so it is not yet clear why Hegel does not distinguish nutrition and growth from reproduction proper. (We shall discover the reason in the next paragraph.)

Hegel takes over the triad from Schelling's essay *On the World-soul*; but Schelling did not originate it.⁴⁹ He found it in the work of C. F. Kielmeyer. But it is probably older. The theory of animal sensibility and irritability (in something like the form in which Hegel held it) goes back to Albrecht von Haller, who first published his views in the 1740's.⁵⁰ Hegel based his own philosophy of organism upon it throughout his life; and in the Berlin lectures he depended on the *Recherches physiologiques* of M.F.X. Bichat. Bichat (who was a "vitalist" in a *critical* sense—that is to say he believed that "life" itself is beyond the reach of our observation) was probably a major source of Hegel's theory already in the Jena period.⁵¹

- 27./266. These are necessary moments of "the active end-in-itself." Sensibility is the organic capacity to take everything in (in its own way). Irritability is the capacity to respond to everything. Reproduction (including maintenance and growth) is the final end itself. (In a *formal* sense sensibility is "self-reproduction," but *real* reproduction is the function of the whole living organism.)

Hegel here translates the ordinary definitions of the moments into the language of his real philosophy, in such a way as to make the *circularity* of the conceptual process perfectly clear. This circularity is the hidden reason why he does not separate the "vegetative" function of nutrition and growth from the distinctively "animal" function of sexual reproduction.

"According to the writers of Hegel's day," says Petry (who depends on the *Edinburgh Medical Dictionary* of 1807), "sensibility was a term denoting the capability that a *nerve* possesses of conveying the sensation produced by the contact of another body along with it. All parts of the body possessing the power to produce a change so as to excite a sensation were said to be *sensible*. *Irritability* is the 'contractility of muscular fibres; or a property peculiar to *muscles*, by which they contract upon the application of certain stimuli, without a consciousness of action.'⁵²

Hegel's strange-looking definition of "sensibility" as expressing "the simple concept of the organic reflection into self or the universal fluidity of the same" interprets the ordinary definition in terms of his speculative doctrine that the "inner" which escapes observation is just the inner world of consciousness. The commonsense medical definition agrees with the speculative doctrine of identity, in its own dualistic way; for it refers to a "bodily change that excites a sensation." The

body (when we are awake) is generally “sensible” of its whole terrestrial environment. This whole is “reflected into it” as a flux of sensation.

The only novelties in Hegel’s definition of “irritability” are the fact that through his concept of “reflection-into-self” consciousness is implicitly included (whereas the medical observers spoke of a spontaneous reaction “without the consciousness of action”); and secondly he introduces his own technical term “elasticity.” It is clear that the terms “fluidity” and “elasticity” are deliberately introduced by Hegel in the interest of establishing a parallel between the organism and his theory of the *Gestaltung* of inorganic matter. But “elasticity” is a reasonable synonym for the “contractility,” which Bichat substituted for von Haller’s “irritability” (and which we find already in the *Edinburgh Medical Dictionary* by 1807).

“Reproduction” includes all of the functions of the Aristotelian “vegetable soul”—the growth and regeneration of the organism’s own tissues, as well as the genesis of the new organism. This is the activity of the *Gattung*, shared by the simply “generic” plant, and all the developed species of animals. The reproductive function generates the “sensible” organism in reality. This is what is directly *born*; but the growth and development of the muscular system also belongs to this nutritive function taken more generally. So “reproduction” is the whole of the “real” concept of the animal organism regarded as a process of self-formation.

- 28./267. These functions are observable as organic *systems*: the nervous, muscular, and assimilative-reproductive systems.

The only point that needs spelling out here is that the three systems are observably focussed in the head, thorax, and abdomen respectively. The nervous system connects every part of the body (and especially the outer superficies) with the brain. The heart is the muscle on which the circulation of the blood (the main observable *shape* of the universal fluidity) depends. Finally digestion, fertilization and gestation all belong mainly to the abdominal cavity. This observation goes back to the ninth book of Plato’s *Republic*.⁵³

- 29./268. “Laws of organism” relate inner to outer aspects: e.g., my “sensibility” expresses itself in the peculiarity of my nervous system, but also in my general growth and specific capacities. These are two aspects of being for another, both of which are observable.

The *laws* that observing Reason *postulates* (Hegel speaks only in the subjunctive about what should be, or is presumed to be, the case) connect the observable part with the observable whole. The state of a given system is supposed to express a certain degree of that *moment* of the “universal fluidity”; and on the other hand, because the “universal fluidity” is what is expressed in *all* moments, there can be lawlike correlations of one system with another. Thus some organisms are highly sensitive or “nervous.” But this nervousness affects the operation of the digestion, or the relative weakness of the musculature. The observable operations of the *nervous system* (which is the outer side that properly belongs to sensibility as an *inner* moment) must be distinguished from the observable behaviour of the physical

organism (which is what is meant by the “outer” in the whole organism). This is important to the supposed observability of both “sides” of the law. For the *universal* fluidity itself is not observable.⁵⁴ It is only in the correlation of *different* moments (or different parts of one “system”) that two inward *sides* of the putative law could be observed. Otherwise, the correlation has to be between the particular *system* and the general *behaviour*.

30./269. No *laws* come to light, however. And that is because the *concept* is a mistake.

As long as we have *two* “outward” terms—whether they are the “outer of the inner” (i.e. the organic systems of the body) or the “outer as such”—we can hope to make lawlike correlations. But in fact we do not find any. Hegel is perhaps a bit too easily convinced about this. Dr. John Brown could retort that “nature loves to hide,” and that the observer must be both ingenious and patient. Even in the proper realm of the Understanding, where Hegel holds that there is nothing occult at all, and the “inner” is exactly what is manifest, Kepler had to struggle patiently for years to discover the planetary orbits and the laws of their motion. The crucial step was made in the sphere of pure thought, when he abandoned the basic mathematical hypothesis of the *circle*. This example shows fairly clearly that Hegel may be mistaken when he says that the failure of observation is not simply caused by its being too empirical in its procedure.

Hegel is slighting his own real insight here. For the truth is precisely that scientific procedure ought to begin “from the Idea.” We do not *know* whether there are laws there to be observed until we have the right Idea (meaning the union of concept and intuition, or of infinite and finite). Since (for observing Reason) the divining of the Idea is always an act of creative imagination (the succession of ingenious geometric hypotheses that Kepler tried makes his planetary research an ideal paradigm here) observing Reason can never get beyond the Kantian critical standpoint. This is true even in the inorganic sphere; but it is *obvious* in the sphere of the organic (where the hypotheses cannot be simply mathematical). Thus, to take the example that is close at hand here, Hegel was quite right to identify Bichat as the best observer of the organic in his own generation. But Bichat’s fundamental insight was the recognition of the body as a great complex of different *tissues*; and the quest for the “primitive tissue” which this insight inspired was mistaken in principle.⁵⁵

It is not Bichat’s kind of “observation” that Hegel is condemning, however, when he says that “the thought of laws of this kind proves to have no truth.” The examples that he will soon give are explanations of disease (and implicitly of behaviour) in terms of a supposed “high” or “low” degree (or tension) of one of the “systems.” It is *clear* that there are not and cannot be “laws” of this kind, because no quantification of the terms is possible. The whole language of “quantity” is here out of place.⁵⁶

Before we embark on this polemic (which is directed at the formalist philosophy of nature, rather than at any working biologists or physicians) we ought to recall thoughtfully the fact that Hegel’s own systematic philosophy of nature expounds

the organism in terms of the interaction and reciprocal involvement of the three systems that are identified in paragraph 267. This confirms that *we* do not have any privileged knowledge. It is apparent, therefore, that biological science, as Hegel himself envisaged it, consisted in whatever kind of correlations are possible between “the inner and the outer” as here defined; and even the “real philosophy” of nature depended ultimately upon observation to save it from being a mere *Sollen*. This is where Hegel’s *system* provides a better guide to his philosophy of science, than the critical attack on scientific “law” in the *Phenomenology* (including the critique of “explanation” in chapter III, pars. 154–155).⁵⁷ He did not agree with Bichat that there is anything “unobservable” about Life. Like the other believers in the “thing-in-itself,” Bichat was the victim of a transcendental illusion. The “unobservable” is just the Concept that enables us to organize and interpret our observations. But Hegel did agree with Bichat about the aims of “observation.”

- 31./270. The living function in the organism as a whole is to be lawfully connected with its specific materialization. Is this possible? No! because the universal functions are too fluid in their *total* expression to be distinctly identifiable; and precisely because they are functions of the whole organism, sensibility and irritability are not quantifiable in a variable way. Thus the organism has necessarily the *same* degree of sensibility and of irritability.

For there to be a law, the universal property (e.g. of sensibility) must have made itself into a “thing” (in this case, the nervous system) and must have “imprinted its shape” in that thing. Both aspects of the same essence must be present—the universal *moment* (i.e. the motive impulse) and the “thing.” But the situation is further complicated by the fact that there are three of these moments. So before we consider the lawful relation of inner and outer as such, we must inquire whether the three “moments” can be lawfully related, and if so, how? Hegel claims that, because the moments are fluid, this is impossible. They are not “things” at all.

This might seem to be a very poor argument, since a fluid motion is as good a “thing” as the path of a planet. But *these* motions cannot be schematized mathematically. The supposedly distinct “properties” or “moments” are aspects of *one* fluid process, and hence they cannot be separated into distinct observables. In respect of the “laws” sought by the theory Hegel is criticizing, this is quite true. But that is not to say that some more carefully specified version might not be capable of producing laws of a properly definite kind. There is a real possibility that Hegel has here confused vagueness of observation and interpretation with logical weakness in the theory.

He was probably too much impressed by the fact that the different “systems” are *conceptually* interdependent. There is no activity of the sensible system that is not a reaction of the irritable system; and it is true enough that once we identify sensibility with the nervous system we are in trouble, since the nerves do not merely carry sense impulses to the brain, but also carry motor impulses back to the muscles. The whole theory rested on an oversimplification, and Hegel’s attempt in the *Encyclopedia* to treat each of the systems as containing the three moments in

itself (so that the study of each of them is a way of observing the whole organism) is the only obvious way to mend this weakness. But the conceptual weakness of this particular theory has no necessary connection with the logic of organic observation as such. The study of the nervous system, and the "observation" of its "impulses" has now produced results that Hegel would have to treat with respect. His own logic is both "right" and "wrong" here. He was right in criticizing Brown and the schematizing disciples of Schelling. But he was wrong to attack the observational method in the wholesale fashion that he adopts. His own System suggests that he was "instinctively" aware of his mistake. His critique of observation in this polemic should be accepted as valid only in the perspective of the "science of experience" (with its particular goal).⁵⁸

Although Hegel's main argument is plain enough, his use of the technical term "reflectedness into self" here is puzzling. When he says that "in sich reflectirtsein" is "passivity or dead being not sensibility" he can hardly mean the insensible condition of a stone (for example) because he also says immediately that *without it* action is not irritability. At the conscious level of functioning, he must be referring to a state of being reflected into self, such that the organism is sentient but not actually sensing anything. This seems to be just what he means by "self-feeling" (in its simply "resultant," or undeveloped, form).⁵⁹ The organism can be passively "receptive" to a sensory stimulus; and equally it can act in the "expectation" of a sensory reward. Both the receptivity and the "expectancy" can be contained within "self-feeling"; and at the level of automatic function the circle of sensibility and irritability can be perfectly spontaneous. Stimulus and response form a perfect circle. Bodily processes (especially nutrition and growth) have to be conceived in such a way that the response is implicit in the stimulus and vice versa. This is the "reflectedness into self" of the organism.

As soon as this automatic circularity of organic functions breaks down the organism is in process of dissolution. So the perfect equality of sensibility and irritability is a logical truism. I do not think that it makes any sense to speak of this as an equality of "quantity." The appeal to how we talk about the sensitivity to stimulus and the response to it at the level of conscious interaction, makes the conceptual interdependence of the two terms plain. But also it shows us that Hegel's intended target is not medical observers, but philosophers who dress up common-sense observations in pseudo-scientific language.

This is further confirmed at the end of the paragraph, when Hegel makes an illuminating remark about terminology. "If they [Sensibility and Irritability] are called *factors*, and this is not to be a meaningless word, then what is expressed by it is that they are moments of the concept." Here we have a visible attempt to rescue Schelling from his "school." For the "factor" terminology comes from the "First Sketch of a System of the Philosophy of Nature" (1799); and in paragraph 271 an example of its *formalist* use is given that comes from Schelling himself.⁶⁰ There is no reason why Hegel should make this remark at all unless *someone* whom he regarded as a speculative thinker used this terminology. Thus we have here a confirmation of what he said publicly in his lectures and privately in his letters: that

Schelling's "forms" must be distinguished from the "mischief (*Unfug*)" that has been made with them. But it is also true that Schelling himself started the "mischief" of confusing "qualitative" distinctions with "quantitative" ones. The distinction between him and his school is not as clear as Hegel pretends when he is writing to Schelling himself.

- 32./271. The distinction between them [Sensibility and Irritability] is not quantitative but qualitative. The apparent laws that are produced by representing the distinction as quantitative are empty tautologies. All of the moments are functions of the whole organism, and must increase or decrease together (being the same vital force looked at different ways).
- 33./272. Quantification here is just formal abstraction of a trivializing kind.

Even as he embarks upon his attack on "formalism" in the philosophy of nature, Hegel is anxious to insist that there is an important *qualitative* difference between sensibility and irritability. They are, in fact, the opposite sides or aspects of the same cycle. But this "identity" is less important than the way in which each appears as a "factor" in the systematic expression of the opposite moment.⁶¹ This qualitative (or dynamically descriptive) approach is the right road to the theory of the organism. The quantitative approach—and particularly the supposed law of an inverse ratio between sensibility and irritability—began with C. F. Kielmeyer in 1793; and it was taken up by Schelling in his pioneering essay *On the World-soul*.⁶² Hegel was suspicious of Schelling's quantitative analogies from the first. Even in the manuscript of 1803/4 we do not find any reference to them. But this first surviving attempt at a philosophical theory of organism—which is also where the dynamic approach is first developed—owes many demonstrable debts to the early essays in which Schelling accepted Kielmeyer's law and employed quantitative formulas. And since Schelling had abandoned these formal "constructions" by 1807, the only properly available targets for Hegel's attack here, are those students of Schelling (or other adherents of the new idealism) who are still mining these slagheaps from the furnaces of philosophical discovery. Hegel must have believed that Schelling would agree with him about this.⁶³

Hegel's concern is to show that formal constructions with the opposite factors of the unitary organic process are necessarily tautological. The terms of the supposed law are simply the same thing considered from opposite sides. All that we have to do is to manipulate the conceptual opposites like plus and minus signs. All of the empirical content can be ignored—Hegel says it "gets lost"—because we are really just doing formal logic. The point is a simple one. The astonishing thing is that Hegel labors it at such length.⁶⁴

- 34./273. With reproduction this trivializing procedure is not possible because there is no antithesis here.

Hegel himself regarded Reproduction (in the broad sense in which it includes nutrition and growth) as the truly infinite union of Sensibility and Irritability. It is

in terms of this doctrine of his own that he asserts that there cannot be a law of the equivalence type between Reproduction and either of the other systems. Schelling did assert a direct ratio between the preponderance of irritability over sensibility and the increase of the “productive power.”⁶⁵ This is not a two term ratio, so it does not contradict what Hegel says here, but it shows that he has himself *forgotten* some of Schelling’s own “mischief.”

- 35./274. Properly speaking the theory-construction that we have been considering ought to be an *a priori* activity; but as observation it cannot help being empirical, since it only connects observables. We are here concerned only with the immediately observable expression of the soul [its functioning], not with its expression in the outer shape of the organism [its structure].

The difficulty Hegel raises is that all theory about the organism based on observation is properly a *synthetic a priori* construction. We are laying down the “concept” of life, but we are doing it on the basis of observations whose content is *given*. The observer has *no* intellectual insight into the “inner as such” (Life or “the soul”). She is postulating the truth of the theory; and the postulate is *necessary*, but it is only an outward phenomenon that is observable.⁶⁶

Hegel is here stating the ground of Kant’s insistence that the scientist can make only a “regulative” use of the concept of organism. Hegel’s own position (if I understand it) is that it is only our own self-observation that entitles us to make assertions about the *necessary* structure of the organism. If the identity of our inner experience with our outward observation is not allowed, we shall be reduced to commonsensical assertions of the type considered in the next paragraph; and in that case all of our science of life will sink to the level of empirical observation without any necessity at all.⁶⁷

- 36./275. From a commonsensical point of view we can distinguish more and less sensitive, irritable, reproductive organisms. But these empirical abstractions of ordinary Understanding cannot yield necessary laws at all.

If we take “sensibility,” “irritability,” and “reproductive capacity” to be properties of whole organisms that enter into descriptions of their behaviour (and not as *functions* of the inner organism, which are necessary to its survival) then of course we can characterize humans (and other animals) as “more sensitive” or “more irritable,” or “more fertile.” We can even make distinctions about how our chosen organisms reproduce, and what they are sensitive to, or irritated by. The horse will eat the oats before the hay, the dog will sleep in the manger of the ox (as in Aesop); the mare has one foal and the bitch about six puppies and so on. But there are no laws about any of this (except statistical ones, which would not interest Hegel in his present investigation).⁶⁸

There is a reason for distinguishing, at this level of empirical degeneration, between sensibility and irritability on the one side, and reproduction on the other. For although it is hard to see what use “laws” about sensibility and irritability as

“universal properties” could be, or even how the terms “sensible” and “irritable” could be stabilized, for purposes of record and measurement (as in the scales of color and hardness), we shall in due course come to a pseudo-science that is concerned with this sort of observation. *Physiognomy* is based upon observable “properties” of just this vague and uncontrollable kind.

- 37./276. Let us try rather to relate the supposed moments of the abstract concept of organism with the observable structure of the organism (not now considered as functioning, but as described by anatomy). The moments cannot be singularly identified; and anatomy reveals that the organism has many more structures than are accounted for by these three functions. In any case the sensible system, etc., must mean something very different from the abstract structure revealed by the anatomy of a corpse. The *being* of the organism is a self-maintaining cycle. Anatomical data must get *their* interpretation from the context of life in process.

We now reach the third stage in the observation of the living organism as a functioning process of self-realization. First, we tried to relate the moments of the life-concept as a fluid process; and we found that observational laws were impossible in principle. Then we tried to relate the inner and the outer aspects by regarding the moments as “properties” revealed in the behaviour of the organism. Here the sides are observable in principle, but there are logical reasons why no laws can be found. Now, finally, we are going to consider the relation of the conceptual moments to the outward structure of the whole organism. Here, the experience of our Concept has brought us to its “first inversion” or *simple negation*. We observe the living organism, by studying the corpse.

Just as the previous stage is pushed to the limit of outright absurdity in Physiognomy, so this third stage will become absurd in Phrenology. But there is *nothing* absurd about the Concept of Observation in the present phase. This is the concretely successful and functional concept of medical (or physiological) observation. Hegel himself, who followed a course of Anatomy at Tübingen, has done observational work at this level.⁶⁹

What he says about it is therefore sensible. If it seems cursory and dismissive, that only indicates that this kind of science has little to contribute to the goal of our present inquiry. The critical comments are relevant to Hegel’s attack on the “formalist” programme for the “philosophy of Nature” as a kind of pseudo-scientific universal *description*. But we would need to go to Hegel’s own Philosophy of Nature to discover what solutions he had for the problems raised here; and only by comparing his criticisms with his own performance could we hope to arrive (by inference) at a fairly reliable (though still very general) impression of what his own view of scientific method was.⁷⁰

Only the dead body can be observed *ad libitum*. The observational science of the organism *par excellence* is *anatomy*. The inner is now the life that has gone; and the outer is the body that remains. Much of it will not remain for long unless we pickle it in formalin (or something of that sort). But it *can* be preserved long enough to be studied in its lifeless condition. The dissecting room is where we can reasonably

expect to discover the law that would genuinely “express the true *outer* as the off-print of the *inner*.” Hegel’s use of the subjunctive clearly indicates the suppositious status of this statement.

We can be sure of *one* thing: the cadaver of the dissecting table *is* the “true outer.” We can also be certain that Hegel regarded anatomy as a genuine science. Not only did he study it as a student, but he always continued to take an active interest, even in its polemical aspects (he was concerned, for instance, with the dispute about the discovery of the intermaxillary bone, by Goethe and Lorenz Oken).⁷¹ When he invokes the study of anatomy on the first page of the “Preface” as his model of what scientific knowledge involves, the example is deliberately chosen.

The science of the “experience of consciousness” has here reached a limit and a turning point. The forms of Observation that follow are not sciences at all, by Hegel’s standards. Formal logic is an *a priori* study like mathematics. Hegel’s estimate of it was unjust, but not for reasons that matter to us at present. Observational psychology, like ecology, was a *potential* science (and one which had not yet achieved the conceptual foundation in physiology that would allow it to become that). Based as it then was in introspection, psychology was an observational science of *spirit*. The conceptual absurdity of this is what becomes *visible* in physiognomy, and *undeniable* in phrenology.⁷²

Hegel’s critique of anatomy begins with the point that is implicit from the first in his characterization of the observational standpoint. Now that we have the dead body on the table before us, it is perfectly obvious that the *systems* that are the outer expression of the inner fluidity do not provide separate singular expressions of the inner moments of the organism. When they are alive and functioning, they express the *particularity* of the moments. Now they *are* singular, and we can dissect them out, and make drawings etc.; but the life is gone. Moreover, as we do dissect them out, we are forced to recognize that the concrete organism involves other systems that are distinguishable from the nerves, muscles and assimilative-reproductive systems (at least in the way that the dissection separates them out).⁷³ Hence the “systems” we speak of in our philosophical theory cannot be identified with those that go by the same names in the dissecting room.

Every point that Hegel wants to make about self-observation in phrenology could be made at this point, but for the fact that the anatomy student knows perfectly well that she is not studying her own body, and that she cannot study it in this way. What the study of anatomy does for the science of experience is to underline what is *not* there on the table. The living process, the movement, is gone. To mention only the most prominent *system* that can be anatomically distinguished from the canonical triad, the heart is no longer pumping the blood round the body. The unity that is “reflected into self” and actively maintains itself is no longer present. The parts have no *sense* (*Sinn*) except what we reflectively assign to them by reference to the life in ourselves.

38./277. To sum up, then, an observational law of organism is impossible because the moments of the living soul cannot be identified with observable things, since they are all-pervasive processes, not separate functions in separate organs.

At this point another lengthy explanation of the theoretical inadequacy of the concept of a “law of being” as applied to organic phenomena begins. Now that we have reached the anatomy lab this is not necessary. But on the other hand the observations made in the dissecting room are just the ones that can be correlated like the motions of bodies; so this is where the gulf between any mechanical picture of the human body and the actual life of the organism both can be, and needs to be, made clear. If we recollect the great vogue for mechanical models of man among the French materialists—e.g. in Condillac, LaMettrie, D’Holbach, Helvétius—we can begin to see why Hegel hammers on this point at such length. Our own main concern, however, is with the movement of Hegel’s methodical argument. The “second inversion” (in which the antithetical sides of the self-deposed Concept are comprehended as a new “result”) is about to begin.

The mechanical model does not work like an organism at all. Cogs and levers remain separate, while living moments flow into one another. Life operates in flowing cycles that involve the organism as a whole. Even mechanism cannot be understood without the concept of inner forces that are polarized; but in the organism we cannot isolate “poles.”

- 39./278 Thus a *law* of organism cannot be had at the level of *Vorstellung* because the separation of the aspects is impossible.

It is vitally important that what must be given up at this point is the *Vorstellung* of a law. What this means in more familiar language is that a mechanically lawlike connection between observed phenomena is not to be had, or that even where it does exist, the theoretical explanation involves conceptual structures that are by no means adequately or exhaustively revealed in it. Newton’s apple was a *Vorstellung* of Galileo’s law of falling bodies; and the Solar System (which included falling bodies even before life emerged) is a perfect *Vorstellung* of the “law of gravity.” But there is no observable model of the law of organism.

This is not to say that there is no *conceivable* law of organism. But in order to conceive it, we must change our attitude towards observation and observable phenomena. The *inner* and *outer* sides can only be related in a mechanical way at the cost of all organic significance. What is organic is *free*. Hegel expresses what that means by saying that each side (the inner concept and the outer phenomenon) is “simple universality in which all determinations are dissolved, and the movement of this dissolving.” It is clearly precluded by this view that we could ever have a perfect predictive science of organic motions. But a conceptual theory that is as perfectly exemplified in the phenomenal world, as the theory itself says that it ought to be, is still quite possible. I do not see how we are to understand Hegel’s “real philosophy”—his attempt to comprehend nature and history as one systematic whole—unless we grant that he regarded a system of our theoretical concepts as not merely possible, but as the most valuable of all forms of knowledge. Moreover, his continual struggles to improve his philosophy of nature, and especially his readiness to incorporate new theories of organic phenomena, argue that he saw sci-

entific inquiry as a perpetually self-corrective labour—a *bad infinite* of interpretive effort. And for that reason we must grant that he recognized the observation of the outer side of experience to be just as important as the logical structuring of the inner side.

This is clearly implied by the equivalent definition of the two sides here. What really follows from the abandonment of the *Vorstellung* of scientific law, is the admission that Science is a continuum in which the possibility of a *Vorstellung* only indicates the *inorganic* character of the comprehension achieved. The science that can be successfully *vorgestellt* is essentially *instrumental*.⁷⁴ For someone who is seeking theoretical comprehension “Science” properly designates the conceptual continuum within which all forms of empirical inquiry are united. In this perspective, the distinction between *scientific* and *humane* inquiries is seen to be a mistake that rests on the mathematical *Vorstellung* of the “laws of nature.”

One consequence that follows from this understanding of the present paragraph is that Hegel’s philosophical “Science,” and particularly his “science of the experience of consciousness” and his “philosophy of world-history,” must be interpreted in accordance with this view of *inner* and *outer*. So all of the criticisms of his philosophy of history—including for example those of Croce—which interpret comprehension in terms of the “*Vorstellung* of law” that is here rejected are mistaken. Whatever Hegel may be trying to do in these “sciences,” his efforts are *not* modelled on the science of celestial motions. No one was ever more adamant than he that human experience *cannot* be comprehended on that model.⁷⁵

- 40./279. In the movement of perception and understanding, the understanding *was* the transition (from singular being to universal concept). Now it is seeking to observe that transition objectively; as a result it has grasped the thought of law itself. But this thought-model requires dynamic concepts, not just subsisting differences, as its content. The unity of the organism is an immediate unity of concept and being. Hence its moments are not distinguishable as beings, and so no “laws” can be formulated.

This paragraph states the *result* of the three-stage movement of “organic observation” *for us*. No understandable law about the life of the organism can be based directly upon observations of the corpse. But the corpse is the sort of thing about which we can state physical and chemical laws. So we are now in a position to make a valid comparison between the laws of the Understanding and the general principle that “the outer is the expression of the inner” which has been the guiding light of our observation of the organism.

In the sphere of Understanding we were not concerned with the objective validity of the transition from the singular case to the universal law. That becomes a *philosophical* problem only when we reach the limit of our range (and then it is only a pseudo-problem). It is the Understanding itself that is the “transition” here—in other words, the “schematism” is mathematical, and the inductive inference is immediately necessary.

But when we are observing a “living thing” we have to formulate the principle that “the outer is the expression of the inner” consciously because the transition is

no longer *immediate* or mechanically necessary. We know what this *free* transition is like, because we have a model of it in the conscious relation between thought and action. Only the universal principle of *interpretation* can be stated. This principle (that “the outer is the expression of the inner”) is the abstract *thought* of the “law of Reason.”⁷⁶

Physical *necessities* had to be conceptualized earlier, through the integration of each abstract universal with its complementary opposite. This was the problem that presented itself as the paradox of the “inverted world”; and in the “thought” of a “law of Reason” the paradox becomes a truism. Laws must henceforth be necessary relations between Concepts—totalities that unite opposites, and so comprehend the “restlessness” of the Concept of Reason itself.

This is easy enough to write down; and indeed, the student hardly needs to have it written down *again*, for she can easily see that Hegel is saying something of that sort in the text. The problem is to see what it means. The best recourse is a close study of the examples that Hegel offers. Of these, the closest at hand is the “expression” law itself. We have already seen how the primitive terms *inner* and *outer* had to be given their own “inner” and “outer” sides in order to be employed as observational concepts at all. The fact that anatomy is a genuine science which *does* give us insights into the way the living body functions is a more concrete illustration. Anatomy can only do this because the “resting being” of the cadaver, and its structures, is taken up into the observer’s comprehension of what it is to be alive. A living body is the unity of soul (the “infinite sublation or absolute negation of being”) and body (a “resting being” that is as much subject to the laws of gravity, impact, etc., as any other physical thing). So its distinctively organic behaviour will not be comprehended through any laws that are modelled upon the relation of bodies.⁷⁷

- 41/.280. Because of the immediacy of the organic unity, the body is completely identical with its self-preserving form; hence it is self-contained, and does not *react* regularly with other beings (like the chemical “force” with the litmus paper). Its observable behaviour *varies* in a quantifiable way but there is no conceptually necessary pattern in that.

Having stated the *result* of this stage, Hegel is logically ready to proceed to the next one: the comprehensive observation of the organism in its total environment. But before he does that, he treats us to one final attack on the error of “formalism” (the degenerate attempt to employ mathematical schematism, and to reduce the essentially qualitative aspects of genuinely conceptual knowledge to abstract quantities).

It is only as a living whole that the organism is an observable *being*. This wholeness is what maintains itself until the organism is a corpse, ready for the anatomist. Its organic self-containment is its “reflection into self.” We shall soon be observing it as an *inner* that utters itself in its relation with the terrestrial environment. But for the moment Hegel reiterates, negatively, the fact that it does not react with other things by changing its own form in some identifiable and reliably predictable way. It can be damaged and survive, but only because it is able to repair the wholeness. The interaction, in that case, is a wound which leaves a scar. We must always

refer back to the unwounded state and recognize the scar as the result of the organism's effort to regain that. There is only one state of the organism that is definitive for it.⁷⁸

Litmus paper is determinately *red* or *blue*, and it can be determinately transformed from one to the other by interaction with the appropriate complement. The "living thing" is six foot, and 180 lbs, with brown eyes, black hair, white skin etc. In the course of nature the color of eyes and skin will remain constant, but that of the hair will change (or the hair may fall out). As a perceptible thing with many properties it is a self-directed process of alteration or "exchange" (*Wechsel*) of one property for another.

We can measure it (as in my specification of height and weight); and if we do this regularly—or for a large population—Hegel's claim that the "concept is abolished and necessity has disappeared" ceases to be quite true. We *know* (common-sensically) that if we measure humans at age 40 (another quantitative determination) we shall come up with different averages for men and women *everywhere*; and we know which will be higher. We also know that the data for North Americans of Chinese extraction will be further from the specifications of my accidental sample (except with respect to hair and eye color) than the data for those of German and Scandinavian extraction; and so on. But the data for an individual tells us little or nothing about her as a living consciousness; and it is the singular self whose "experience of consciousness" Hegel wants to make into *science*. We read the book and study it; and it is essential to its status as "science" that there should be a "we." So you must not suppose that my point about statistical data is irrelevant, any more than a childhood record of heights on a doorframe is irrelevant to our individual "recollection." But *we* read and study together for the sake of each of us singly. So Hegel's emphasis is correct and his point is valid. There are *quantitative* laws about the organism. But they are not philosophically interesting.⁷⁹

- 42./281. This observation is aware of dealing with expressions of life (the Concept); yet it relapses completely into the posture of Understanding. The terms are quantified; the advance to Reason loses its meaning.

In *measuring* a living thing, and making records of its perceptible qualities, we are treating it as something less than, and essentially different from, what we know it to be. A man or a monkey *is* a physical body and is subject as such to the law of gravity very much in the same way as a carefully stuffed dummy of the same shape and weight. But if we project them into the near-weightlessness of space it is not the significance of this for a stuffed dummy that we have to be concerned about. If we concern ourselves with the observable and recordable data about the organism as a perceptible object, we are in effect substituting for it not a stuffed dummy but a corpse; and we have to interrupt the chemical degeneration of *that* in order to make it reliably observable—so the stuffed dummy analogy is appropriate, because that is what we want to make the corpse into.

The only point here that seems to need lingering over, is Hegel's Kantian determination to confine the word *Gesetz* to the sphere of Understanding. (In par. 279

he spoke for a moment as if this might not be unavoidable.) The Understanding “gives laws” to the phenomenal world; but when we move to the sphere of biological science we have to transcend our strictly determinist assumptions and expectations. Our knowledge is still scientific, and we are still concerned with *necessity*. Hegel accepts the Kantian antinomy of freedom and determinism, but he does not align it with the antithesis of Nature and Spirit; he uses instead the antithesis of “organic” and “inorganic.”

The way that Hegel speaks of “laws that have the unrest of the Concept” in them (par. 279) is more concordant with his use of law in the spiritual realm. We must take the influence of Kant (and Newton) to be definitive for the standpoint of Observing Reason only. This will enable us to avoid some misconceptions about what he was really aiming at. It is better to remember the achievements of Aristotle (with whom Hegel was entirely sympathetic) if we want to appreciate correctly the *positive* character of his interest in scientific biology.⁸⁰

- 43./282. Examples of this “formalism” [cf. par. 15]. [Only John Brown’s medical theory is unmistakably criticized, but the examples are probably relevant far beyond the “school” of Schelling.]

In his first formulations of the Identity theory, Schelling tended to reduce all finite difference to the Platonic “indefinite dyad” of *more* and *less*. Hegel rebelled from the beginning against the emptiness of the speculative comprehension produced by this “quantitative” approach; and Schelling himself was too interested in scientific and medical theory to be satisfied with it for very long. But he continued to use the term *Potenz* (which comes from the mathematical theory of “powers”); and his theory of the singular organism was for some time couched in the Brownian terminology of strong (“sthenic”) and weak (“asthenic”) conditions. By 1805 he had abandoned all allegiance to John Brown’s medical theory. So the Schelling of 1807 is not a target of Hegel’s attack.⁸¹

He acknowledges that dispositional terminology (“irritability” and “sensibility” rather than “muscle” and “nerve”) is needed for theory construction; and we might well ask whether *Reflexion in sich* is any less macaronic (or bastard-Latin) than “Potenzirung.” It is the quantifying impulse, the mathematical cast rather than the academic pedigree of the terminology, that Hegel can properly object to. The “formalist” theory supports and encourages a *pointless* mode of classification.⁸²

This complaint seems sound and sensible, since it is hard to see any theoretical fertility in a *scale* of “sensibility” and “irritability.” But the dismissal of quantification generally, simply because it can be pointlessly pursued, is an error. Those who take this to be the real upshot of the attack on “formalism,” and even account it to be one of Hegel’s great insights, are not in step with Hegel himself, as a single example of essentially quantifiable inquiry that was *not* pointless will show. A few years before Hegel went from the Stuttgart Gymnasium to Tübingen, Georges Cuvier (a year older than Hegel) came from Montbéliard to study in the Karlsschule. There he was a student of Kielmeyer. I do not know whether he and Hegel ever met, but Hegel certainly appreciated and respected Cuvier’s achievements in

comparative anatomy. He quotes the famous claim that “with nothing but the well-preserved end of a bone, it is often possible to determine the whole of an animal by means of analogy and comparison, and with as much certainty as one would have if one were in possession of the animal itself” in his Berlin lectures without the smallest hint of irony or scepticism—indeed with an acceptance and conviction that is perfectly evident.⁸³

I know nothing about the techniques that Cuvier used in his virtually single-handed creation of the science; but it is obvious that careful measurement was needed, as well as the meticulous draughtsmanship that first brought him to the attention of the learned world. The visualization involved is a kind of geometric projection, which cannot be determined solely by the conceptual grasp of the functional relation between organism and environment which naturally impressed Hegel in his work.

Hegel certainly understood that this “external” comprehension is as important as its internal analogue. To suppose that he would not appreciate the importance of exact measurement, statistics, computer modelling, and so on, in the service (or for the *development*) of a general theory, is as stupid as to suppose the same about Aristotle (from whom Hegel’s distrust of the “formalism” of mathematics descends). His view is rather that these essentially instrumental techniques are worth only as much as the *theory* in whose support they are employed. The mathematical concept of “the One and the indefinite Dyad” does not facilitate the comprehension of the concrete content of any experience. Within the Platonic tradition we must cleave rather to the teleological concept of “the Good.”

(e) *Observation of the Organic Totality*

- 44./283. Finally the outer shaping of the organism (and how it has an inner side) must be considered.
- 45./284. Here the outer side is the relation of the organism with its environment. No law is possible beginning from the outer side.

Now, at last, we reach the climax of Organic Observation. Here we come back to the relation between the organism and its environment. We are now observing Life comprehensively; but we already know that our result will be *negative*, because there is no “law of environment” (par. 255).

The “inner and outer” of the inner organism were the life-*process*, and the system of inner organs (which can be exposed in the anatomy lab) respectively. The Concept is the unity of life and death. The outer organism is the human animal, or the beast we can observe in the wild. When we remove the beast from its natural habitat, we disturb the inner-outer relation of this outwardly visible organism, because its proper “outer” side is its home environment. Hegel’s doctrine that there is no law governing the organism’s relation with its environment, means that if you put it in a cage, or whatever else you do to it, it will try to survive. There are some absolute limits here, which can be called “laws” if we choose. A fish out of water will die rapidly; and a mouse under a glass dome with a candle flame will die

when the flame goes out. Hegel ignores such “laws” as these because they are only *negative* in their application; they will not lead to any positive comprehension of the life of fish or mouse.⁸⁴

It is more important to consider his attitude toward the evolutionary “law” of “survival of the fittest.” He could easily defend his formal position, because it does not decide the fate of any singular organism with necessity (unlike the removal of the fish from water, or the exhaustion of the free oxygen in the air). The observation of the sage called “the Preacher” remains valid: “I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong . . . but time and chance happeneth to them all” (Ecclesiastes, 9:11). But Hegel himself is interested in looking beyond surface show to the unity of Appearance (as the *actuality* of Reason) with “the Concept.”

He was not familiar with the *Essay on Population* of T. R. Malthus; but he was well acquainted with Adam Smith’s doctrine of the “invisible hand.” His acceptance of Smith’s science (and its “laws”) is implicit in the characterization of the bourgeois economy as a gravitational system (in which *wealth* constitutes mass) in the Real Philosophy of 1805.⁸⁵ The view that life-maintenance constitutes a system of spiritual *mechanism*⁸⁶ validates the employment of the concept of “law” in the appropriately modified sense. So for Hegel too “the survival of the fittest” could be called a *law* of a purely conceptual kind. But the language is not what matters. Consistency within the *Phenomenology* is best secured by speaking of “conceptual necessity,” and remembering that this is the topic of Science in general.

- 46./285. The actual organism is now observed as a *middle* term connecting the life-force with its inorganic environment. Life is absolutely *free*. It can take any shape, and it is indifferent to all shapes. This universal life is the *element* in which all the members of the living body subsist. In its simplest inward expression it is survival-power, and on the outward side variety.

The living organism is both the *outer* side of the “inner” (as a relationship), and the *inner* side of the “outer” (as a relationship). Thus the total relationship is a syllogistic one. It is the discussion of this total relationship of life with its terrene environment that gives Hegel a proper occasion to expound his universal concept of life as such. He has to consider the immense variety of the visible forms of organism; and his view is that the physical form is radically arbitrary and unpredictable. Free creativity is the only content that Hegel assigns to the One to distinguish its concrete teleological character (as the Good) from the empty mathematical form. Life itself (as “the immediate Idea”) can take any shape, and is indifferent to all shapes. It is the “creative universal soul.”⁸⁷ But as such it has no purpose except to be. It is “indifferent to what kind of mills it drives.” The metaphor of the mill race returns us to the “universal fluidity” which is the inner side of the visible inward organism. Also it echoes the characterization of “the Infinite” as “the universal blood” (par. 162). Implicit in it, there is the complementary concept of the Earth as the “universal Individual”—the river bank that determines what mills are possible, and where they can be placed.

Logically, Hegel's doctrine entails that we cannot decide *a priori* whether there is a definite number of "mills," and whether they are permanent. The indefiniteness of living species—an aspect of what Hegel calls "the impotence of Nature"—expresses the "pure freedom" of the Concept as Life (i.e. as the dialectical identity of life and death).

Hegel goes one crucial step beyond Kant and the French biologists (especially Bichat) who insisted that the essence of life is an incomprehensible mystery. We make the mystery, he claims, by assuming that there is some positive essence to be comprehended. Instead what is there is pure freedom, the "being" of "nothing." It is only a mystery because we want to comprehend it as "something." That pointless curiosity must be turned in the opposite direction. Rational life *is* what that primitive freedom *can become*. Grasped logically as its own essence, "freedom" *is* Reason—i.e. it is the potential (the *Ansich*) for self-definition. Natural life reveals this to us, as external observers, by its "indifference to the mills," its plethora of forms. The freedom that the One *is*, displays itself outwardly as Many Ones, i.e. as a numerous *variety*. The expression of freedom here cannot be a repetition of the same abstract identity many times. It must take shape as many different shapes, i.e. as life in many *species*. Every different shape will have a place in a number series—each one having a new determinant relative to the one before it.⁸⁸

- 47./286. The two "inners" compared: the inner of the inner organism is the living abstraction of free activity. That of the outer is the dead abstraction of mathematics. Laws *seemed* to be possible about the former, but they are explicitly impossible about the latter.

The *inner* generally, is the Organism. This can be observed on its *outer* side as a living *species*; but as a system of living functions it can only be observed when it is *dead*. The observation of the "inner life" of the organism is a mediated one. Even on its "outer" side (as living function) the organism is a Concept, not an observable *thing*. The inner side of the species-concept is its universal aspect: the life-force as a living "abstraction," i.e. something that abstracts *itself* from all observation, which is conceptually comprehended as a completely free drive towards expression in whatever ways the environment will allow.

On the other side in this Fichtean picture, the "outer as such" (the *Anstoss*) must be conceived as the *dead* abstraction of extension, which is the medium for representation and observation. The inner side of *this*, is simply mathematical Reason. Every form of life is a definite *Gestalt*, and the shapes can be identified and classified. The great means for this is the dissecting table. Since we are explicitly concerned with the *dead* shape, the anatomist is now in his proper element. But no absolute (or *a priori*) knowledge is possible, just as none was possible on the inner side of life; and this is logically obvious, because we are dealing with nothing but numbers. Living species are not related to one another in a mathematically logical way. Leibniz thought they were, but we have seen that they cannot be, because it is the essence of the "end-in-itself" to define itself *freely*. Darwin spent several years classifying the limpets (living and fossil species). But he could never know that he had them all, and that no new ones would turn up. He did, of course, have a

hypothesis for arranging them; but he was not much better off than Cuvier who had no defensible laws at all.

- 48./287. We are now observing the relation of inner and outer only in the outward shape. The evolution of observing Reason has led us back to the observation of the inorganic with our organic concepts.

The paradoxical employment of the dissecting table to develop the science of the living organism led us to the recognition that life is “free activity” and that “life science” is a conceptual rather than an observational science. For Observing Reason, this “result” means that we must observe life as a whole, in its total relation to the inorganic environment. This *external* mode of observation reduces the living organism to the status of an inorganic *pole*. There is a level of what Hegel would call “chemical” observation, for which this method is adequate; and the return to it shows us what Hegel means by speaking of *number* as the essence of the “inner” at this stage. But before we come to that, we should consider how number has been taken to be the essence of the observable world in general.

Pythagoras said that “things are numbers”; and Aristotle tells us how the later Pythagorean Eurytus tried to determine the “numbers” of things by placing pebbles on a sketch of their *shape*.⁸⁹ Here the identity of inner and outer is given a very naïve interpretation. But the long tradition of the “great chain of Being” develops from this naïve beginning; and when the classification theorists of the eighteenth century sought to arrange all the forms of life into a single ascending (or descending) scale they were employing this same model.⁹⁰ Hegel’s concept of the living organism as an “end-in-itself” springs from Leibnizian origins. But his view that the “abstraction” of Life itself is radically free is supported (if not suggested) by the empirical observation that the types of being cannot be ordered in one single series. Life branches out in many directions, and what determines it (or gives its plethora of shapes an overall shape) is its living habitat.

But now we are getting ahead of ourselves again. Logically speaking, our universal concept of Organism is now comprehending the inorganic order of descriptive classification *conceptually*. So we shall have to examine the inner aspect of inorganic bodies. For in that sphere, there is a mode of observation where the inward side of “shape” really is a *number*.

- 49./288. At the inorganic level, the inner aspect of shape is specific gravity (which is measurable). But the observable outer shape is not comprehended.

The recognition that the identity of inner and outer cannot be interpreted as a law, is like the transition from Perception to Understanding. We cannot *observe* the living thing; we must observe the totality of its relations. But Observing Reason can only grasp this in a completely formal and abstract way; it is only the *immediate* shape of Reason. It heals the bad logic of Understanding instinctively; but “healed Understanding” is all that it is. We do arrive at the critical “idealism of Reason” in the observational theory of the organism; but the best observers (e.g., Bichat) are

Kantian believers in the “thing in itself” rather than *speculative* thinkers. Only a *formal* level of speculative Reason is possible in the observational mode. The “schematizing formalists” of “Schelling’s school” were obliged to adopt a mechanically “polarized” concept of Nature as a whole. This “chemistic” schema is actually the shape in which *inorganic* nature is properly reintegrated into the organic totality.

Specific gravity is the “inward aspect” of the different “shapes” of matter. Hegel conceived of “specific gravity” in strict accordance with its name. It was a *specification* (at a higher level of logical development) of the primitively undifferentiated force of gravity. In Hegel’s interpretation, this makes it analogous to our concept of atoms and molecules. What the *number* corresponds to in the object (let us say a bit of gold, or perhaps better a single crystal of sodium chloride because that has an even more determinate observable “shape” than an organism) is a numerically determinate quantum of energy. As known to the observer in “external reflection,” this *formula* falls outside the thing, and within the self-consciousness of the observer. Our gold atom or salt molecule is a more complex object (or concept); but the project of reducing all the variety of experience to continuous and discrete quantities of undifferentiated “energy” is easy to grasp; and our conception of the lawfulness of atomic phenomena is now a statistical (i.e. a numerical) one. It is through this reduction to numbers that the mechanically predictive power of our theory is preserved. So we can fairly claim that both observational science, and Hegel’s “science of experience” are vindicated. We cannot live rationally without statistics; but no one lives by them.

If we now look back at the problem of biological “shape” with the analogy of “specific gravity” in mind, we can see that the project of viewing the types of life as a number series was not completely mistaken after all. Our genes and chromosomes are not simple “numbers”; but molecular biology is now sufficiently advanced for the continuum with basic atomic theory to be visible. Plato’s forecast that any programme of genetic control must eventually come to grief remains true in our perspective, because of the randomness of genetic mutation; and the “numbers” are not related to the visible shape with the mechanical reliability of crystallography. But the shaping of living things has turned out to be more predictable than Hegel expected; and what is more significant than that is the fact that his adherence to the Platonic tradition as the best conceptual frame for a dynamic (or “dialectical”) theory of life has turned out to be valid.

This Platonic loyalty is all the more surprising in view of Hegel’s violent reaction against all of the prevailing forms of “mathematical philosophy”; and his clear recognition that the formalist philosophies of nature represented a *degeneration* of speculative insight. The formalists, like their great prophet Schelling, were romantic Platonists; Hegel is an Aristotelian who remembers his Plato.

At this point, someone may very properly object that I am claiming too much insight for Hegel himself. It is the *inadequacy* of the comprehension achieved by this mode of observation that impresses him. Almost everything at the perceptual level of observation is ignored in this ordering of things. A host of differences between the things ordered is treated as nonessential. But this only reveals the

“formal” character of the idealism involved. We have here a project that is not successfully carried out. But it is a serious project. Even in Hegel’s eyes it is not a mad fantasy like Brown’s medical theory or Gall’s Phrenology. This is shown by his own systematic Philosophy of Nature. He could not foresee the future triumphs and developments of observational theory in this formal mode. But he gave the project its proper place in his own observational science.

- 50./289. Specific gravity is conceived of as a static resistance. As static it is indifferent to a host of other properties (which do *not* vary with it, like those that are its manifestation). Some property must vary with it (specifically its *cohesion*), but *this* is a tautology, for its passage through this continuum of states is how the *concept* “preserves itself” even when the thing does not. The changing of its “cohesion” [e.g., freezing of water] is the process of sublating its specific gravity. But self-preservation is against the inorganic thing’s nature, since it does not have that as an inner purpose. What its measurable gravity is, and what its process of change is, are unrelated. The nature of the thing is expressed only in its relations, and its self-maintenance is a function of its environmental circumstances. It does not adapt to them or avoid them.

When we see how Hegel develops his critique we may well be inclined to say that he does not have any *positive* intuition of the value of this kind of science at all. But his Kantian (even Humean) attack on the theory that specific gravity is the *essential* differentiation of matter cannot alter the fact that in every surviving version of his natural philosophy, this concept is given the fundamental role assigned to it in paragraph 288. The present attack is motivated only by opposition to the *formal* use of the concept in the theory of the organic world.

For reasons that are made clear here, it is *cohesion*, “the abstraction of the side that stands opposed to specific gravity,” that is emphasized. Hegel regards inorganic matter as a substrate that can and does carry other properties; according to his theory of its “fluidity,” the constant “specific gravity” that defines a particular stuff, reveals itself “in otherness” as a measurable and predictable variation of cohesion. Thus *water* (to take the obvious fluid paradigm of this theory) has a specific gravity that reveals itself in the “otherness” of heat and cold as constant freezing and boiling points; and all of the metals can be reliably identified by their melting points.

Water is also a useful paradigm for the *unpredictable* properties that are not determined by this essential “fluidity.” Whereas other substances contract and expand at a constant rate in the “difference” of heat and cold, water suddenly expands at or near freezing point (with dramatic consequences for the metal pipes whose cohesion is more continuous). Hegel’s account of the dialectic of Perception should be read in terms of this theory of gravity as *specified* in material things, which have other qualities not affected (or irregularly affected) by its specification.

His critical attack here is directed at the efforts of Steffens to establish a general theory of the metals as a series on this foundation. This continues to the end of paragraph 290; and there are enough quite specific echoes of Steffens’ views and terminology to make it unmistakable that he is the one who is being attacked.

Schelling adhered to Steffens' position, so the criticism strikes at him too; but in Hegel's mind this is only a minor disagreement about the application of a conceptual theory which Schelling originated, and which he and Schelling hold in common. As the Critical Editors point out, the definition that establishes a *logical* relation between "specific gravity" and "cohesion" is derived from Schelling's (slightly less *vernacular*) terminology in the *Fernere Darstellungen* of 1802.⁹¹ The fact that an *understandably* determined series cannot be established, even at the inorganic level, is of course the clinching argument against the employment of *formal* analogies at the organic levels of development.

It is clear from Hegel's critique that he held that the Understanding can never absorb the variety of perceptual qualities completely into its web of mechanical theory (even with respect to inorganic things). In some Kantian sense this may be a logical truth (i.e. it may be true that any explanation of phenomena involves the acceptance of other phenomena that are not explained). But I do not know how it can be shown. The critical imperative of explanation directs us always to explain as much as we can with every theoretical construct. So even if his theory was a formalism in Hegel's sense, and whether or not it actually proved fertile or stimulating for the advance of research, Steffens was actually justified, and Hegel's attack is misguided. The acceptance of a measure of free disorder in all order must never be invoked against the methodical pursuit of order in the framing of hypotheses. Pointing to the fact that a given hypothesis breaks down at some point has to be taken as a suggestion that a better hypothesis should be sought.

Turning now to the positive appreciation of the critique itself there are some logical points that are worth underlining. In the first place, "Being-for-self" is the fixed or static gravity of the thing at rest. This means that its *cohesion* is a theoretical concept of something not directly perceptible, since the perceptual thing that maintains itself over a certain range of conditions does not do so in the perceptually different states that it assumes in other conditions which the observer can produce. Ice, water and steam are all forms of the intelligible concept *water* (which Hegel accepted as an "element"). For visual perception they are quite different. As a perceptible thing water feels very different at 4° Celsius than it does at 96°. But it becomes another *thing* altogether at 104° or at -4°. The perceptually static specific gravity or cohesion of the thing is not what is theoretically important at all. It is the dynamic or fluid cycle that matters.⁹²

What is even more important is that the "process" of an inorganic concept is open-ended. We have been able to show that at very high temperatures the *cohesion* of material substances actually turns into its opposite; and some very paradoxical things occur as we approach "absolute zero." But even in Hegel's world it was obvious that no self-preservative cycle of change (no "true infinite") is involved here. Resistance to change is not independence—which shows itself rather in ready adaptability. The perceptible thing is not independent. Its stable condition depends upon its environment. In other words its "being for self" is really its "being for self in other." That is why Hegel's adoption of Schelling's definition of "cohesion" (after considerable hesitation) is significant.

- 51./290. Ordinary perceptible cohesion is a property separate from the rest which are its other side. It can be measured, but the number does not account for the transformation of properties. Thus in [Steffens'] theory of the metal-series no parallel can be established between their specific gravity and any of their other properties (though all of them ought to vary together if the theory were correct). Since the properties are not dynamically conceived, no properly conceptual theory is possible. In this empirical approach any property has an equal right to be correlated with any other in a series.

Steffens is a *formalist* because he takes the measured quantity of an empirical property as the foundation of his supposed theory. Schelling is innocent of formalism (at least in principle) because he defines the theoretical foundation conceptually—i.e. as a dynamic “process.” All that the empirical observation yields is the knowledge that a thing with one measured gravity has one set of properties, and a thing with another gravity has a different set. Thus the organization of a metal-series in terms of “specific gravity” does not tell us anything about why gold and mercury, or iron and lead, are so different. If we choose some other empirical standard (for instance hardness) we shall simply have to put them in a different order. We can get a lot of measurements for different properties but this does not help. We can look for parallels and inversions (“positive” and “negative” relationships). But even these will be no use unless we can produce a conceptual theory to show why the observed connections exist; and in fact no connections have been observed.

Any measurable property that varies progressively can *represent* the essence in a series of this kind; in other words it can be a *Vorstellung* of the essence, but it is not the “Thing itself.” The Thing itself would be the Concept (and we might say that it is *represented* in a genuine theory). But no parallelism of properties in any sequence of bodies could be a Concept of the essential nature in its self-differentiation. Serial arrangements, therefore, are not what we ought to be trying to establish; organizing things in “series” is not yet “science.” Only the theory that relates different series successfully will be “scientific.”⁹³

- 52./291. We can now explain what led to the transfer of the inner/outer concept in organic shaping to the inorganic level [see par. 287] and this will bring us to another form of the relation. At the inorganic level we find the distinct sides that are not present in the organism; the being for self of the organism is not like specific gravity, for it is a dynamic unity of identity and negativity. It is the *Gattung* that brings death to the single organism as well as life. The metal defines itself but does not *perish* when it reveals its shape. Thus the cycle of the metal is its essential (comparatively measurable) property; but the cycle of life is death to the organism.

In this final movement of Organic Observation, the observation of the totality of Nature as a numerical series is the moment where the Concept is simply inverted. Both Schelling and Hegel conceived *cohesion* on the model of magnetism (i.e. as an attraction of opposite poles).⁹⁴ The attraction through which a thing holds itself together corresponds to the inner self-maintenance of the organism. Thus inorganic solids (and even fluids) can be conceived as having an *inside* and an *outside*

that are lawfully connected; and for purposes of experimental observation a visible property can *represent* the inner side. The transfer of the organic model to inorganic things is natural for this reason. Since Hegel has put a lot of effort into attacking Steffens' theory as a failure in the last two paragraphs, it is important to see that he now resumes the argument from paragraph 288 with the placid assumption that specific gravity is the *inner* of material substance; and further that lawlike connections can be established (e.g. laws of expansion and contraction). The attack on Steffens was not meant to challenge *that*, but only to show that the way Steffens was building on it was not calculated to produce a proper Concept.

We are ready now to proceed to the *comprehensive* inversion of our concept of the whole. The contrast between inorganic laws, and the complete absence of laws at the organic level, leads us to a new insight into the organic totality. The organism as an independent shape that maintains itself in the environment has the "principle of otherness" implicit in it. Death is just as natural for it, as its efforts to preserve itself. What is permanently alive, in the way that matter is permanently there in all its degrees, is the Genus which goes on through the generations. The freedom of the *Gattung*, against all the inessentials that die with each organism, is quite different from the freedom of specific gravity against the pattern of perceptible qualities that constitutes the *Gestalt* of the inorganic thing. The inorganic property is itself one aspect of the shape; but the *Gattung* is free in a much more radical, more dynamic sense. It releases the determinate shape of each generation that comes to its completion; the crucial moment of that completion is the giving of another shape to the *Gattung* (in the form of a new generation).

Hegel's point is a logical one, and it must be taken in its logical sense. The *genus* is the rational concept of Life. Life has to exist in single things that vary, just as specific gravity does. But the organic individual does not have the sort of nature that can be reduced to the fixity of a number. The body (which has the aspect of an indifferent being, and can be measured and numbered) cannot be taken as the essence of its living nature. The life of any living thing necessarily transcends the thing in a way that the defining essence of a type of inorganic matter does not. The return to the inorganic level was sparked by the attempt to conceive living shapes as numbers; comparison with the scale of specific gravities has shown us that this concept of rational life is inadequate. The inwardness of the *Gattung* is not like that of specific gravity, because it passes on from one generation to another. No numerical formulas or ratios can define it, because it is negative towards its outward aspect, which is not the essence of its vitality.

- 53./292. The inward essence of life does not develop its moments in the organism. The *Gattung* disappears from sight behind the *Art* (the living *species*). If it were present (as the continuum of life) and its members lived and died knowing they were *in* it, it would be consciousness. Instead it is physically determined, replaced by a representative which is [like] the number [in Steffens' metal series]. But the number indicates arbitrariness. There is a chain of being (higher and lower) but the individual organism adapts in its own way. The true universality of life is not revealed in the array of species. It is (negatively) the inward freedom of the single organism. But (positively) this

individual organism is not universal; it does not *contain* all of life's potential. The universal individual is not consciousness itself, but an external object.

No formula for its vitality can be reflectively abstracted through the observation of the organism. At every stage it is in process, dying and being reborn. Unlike the metals in Steffens' proposed series, it cannot be *placed* as a definite quantum on a continuum of other quanta. But also there is no singular organic *object* through which the whole range of life could be expressed. Taking just the vegetable range as our example, Goethe's *Urpflanze* could never be successfully *visualized*. In Kantian terminology it is an "Idea" of Reason, which cannot be intuited as an "Ideal."⁹⁵

No observable form of life is the natural Genus. The living shape is always the shape of some *species* of life. Some of the French biologists liked to set the problem of classification aside as *artificial* on the ground that there were no real species, but only living organisms.⁹⁶ Hegel accepts that starting position, because he agrees that life only exists in living *things*, and the one universal genus is "indifferent to the mills it drives." At the vegetable level, this generic energy is so untrammelled that by grafting we can enable one species to live with the life of another. But Hegel now makes the important point that since all singular living things are mortal, it is their *species* which are really substantial beings. Both the genus and the singular organism are everywhere but nowhere; the genus being everywhere permanently present but nowhere complete, and the individual everywhere self-completing, and in consequence nowhere present.

What is present and complete is the *species*, taken in the concrete sense of a self-perpetuating life-line. Because it is sexually divided, the species becomes a web of living connections or what we call a gene-pool. In the consciousness of the rational observer the whole process of the Genus is present. Indeed, as we have already seen in the discussion of self-conscious Life, the Genus "is there" for any self-consciousness that has reached maturity. "Maturity" involves the comprehension of mortality and family. To *know* the inevitability of the one, and hence the rationale of the other, is not necessarily to accept them in practice. But it is this *knowledge* that constitutes the transition to "consciousness" of which Hegel speaks here.

This transition is the comprehension, the second inversion, or the *result* of Organic Observation. When Observation tries to put the sides of the Concept together—the inner *feeling* of a creative impulse that overflows all boundaries, and the inexhaustible array of outward shapes—it is faced with an impossible task. We, who are watching, can now ask "How and why does the problem pose itself? How *are* the 'sides' together in the first place?" The answer is simple: the *consciousness* of the observers is the unity out of which the problem arises. It is an impossible problem because we are looking at it the wrong way round.

Consciousness is the medium in which the moments of the life-process exist as the abstract concepts of genus, species, and singular organism. The "resting simplicity of the Genus which has the differentiated parts implicit in it" is the mode of Consciousness called *Understanding*. Consciousness has transcended the sensible world, and is operating as a "simple negativity" which is "as such motion at the

same time, a motion that runs through parts that are in like manner simple and immediately universal in themselves." Faust, who fails completely as a living organism, is "singularity developed and actual in its moments as themselves *abstract* or *universal* in it." The Understanding is the *simplicity* or *immediacy* of Reason. Its moments are simple (or immediate) abstract universal concepts, resting in their motion like the Solar System.

The living species that makes the Faustian advance to Self-Consciousness is "the Genus" appearing as the perfect species of itself, in opposition to the differentiated species which are (by definition) *other* than the Genus. This self-specifying Genus is what *we* are observing in the Science of the Experience of Consciousness; but the rational consciousness that we are now observing can only observe the Genus in and through the range of its differentiated species. Actuality begins from the natural Genus—the universal vitality that is indifferent to the kinds of mills it drives; and what is observable in the actual world is not that *Gattung*, because comprehends itself only in pure thought. The Genus as such *is* thought; and the immediate moment of thought is the Understanding as the *productive imagination* of the observer. Instinctive Reason is just this productive imagination—awesomely creative and fertile at one extreme, and appallingly stupid and mechanical at the other.

The Genus in its organic shape is "represented by a number," says Hegel (deliberately borrowing the terminology of Steffens). In place of the *Concept* of life, which is the true self-moving activity of the *Gattung* of Reason, rational Observation has before it the abstract schema of biological classification in which every species is mathematically placed.⁹⁷ This representation points up the freedom of the universal moment from the singular moment (and vice versa). Life appears in every shape and size, and at every level of organic development. The observant understanding puts each in its place according to the measurements that have shown themselves to be relevant. But the result can no more give us insight into what the universal life *is*, than all of the metal series possible in conformity with Steffens' general hypothesis could tell us what *metal* is.

On this reading Hegel uses *Zahl* to stand for all possible modes of measuring specific differences, because he wants to make an analogy with Steffens' use of "specific gravity." He employs "specific gravity" as his *Gestalt* of the "first inversion," the simple negative of universal Life, the dead skeleton, so to speak, of the universal organism. The use of the term *Repräsentant* is the guide post for the proper interpretation of his meaning. The true universality of life is a purely inward essence. It does not come into observable measurable actuality, but makes itself known only in the inward spiritual development of consciousness. "Thou orderest all things in weight, number and measure," says one of the books of the Apocrypha (Wisdom 11:21). But Hegel's real Universal is the unfathomable power that created Blake's Tyger; it is as much a drive towards *disorder* as towards order, for it defies all the efforts of observing Reason to number and measure it. Even supposing that we were to get the numbers and measures right—including some measure for the "wandering cause" that prevents the classifications from ever becoming hard and fast—we should still know nothing of the free essence that

drives all the mills. The real lesson of the spectacle is only learned when we turn away from it toward the inwardness of our own observing consciousness. Here Hegel agrees with Bonaventura.⁹⁸

The *species* that is stably maintained by the absolute fluidity of the genus moving within every organism, is a "formal universality." Life remains essentially indifferent to its shape, and this radical freedom is real in every individual. I have expressed Hegel's view by saying that what is real is the breeding community; and that is what he *would* say if he were applying his logic to our biological science. But the immediate inward identity of *Gattung* and organism (implied by the remark that "that true universality comes on stage (*tritt auf*) on the side of singularity) means that organic life is plastic in principle. Because of his agreement with the view that the *species* is a formal construct, Hegel's theory can accommodate Lamarck's conception of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, or Darwin's natural selection of accidental variations, or the modern genetics of "mutation" equally easily. What it has in common with all of these evolutionary theories is the view that the observable species is the *result* of the lives and fortunes of individual organisms.

Hegel's own theory is not an evolutionary one at all—except in a very marginal sense. It is a "logical" conception deriving from a reading of the *Timaeus* in the context of Aristotle's view that the world-order is *eternal* (i.e. perpetually stable). Hegel objects to the view that life could have originated at some definite moment in an order that was previously devoid of the very possibility of life. This is a dualistic conception in which "spirit" and "matter" are different substances. *That* interpretation of Plato (and of the relation of logic and fact, or of eternity and time) Hegel absolutely rejects. Aristotle's "eternal world" represents for him the proper mediation of the Christian-Platonic dualism. "Creation" is a mythical representation of the embodiment of eternity in time. At Berlin he declared in his lectures that "The account of the creation given in Genesis is still the best, in so far as it says quite simply that the plants, the animals and man were brought forth on separate days. Man has not formed himself out of the animal, nor the animal out of the plant, for each is instantly the whole of what it is."⁹⁹ From the point of view of religious orthodoxy, this is certainly an ironic position in that two things which it does *not* imply (but is meant to avoid) are the belief in a *beginning of time* and the belief in a *disembodied creative spirit*.

Hegel admits that the Earth has a "history" of some sort, and that life *may* have emerged at some stage in that "history." But what matters to him is that the logical status of vegetable organism, animal organism, and consciousness is different. The myth of the "six days' work" serves to express that fact. Within the animal creation, there would be room in Hegel's view for several distinct generic levels; but some of the specific variety must have developed spontaneously (or have been spontaneously generated). He can hardly avoid assuming, for instance, that life forms adapted to all three elements have *always* existed; but the way that each range overflows its element (flightless birds and flying mammals, whales and amphibia etc.) shows us that this is not logically significant. How much of the variety of life has originated through the self-positing of the free essence over long periods of time is

not logically determinable, and hence not philosophically interesting. The Earth has always been *essentially* alive; and “the origin of the species” is not a *philosophical* problem. Life is primordially the “free genus” positing itself in singular organisms.

In order for life to be the free genus which affirms itself in singular shapes that are transient, there must also be (apart from the multitude of living forms) the one organic process that does not live and die, but is a permanent *individual* (rather than a transiently *singular* organism). In order for the whole movement of universal, singular, and particular (or species), to be eventually brought together in the higher comprehension of consciousness, it must be *physically* (or externally) comprehended within the perpetually perceptible individuality of the Earth-process. The unity of life in its many forms presupposes the unity of its environment. This repossession of the “first position” of Observation (the Mineralogical Organism) is the topic of the next paragraph.

- 54./293. So finally we have a syllogism in which the genus of life as universal is linked with itself as individual; and the middle term is the genus as the combination of species and authentic singularity. As the syllogism of *Gestaltung* it embraces the inorganic.

Since the Earth as a “universal individual” is essential to life, the full explication of Organic Shape is a “syllogism” in which the inward universal of life is linked with the outwardly comprehensive individuality of the Earth through the particularity of the singular living organism. On one side the organism is the *specific* shape of life as the universal fluidity, and on the other it is an observable *body* which grows upon and decays back to the Earth (including land, sea and atmosphere as Earth’s moments). The Earth-process which sustains life, has to be conceived as the permanent potential of life.

This is what Hegel means by the claim that the Earth is “the same [universal life] as *singular*, or as universal individual.” The Earth is explicitly identified as the “universal individual” in paragraph 294; and the sense in which it is *universal* is plain. It physically comprehends the whole range of the life-process now; and its history must be conceptualized so as to involve this necessarily.¹⁰⁰

I have expressed this logical commitment in the Aristotelian form in which I believe Hegel held it. The potential for life is *permanent*. Hegel did regard the sea as the element from which animal life had come, but he believed that the land generates primitive forms of life also (especially vegetation). He accounted for all the signs of geological and biological change on the Earth, by accepting the *catastrophist* theories of observers like Buffon, Cuvier, and Werner. This, too, was an *empirical* belief; Hegel’s logical theory does not decide between different hypotheses that observers may arrive at. His view that the “determinateness of the species” is “a formal universality” seems to have been adopted precisely because the formation of empirical hypotheses is, and must be, logically untrammelled.

The consequences of accepting a radically evolutionary conception of nature (like the one that most scientific observers accept at present) are two: on the one hand, we have to admit (in a Kantian critical sense at least) that there was a *beginning of time*, a first moment beyond which we cannot think; and on the other hand

we have to admit that life may not in fact be a *permanent* potentiality of the world-process (the vanishing of that potential being the real *end of time*). From the point of view of theoretical comprehension these admissions are uncomfortable; but I do not see how they can be logically outlawed. Even within his Aristotelian perspective (which makes the “beginning of time” illegitimate) I do not see how Hegel can be logically certain that life cannot destroy itself. In a natural order in which it is the *only* unstable element it cannot, of course, become impossible in any other way. But if consciousness is the real inwardness of nature itself, then I do not see how the extension of Baconian power (technological control) over the ultimate dynamic energies of the world can be ruled out. The fact that this seems to be *necessarily* possible upon Hegel’s view (together with the fact that the possibility appears to have become *real*) is a weighty reason for believing that Hegel’s view of things is the right one.

Baconian “lordship over Nature” is only what Plato called “doing what we wish without getting what we want.” But Hegel’s theory of action, and of the “cunning of Reason,” shows us why we must logically expect that too. There are some aspects of Hegel’s return to Aristotle in his philosophy of nature that are faith and not knowledge. I think he was more clearly aware of this himself than we usually suppose; and his doctrine of the “Syllogism” of observational biology is one of the principal grounds for saying this.

Not everyone will agree, of course, that the historic Hegel would have allowed his logical intuitions to be controlled and interpreted by the consensus of empirical observers.¹⁰¹ But the evidence clearly shows that the historic Hegel distrusted intellectual intuition from the beginning. In any case, the decisive canon for the interpretation of Hegel’s theory in *our* time is the claim for absolute knowledge. We can only discover what “absolute knowledge” is (or might be) by interpreting Hegel’s theory in such a way that it *does* comprehend our time as well as his own. That is what I am trying to do; and Hegel’s indubitable reverence for the *Weltgeist* combined with his insistence that “the share that falls to the activity of the individual in the total work of the Spirit can only be a very small one” (par. 72) convinces me that this is not only what his logic dictates, but what he himself would have wished.

55./294. As *simple* essence, life must display itself as an array of species (at different levels which form a numerical series). But over against it, stands the Earth, controlling its outflow of forms, doing violence to any potential continuity or logical perfection.

This is the fundamental paragraph for the justification of my interpretation of what *Zahl* means as the middle term in the syllogism of organic shape. Hegel evidently believes that the only order that scientific observation can discover in the specification of life is a quasi-mathematical one. Just as the colors can be arrayed on a geometric schema, so can the species. If we could classify every living thing in a perfect array, we should have a *Vorstellung*, a *portrayal* of life in which every degree of vitality was separately instantiated. The influence of the “great chain of Being” model (and especially of Leibniz’ *Monadology*) is quite patent.¹⁰² Every element in the picture would be equally necessary to the whole, just as every number is equally

necessary to a number-series. But in fact, experience presents us with an actual *Vorstellung* of Life that is far from perfect, because the brute contingency of the Earth's surface spoils the balance and symmetry everywhere. So the influence of *Candide* stands as a counterbalance to Leibniz in Hegel's theory.

For us, of course, even Hegel's own view is too abstractly Leibnizian; or in other words it is teleological in the wrong way. Speciation results, as we see it, from the competition within and between breeding groups to survive in the environment. Hegel recognized the struggle for existence, but only in its most abstract form (the opposition between the Pure Universal and the Universal Individual). This enables him to grasp the abstract formal character of the existing systems of classification; but in spite of his own emphasis on struggle as the principle of differentiation (par. 246) he did not recognize the existence of the *concrete* process of specification (which his theory is so well prepared to accommodate).

- 56./295. So we can only observe Reason as *life generally* in this spectacle, without any rational articulation. Only in the organism as the self-conscious middle term of the syllogism (par. 293) can the movement and purpose of life be present as a rational whole. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* displays the chain of forms of consciousness as the continuum of spiritual life. It offers us history as a system. Organic nature has no history, and no single organism is aware of the ecological balance that its self-maintenance contributes to.

By contrasting the shattered condition of natural observation with the continuous logical order of our own speculative observation of the Spirit, Hegel not only shows us how to make the transition to the next position of "Observation," but shows us how different the *immediate* situation of Observation is from our own situation as speculative observers. The record of human history is as disorderly and outwardly confusing as the animal and vegetable kingdoms on the Earth's surface; but once we have the right logical method the thread untangles and winds up for us without a break. When they turn from the fragmentary and shattered order of Nature to the observation of their own consciousness, however, the observers whom we are observing will *still* not have "the extremes of inner universality and of universal individuality" properly united in their conception.

Having only a "formal unity" of the opposite moments of "inner and outer" they will find only the empty laws of thought at the extreme of "inner universality," and only mechanical and unconvincing "associations of ideas" at the extreme of "universal individuality." The *method* of Observation has only these abstract extremes (supplied by the imagination) at every stage. Observation must remain *instinctive* and cannot make any inward developmental progress until it has plodded logically from object to object right up to the final absurdity of trying to find the inward, creative freedom of its own imagination "mathematically schematized" in an outward physical shape. At that point Reason will be as far from us as it ever gets; and it can then take a new view of itself.

Turning from this prophetic aside back to the "observation of Nature" proper, the lack of a concrete conception of the origin of species is clearly shown by Hegel's

denial that organic nature is a “self-grounded system.” The argument of this paragraph demonstrates that a reading of the *Origin of Species* would not have affected his general attitude towards the observational sciences in any important way. No matter how long the evolutionary process may take, the “fall” from the universality of “pure life” into the singularity of *this* organism struggling to preserve itself is *immediate*, because “organic nature has no history” in the proper sense of the term. No organism, except the self-conscious one, has any capacity to comprehend the long process that has produced it, and to which its struggle contributes.¹⁰³

We can comprehend this process; and in part this is because the Universal Individual does preserve a record of it. The record is even more “interrupted and full of holes and troubles,” than the order which the unconscious “principle of plenitude” has presently produced for our rational observation. But the reason why the comprehension of it is more important to us than Hegel realized (the reason why it is properly part of that “experience of consciousness” with which he is concerned) is a practical rather than a theoretical one. Far from being eternally stable, the balance of the struggle between the Genus and the Universal Individual is fragile and desperately unequal. Even without considering the potential implications of the release of atomic energy, the risk of the Earth becoming a poisoned desert is quite obvious. There is more truth in “catastrophism” than the followers of Hutton (including Darwin himself) believed; and there is no certainty that the “experience of consciousness” may not prove to be the *fatal* catastrophe. Hegel’s logical distinction between nature and spirit, and his Kantian tendency to view them as *fixed* opposites, was the embodiment of an enlightened optimism (or a Hellenic-romantic trust in Mother Earth) which the Industrial Revolution had already exposed as naïve to the point of folly. William Blake was wiser in his generation than any of the philosophers.

Hegel’s logical point is sound, however. In the science of zoology we can observe only the outward display of life as the natural *genus*. The inward character of what is displayed, we shall discover only by observing the movement of the Genus in ourselves—i.e. by observing ourselves as the rational consciousness that recognizes itself as the Genus, and hence as the perfected species, the climactic achievement of a freedom that has become self-conscious. It is because this “perfection” is so purely *theoretical* that we need to appreciate the *practical* significance of zoology.

- 57./296. Thus when Reason observes the order of organic life it sees only general systems arising from the adaptation of the Genus to the Earth.

Hegel is fully conscious that the outward shapes of life result from adaptation to the environment. Everything essential in the outward shape of the organism is to be explicated in terms of the self-preservation of the living body in its natural habitat.¹⁰⁴

The *systems* here are the logical stages of life’s “development and realization.” It is these stages of development (especially the forms which are “generic” in the sense of being undeveloped) that are specified by the requirement of the habitat.

What Hegel is saying is that both the way *and* the degree or extent to which a particular organism can express the developed essence of organism (the maintenance of the *knowing* process) is determined by its relation to the Earth. Plants are only self-reproductive cycles; and the classes of animal life fall into series in which the Genus blindly seeks to express its freedom in the different elements. I say confidently that the Genus is *blind* because Hegel says both that it is primitively indifferent, and that organic life is not yet “consciousness.” But, of course, his theory would allow for a Lamarckian interpretation in which the striving of the singular organism makes a difference to the species process, as well as for the more completely blind recombination of genes in an instinctive process of copulation. Hegel himself conceives the blind rationality of the Genus as the trying of all possibilities (as in the continuum of specific gravities). So in its disturbance of this plenum, the Earth does operate as an agency of “natural selection” in his theory. Hence we can fairly describe Hegel’s view as “proto-Darwinian”—or better still as “proto-Mendelian” because of his insistence that the resultant species are “numbers.”

- 58./297. There is no genuinely independent mediation in this struggle. What it produces is a *Meinung*—a symbolic *pointing*. To try to discover what it points towards is an idle pastime because all kinds of patterns are hinted at. The only necessity discernible is the loose one of environmental “influence.” The pure Genus aims only to multiply into more and more forms. What we may find interesting in this multiplicity is arbitrary. To think that we can divine the conceptual pattern intended because we are “friends of the Concept” is childish.

The Shape of the Earth as the “Universal Individual” is a mass of contingent “sense-certainties.” The facts of existence are as brutally and radically absurd as Hume says they are. Hence the images of rational order that the forms of organic life present cannot be more than a *Meinung*. The order of organic nature is not like that of a human book in which the words have been chosen and ordered by a mediating consciousness. The Author of Nature (with his “book”) or the Divine Architect (with his cosmic “design”) are myths. To seek to array the data of scientific zoology into an Argument from Design is a waste of time. As compared with the labour of the Concept (or the “stations of the Cross” which mark the real advances in the appearance of the Spirit) this sort of work is an “idle interest”—a mere hobby or pastime.

Hegel did not know Paley’s *Natural Theology* (1802); and as far as I can tell he did not read Hume’s *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1778) which undermined Paley’s position about a quarter of a century before it was formulated. But there cannot be any doubt which side of the debate he was on. His summary of what the “spiritless” freedom of this *Meinen* offers us—“beginnings of laws, traces of necessity, allusions to order and series”—is very like what Hume’s Philo wants Cleanthes to agree to. But Hegel has the scientific apostles of natural necessity in mind, as well as the natural theologians. The picture that zoology and ecology present for our observation was no more satisfactory to Laplace and LaMettrie than it was to Paley. Hegel’s statement of the position comes from the German

biologist G.R. Treviranus: in respect of the connection between the organism and its environment, “observation does not reach beyond *great influence*.”¹⁰⁵

As far as the Genus is concerned, each species is only a number on the scale of its realization (with the fully developed human species as *number one*—the Genus itself—on a descending scale, or the highest number on any ascending one). But it seems clear at this stage that life expresses itself in many *different* “series,” and that Hegel does not believe that organic forms can be arranged in one great “chain of being.”¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, because of the gaps, interruptions, and imperfections, caused by the disorderly variety of terrestrial habitats, the rational observer can never securely discover the order that nature merely points at. Hegel is certainly poking fun at some definite author (or group) who used the italicized phrases (“*clever remarks*,” “*interesting connection*,” “*friendly encounter with the Concept*”). It is not clear who the target of his irony is; but it is plausible (and tempting) to assume that he has some one or more of the *formalist* philosophers of nature in mind. The childish “friends of the Concept” are Platonizing “friends of the Idea” in the form in which Schelling has revived it. “Formal logic,” to which we are about to pass, is an even more childish kind of “friendship for the Concept.” And because it is “the Concept” (not the “Idea”) which is the topic of *logic*, Hegel is obliged to substitute his own terminology for that of the Identity Philosophy.¹⁰⁷

Notes

1. P.-J. Labarrière (1968, 98) points out correctly that “Observing Reason” is where the “infinite riches” of Sense-Certainty are actually enjoyed.

2. Hegel gives a clear analysis of the bad logic involved in asserting that “all crows are black” because “all observed crows have been black” in his own *Logic*; and he there says that it is the “instinct of Reason” to leap over the ditch intuitively. (See *Encyclopedia*, sec. 190, Add.) What is only a “fact” for Consciousness becomes a “necessity” in the *Begriff* that is Reason’s object. Kant’s theory of the Categories provided Reason with its first sound *logic*. Thus “instinctive Reason” is essentially scientific Reason as it was before the advent of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. See further, W. A. Suchting (1990); Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Lasson II, 238 (Miller 690) and *History of Philosophy*, *T.W.-A.* 20, 84 (Haldane and Simson, III, 180–181).

3. But Findlay is right in finding the “certainty of Reason” in Berkeley. Berkeley is as good a theological idealist as Malebranche, not the “empty” Lockean idealist that Findlay takes him for (1958, 103–104).

4. See the article “Encyclopédie” in the *Grande Encyclopédie*.

5. What I have asserted about Newton and “occult causes” here is largely a myth. Hegel’s actual views were very complex. But it is a *convenient* myth. For if I am not mistaken *mathematical* rationalism is the “inner” side of Instinctive Reason, while mechanistic empiricism is its “outer” side. Reason ceases to be theoretically instinctive when it realizes that the law of *expression* must be interpreted starting from inside. But Active Reason is operating “instinctively” once more, when it identifies itself as “feeling” (*actuality* is first rationally achieved in the “outer,” i.e., the “expression”). What needs to be underlined is the sense in which these “instinctive” contradictions of rationality are *rational*. Royce got *this* right long ago: “each *Gestalt* seeks what it views as that which all the world is seeking” (1919, 159).

6. Like most of his enlightened contemporaries, Hegel probably thought that there was no significant scientific inquiry in the era of the Unhappy Consciousness. But, of course, this view is mistaken. What is true is that the scientific work that was done was not conducted by “observational Reason.” Men like Grosseteste typified the “reconciled” or “saved” moment of the Unhappy Consciousness. They knew they were living within the divine life, and discovering it by the aid of the divine light. The *matter* of Newton and Laplace was almost an impossible hypothesis for them (and the metaphysics of either of those thinkers was impossible likewise). Hegel would not have been surprised to discover the existence of these speculative theologians, since his own philosophy of nature has one of its roots in the mysticism of their German followers. (Of course, we must not suppose that the materialist hypothesis was impossible for the Unhappy Consciousness, since it is logically the last extreme of alienation, and an atheistic materialism would be one natural “shape” for the “first relationship.” After all, the poem of Lucretius was *somehow* preserved right through the era of the “second relationship.” The rediscovery of Lucretius by scientific consciousness coincided with the advent of “Reason as Observation.”)

7. Thus, without the *Phenomenology*, the *Encyclopedia* is subject to interpretation in a way that is biased towards logical and psychological immediacy. We assume *instinctively* that “pure thought” means the mathematical thought of Plato or the self-critical thought of Kant. The talk of “identity” seems to be no more than Schelling’s fantasy of a neo-Platonic pure insight which the *experimental* use of reason has taught us that we do not have (or more plainly—since no one can say what intuitions others have—that it is irrational to lay claim to it). The systematic function of the *Phenomenology* is to show us “what Reason *is*” (and as a corollary of that, what it means for thought to be “pure”). Only the philosophical observer who has successfully made the journey beyond chapter V of the *Phenomenology* can possibly grasp the meaning of the basic terminology of the *Logic*. (It is still a problem to say what the *Logic* means even then—or what its relation to the “real philosophy” is. But any valid answer to those questions must begin from the successful completion of the “descent into the depth.”)

8. Kainz is one of several commentators who take the easy way of describing chapter V A(a) as a “phenomenological overview” of Hegel’s Philosophy of Nature” (1976, 152, n. 10). This is only an excuse for not studying the text seriously. No one explains how this “phenomenological” approach differs from the “systematic” treatment of natural philosophy, or why it leaves so much of the Philosophy of Nature out. All that is valid in this position is the recognition that we are observing natural science as interpreted by the *Naturphilosophen*. Hegel wants to exhibit the logical stages involved in the development of the philosophical concept of the knowledge of nature. Only he (and perhaps Schelling) has this concept in the comprehensive mode in which we acquire it. But all effective scientific observers must have the concept in the half-conscious fashion of “instinctive Reason”; if this were not true then we could not ourselves be the scientific *observers* that we are supposed to be. Thus, the implicit context of Hegel’s discussion of this first section is his own view of the Earth as a “mineralogical organism.” But we do not need to know that, and nothing depends upon it (except that it is a useful illustration of what Hegel says). The section can be well understood and explicated by someone who ignores Hegel’s geology (e.g. by David Lamb, 1980, 98ff.). Hegel uses his Philosophy of Nature because it is the best science he has. But the resulting overview of some of it is an accident.

9. L. W. Hinchman (1984, 55) recognizes that “Observing Reason” is a shape of “empiricism.” He says cheerfully (76) that “Hegel . . . ascribes virtues to the empiricists that they almost certainly did not possess.” He should have said rather that they are not clearly con-

scious that they are asserting “Reason’s certainty that it is all reality.” The structure of “estrangement” concentrates their attention upon the absolute *difference* between thought and being. But it is the *identity* that emerges as “universal Utility.” The “rational certainty” of empirical philosophers is “instinctive” because their science is at the level of Understanding. They *see* the rationality of an object which is absolutely *other* than their thought. Only in the triumph of “universal Utility” does it become evident that their consciousness is not simply “Understanding,” but “Reason operating as Understanding.”

10. The historical character of the *Phenomenology* has caused much difficulty here. Reason has to have the culture of the Hellenistic Empire, and that of the Universal Church, already behind it. But it does not yet have the scientific concept of “Understanding” (which it is itself *creating*). The key names for that are Galileo, Newton, Leibniz and Kant. Thus we are now observing an activity of Reason which is *distinct* from the general concern of Understanding even though it is carried on in the same sphere of natural “appearance.” Understanding seeks the *unity of the whole*. Reason has to have a concept of the whole (that is why the Scientific Revolution is justly called “Copernican”). But Reason’s Concept is Reason itself—even though the singular observer thinks of herself as “having” it—and Reason’s concern is properly with the finding of *itself* (as a self-conscious “infinity” that is *beyond the Understanding*). It finds itself in the articulation of the parts as finite whole—“thinghood” is the rational concept of “finite wholeness.” In terms of the logic of Consciousness this activity of Reason directly presupposes “Perception,” but it needs only *some* shape (not necessarily the final shape) of Understanding.

The overlap of the territory in which the two concepts are both developing offers some excuse for the confusion of M. Westphal (1979, 101). But about W. Seeberger’s (1961, 294) suggestion that “Hegel, at the time he wrote the *Phenomenology*, had not yet achieved the clarity of logical distinction between understanding and reason which characterizes his later works” (translated by Lauer, 1976, 132n.) I will only say that the author of the *Phenomenology* had achieved a “clarity of logical distinction” that Seeberger (and many others) cannot even *imagine*.

11. A. Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (New York, Knopf, 1961, 123): “Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world.”

12. When he mentions the discovery of a *planet*, Hegel may be thinking of the asteroid Ceres which was actually discovered by the Sicilian astronomer Piazzi at the very time when Hegel was aspiring to expound the rationality of the Solar System without it. (See B. Beaumont, 1954.)

13. Between the Understanding and Reason comes Life. All rational observation is *teleological* (not mechanical or “chemical”). (For Hegel’s geology, see T. H. Levere [1986] “Hegel and the Earth Sciences,” in R.-P. Horstmann and M. J. Petry, 1986, 103–120.)

14. “Instinctive Reason” takes several shapes. Beginning from Reason’s self-recognition as an “object” in the living organism, we can say that it is “purposive activity that achieves its goal without self-consciousness.” So in its immediate shape it is the empirical induction that falls into the power of Hume’s scepticism because it does not recognize that the rationality of its world is a *real* Concept. Then in its phase of antithesis, it is the mathematical Reason that recognizes itself in the realized Concept of Quantity. Here we have the postulate of the Infinite Architect and Designer etc. But Critical Reason reduces that postulate to the indifferent “vital force” of Life. Critical Reason is what we shall observe in motion as the “Truth of Enlightenment.” (Compare Hegel’s Preface to the 1831 *Science of Logic* [G.W. XXI, 12, line 29–16, line 6; Miller, 34–37].)

Because Observation is inductive, the logic involved is all analogical. Thus, as D. E. Shannon maintains (1988) Hegel's discussion in this section is a sustained critique of analogy. I must agree with J. L. Navickas (1976, 148) however, that "Nowhere does Hegel contend for a negative view of the positive sciences." No empirical scientist would dissent from the view that scientific observation logically *cannot* produce "absolute knowledge." The properly negative upshot of Hegel's criticism is that we cannot know God by analogy. The discussion shows that the "analogy" between the living thing and the divine life in all things—of which Fink (1977, 250) speaks—is cognitively valueless. (But M. Westphal [1989, 193] has pointed out that Hegel treats Hinduism as the absolute expression of "the instinct of the *Begriff*.")

15. The view that Nature exhibits its own true joints in the competitive behaviour of animal species comes from Aristotle (and was accepted by Linnaeus). As the critical editors tell us, Hegel was probably relying on the *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte* of J. F. Blumenbach—which he owned, and which is cited in the "Real Philosophy" of 1805/1806. (But in the case of Linnaeus we should remember that Hegel had studied at least the botanical theory for himself at Tübingen.)

16. Hegel does not regard the modern scientific method as a "logical method" in the proper sense, but as a set of *habits*. This is what he calls the "natural logic" that has liberated itself from the traditional method (of Wolff's dogmatic Rationalism—see especially the *Science of Logic*, *G.W.* XI, 28, lines 19–26; Miller, 58.) On Hegel's theory of "habit" see further J. McCumber (1979, 1990, and 1994) and W. de Vries (1988, 84–86). The "instinct of Reason" produces *intuitions* that may be either fruitful or misleading. Schelling relied on it too far. Hegel's attitude is more Kantian (cf. D. E. Shannon, 1988, 173–180).

17. Flay (1984, 111) remarks insightfully that "surrender to God or to God's Will" involves "a conscious resolve to act on the *instinct* that an ultimate *reason* grounds the possibility of the unity of the changeable and the unchangeable." But this transition is not the one that Hegel is now making. If we add the words "here" or "in this life," Flay is describing the transition to what Hegel calls "Faith"; but he requires us to make our transition to Reason on its "theoretical" side. (Flay did not ask himself—and as far as I know, no Hegel interpreter has asked—what it means *objectively*, to be "rational" rather than "understandable." But his suggested transition is enlightening in one way: it helps to make us see why Reason assumes "instinctively" that the reason for things must lie in "*another* intelligence.")

18. Compare *Encyclopedia* (1831), section 370. As Petry's edition shows typographically, the crucial passage (III, 178, 32–37) was inserted in 1827 or 1830 (cf. III, 191, 35–39 in the *Zusätze*). But compare the first Berlin lecture-course of 1819/1820 (ed. M. Gies, Naples, Bibliopolis, 1982, 142–143). This shows that Hegel began to study Cuvier's *Le Règne Animal* (Paris, 1817) as soon as it appeared, and that he interpreted it in the tradition of Aristotle and Linnaeus.

19. Compare the remark about animal cries in the *Difference* essay (*G.W.* IV, 73; Harris and Cerf, 168). Mating calls, sexual challenges and death cries were certainly in Hegel's mind, when he wrote that passage. How well he understood "territorial defence" warnings I do not know. But the dogs called "good housedogs" exhibit it, and Plato called it "philosophical" because it can be readily conditioned. In the present passage hunting and escape behaviour is also treated as self-assertion. But only a rational instinct can cause us to fasten upon it in external reflection. It is logically quite distinct from sexual rivalry because it only separates the species from the universal. Sexual rivalry determines the reproductive success of individuals within the species.

20. *G.W.* IX, 141, lines 1–4. It seems best to take *desswegen* to mean “on account of the *split*” here, and assume that Hegel emphasized *Entzweiung* to direct us to it as the referent. For one does not need to be a practising botanist to know that Hegel (who *was* a practising botanist) would never utter the nonsense that Baillie and Miller have ascribed to him here. De Negri’s interpretation—according to which “an dieser Gränze” means “within this limit” (i.e. “only *up to* this point”)—makes fair sense; but it does not account for the emphasis on *Entzweiung*.

21. On the “chemical object” here, see J. W. Burbidge (forthcoming, chap. 2, n. 24).

22. In his Berlin lectures, Hegel called the monkey “a satire on man.” But he had remarked shortly before this on the anticipation of family-feeling in the monkey (*T.W.-A.* IX, 514–515; Petry, III, 191, lines 21–25; III, 192, line 6).

23. The story of the plucked chicken is in Diogenes Laertius VI, 40. According to that tradition, the target of Diogenes’ sarcasm was Plato himself. But the *Politicus* shows that it was actually Plato who insisted on “division at the joints”; and it is unlikely that he learned that lesson from Diogenes. It is quite certain, in any case, that Plato would not have responded as the story has it: “in consequence ‘having broad nails’ was added to the definition.”

24. For a more copious discussion and illustration of the general Hegelian view see F. L. Will (1988 and 1993). Nicholas Lobkowitz complains that “instead of either *predicting* that the world will become perfect through and through or trying to *transform* the world in order to make it perfect, Hegel simply *describes* it as perfect” (1967, 325; compare Flay, 1984, 321, n. 9). We have now reached the point where we can see what Hegel is taking to be “perfect” in the world, and is therefore “describing” as such. Lobkowitz should ask himself whether it is in any sense “desirable” that the possibility of having realizable but unrealized “desires” should be done away with. If he starts from there, he will perhaps eventually discover that Hegel’s system *does* make a prediction: it predicts that the world will *never* be “perfect through and through.” Then, if he looks at the actual world *we* live in, he will see that this prediction is not at all secure. Quite probably it is false, because Hegel overlooked the logical possibility that the world of desiring could bring itself to final destruction. This was not a very real possibility in Hegel’s world; and he did not distinguish between “conceptual contradiction” and “real disappearance.” In logical terms, he ignored the peculiarity of the “null case.” Thus the human world could in fact be “perfect” in the sense of being “finished.” Lobkowitz is welcome to *that* logical victory over Hegel as long as the emptiness of it teaches him to study the *logical function* of the concept of “perfection” in human experience (which is what Hegel wanted, when he taught that the world is now as “rational” as it will ever be).

25. Our logic must still use the ordinary logic if it is to count as philosophical logic at all. What we are being asked to do is to reconsider the purpose of the logical study of our concepts in the light of the *necessary* contradictions that that study itself reveals. The existence of a contradiction in the attempt to derive “ought” from “is,” no longer has the same impact upon us, when we see it in the context of a lot of other logical paradoxes about our life and language.

26. Hegel’s knowledge of this discovery came from the German translation of Benjamin Franklin’s *Letters on Electricity* (London, 1751; Leipzig, 1758). The older, more primitive, view that he mentions is that of C. F. Dufay (in *Mémoires de l’Académie Royale des Sciences*, 1733, 1734, 1737).

27. J. J. Winterl (1732–1809) produced several exciting theories based upon bad experimental work. He postulated that “acidity” and “basicness” were two “spiritual principles”

that could inform the material substrate indifferently. “Synsomaties” were physical substrates that could be either acid or basic without being neutral. What attracted Hegel’s attention was the *separation* of the conceptual “force” and the supposition of some kind of energetic continuum. Partington ignores the “synsomaties” altogether. See his *History of Chemistry* III, 599–600. (I do not understand exactly what the synsomaties were supposed to be; and it seems likely that Hegel misunderstood them—cf. Petry, *Nature* II, 401–402.)

28. See *Night Thoughts*, 257–258, 262–265.

29. I cannot tell how Hegel envisaged the relation between the “matters” of sensation, and such theoretical entities as “heat-matter” and “electricity.” The only clear connection is that all “matters” are “observables.” (“Matter” itself—the Aristotelian “prime matter”—is not observable.)

30. When we come to the “Observation of Self-Consciousness” Reason will be observing itself directly as an *activity*. We shall see then that the immediate self-knowledge of the thinking being is a vanishing (or self-sublating) experience. Observation (and *external* reflection) is fundamental to *all* knowing, because there is no *immediate* self-knowledge.

31. Hegel himself brings the full scope of the concept to our notice in paragraph 255. He needs to do that, both in order to underline the different situation of the consciousness we are observing from our own, and to set up the problem of the final phase of Observing Reason [in V A(c)].

32. Bonsiepen and Heede have supplied some specimens of the passages (from Treviranus’ *Biologie*, 1803) that are most directly alluded to here in their note (*G.W.* IX, 500). (On Treviranus see the thesis of T. de Jager (thesis, 1991).

33. We should remember that *this* present critique is only preliminary. Hegel’s critique of general biological theory (when we reach the standpoint from which it can be given) is reconstructive (and not simply dismissive). For discussion of Hegel’s view about the empirical sciences see M. J. Petry (ed., 1987) and E. E. Harris (1955, 1993).

34. Kant called it a *Naturzweck*. This term is shadowed by the ambivalence that belongs to the intermediate standpoint of critical Reason. For we can take Nature to be a sort of controlling “world-soul” which has appointed the end of each type of life; and in that case the standpoint of external teleology triumphs in the whole. Everything is supposed to subserve the supreme end of Reason (conceived as an external understanding). Kant criticized this Wolffian dogmatism severely. But the problematic character of an “end” that we realize “by instinct” (and without any capacity to duplicate it deliberately) troubles him. A self-maintaining process that does not design itself was an inadequate or incomplete concept in his view. It poses questions that *must* be asked, even though they *cannot* be answered.

35. We have only just arrived at the proper beginning of Hegel’s discussion of the observation of the Organism. But already we can see that D. Lamb’s claim about it is rather hyperbolic: “The discussion of Organic Nature in the *Phenomenology* brings us to the heart of Hegel’s conception of human knowledge and truth” (1980, 111). This is valid only if we agree that the human goal is to understand man’s place in Nature. That was the view of the Enlightenment (including Marx) not of Hegel. Lamb supports his contention by appealing to those “spiritual” passages in the early writings which Marcuse relied upon when he sought to distort Hegel’s biological concept of Life in a different direction. When Lamb wants to argue for the more modest (and justifiable) claim that “the biological sciences provide a paradigm for the entire Hegelian venture,” he relies mainly upon texts from the “System” (*Encyclopedia Logic* and *Philosophy of Nature*).

Lamb’s discussion does support my general thesis that there is a *constructive* purpose

behind Hegel's critique of the *observational* identification of external structure with internal function. We are in full agreement about how the Philosophy of Nature is to be reconciled with the *Phenomenology*. Lamb's work is certainly the best study of this part of the text that we have. In large part he is offering a Hegelian philosophy of science appropriate for an evolutionary biology founded on "internal reflection." Hegel did not produce this because he did not find the evidence for biological evolution empirically convincing. (The only proper *commentary* available in English is that of Hyppolite [1974, 236–258], which can be recommended.)

36. See *G.W.* VI, 303, lines 12–13; Harris and Knox, 233. In the "Real Philosophy" of 1805/1806—to which the *Phenomenology* leads—this coincidence can no longer be exhibited, because the *Zweck* of the family as a spiritual community is the *wholeness* of spiritual existence (*G.W.* VIII, 213, lines 4–8; Rauch, 109–110). The family is now comprehended as a *collected* intuition of the whole that we are spreading out as we *recollect* it. It corresponds to what is called the "feeling of self" here. (The difference between the "Real Philosophy" of 1803/1804 and that of 1805/1806 shows us one reason, at least, why the writing of the *Phenomenology* became necessary. See further *Night Thoughts*, chapters VI and XI.)

37. See K. Lorenz, *King Solomon's Ring* (New York, Crowell, 1952, 37–38).

38. Hegel develops this dialectical concept of animal awareness in the "real philosophy" of 1803/1804—see *G.W.* VI, 243, lines 10–17, and 261, lines 10–14 (compare *Night Thoughts*, 294, 296–297).

39. Compare the theory of "feeling" in the first *Potenz* of the *System of Ethical Life*. The *Aufhebung* of the life-process in this kind of "feeling" is a *drowning* analogous to the forgetting of the "law" in "love" as Hölderlin (and Hegel) conceived it initially at Frankfurt. The capacity to recover what is forgotten (revealed in the behaviour of Tinbergen's fish for example) is what distinguishes the dialectical *Aufhebung* that soon supplanted it. The organized recollection of the "science of experience" is only possible, of course, because consciousness itself is this type of *Aufhebung* of the past. But the difference between mechanical memory and the "lingering recollection" that is involved in the science, arises from the human capacity to develop "self-feeling" into *Erinnerung* (the living memory of the process of which it is the "result"). The process involved in the "Science of experience" embraces the remembered past of the whole human community.

40. J. C. Flay (1984, 113) is right in seeing "purpose" as the continuing theme of chapter V. Hegel is not setting out to provide a "philosophy of science" (Flay, 1984, 319, n. 1; compare Fink, 1977, 248–249). But it is "*external teleology*" that is the overarching concept of "Reason as Observation" (or the *instinct* of Reason). Instinctive Reason, even when it observes the organism as an "end in itself" (and when it observes itself as "finite Spirit"), is always trying to *infer* a purpose that remains *beyond* observation. Its activity only makes sense in the context of the hypothesis of a "designing mind." Even Gall's Phrenology makes sense in the hypothetical context of a creatively supreme Leibnizian monad who has inscribed on our skulls what *it* knows about our "free" self-realization.

41. Compare further, W. De Vries (1991).

42. *Ethics* II, 13. The voluntary bondsman has learned this lesson. But rational *identity* begins with Stoicism.

43. I read the last sentence of paragraph 259 as follows: "It is not the case for [the observing consciousness] that [the distinction] is no distinction, but there is an activity that appears accidental and indifferent *vis à vis* what comes into being through it, and the unity

that still links them both together—that activity and this *Zweck*—falls apart for [the observing consciousness].”

44. “I have to live”; “I don’t see the necessity”—Voltaire, *Alzire*, Discours Préliminaire. (Hegel ascribed this exchange to a satire against Richelieu—so it may be older than Voltaire.)

45. The thesis of Hoffmeister that “Schelling thinks nature directly; Hegel thinks nature through the knowledge of nature” (1932, 61ff.), which we find again in Hyppolite (1946, 235; 1974, 244), is not well formulated since no one can “think nature directly.” At least I don’t know what that means, unless it refers to this degeneration of *Naturphilosophie* into *Vorstellungen*. But the reduction of the “law of organism” to quantitative tautology (which Schelling is guilty of) did not depend on that. On the other hand, if Hoffmeister means simply what Fink (1977, 279) calls “Schelling’s Identity thinking, according to which nature is unconscious spirit, and spirit is conscious nature,” then he (along with Fink) is mistaken in another way. For Hegel did not disagree with Schelling about that. He wanted to bring out the difference between “unconscious” and “conscious” spirit (viz., that consciousness provides us with a *real* “inner”).

46. Think for example of the “animal spirits”—which no doubt received “spiritual” as well as “materialist” interpretations. But of course, the spiritual theorists before Kant thought of life as *infused* by the higher Intelligence. It is only in the post-Kantian period when Nature becomes an object of romantic reverence that the vitalist hypothesis can emerge as autonomous and self-sufficient.

47. Hegel was an avid reader of English newspapers in later years (in our period it is French papers that we find him excerpting); and in one of them he found an advertisement that greatly amused him for a book on “The Art of Preserving the Hair, on *Philosophical Principles*, neatly printed in post 8vo, price seven shillings.” He quotes it (in English) in one of his attacks on the “Natural Philosophy” of the Newtonian school (*Encyclopedia*, sec. 7).

48. In this new standpoint it is the “unity of universality and activity” that is observed. The difference between us and the observed consciousness here, is that *it* takes this single organism to be “endowed” with a soul, while we can see that *all* life springs from the universal life of nature whose rational consciousness we are. When Hegel says in paragraph 261 that “This unity . . . is not for this observing Consciousness,” he means only that the observing consciousness cannot *comprehend* the unity properly as the Concept. *We* are able to do that, because we have comprehended that the Cartesian problem of the union between the soul and body is a pseudo-problem (par. 259). Observation takes the Aristotelian view that the soul is the “form” of its body. So it does not (and cannot) have the Cartesian problem. But it does not, and cannot, *solve* the Cartesian problem, all the same, because *that* would involve recognizing that the “outer which expresses the inner” is not the biological organism as an expression of “Life,” but the whole world of human activities as the expression of human Reason. Observation substitutes the “soul” of the *De Anima* for that of the *Meditations*. (How these two souls were “united” was already a problem for Aristotle. Hegel’s concept of “Spirit” provides an answer that obviates any need for the postulation of a “separate intellect.”)

49. The view that the discussion of the three organic systems is a critical dissolution of Schelling’s theory does not seem to have been stated by Royce (as Flay claims [1984, 319, n. 1]). In Germany Kuno Fischer carefully keeps to the facts (1911, 346) as did the Scots. I think the “direct attack” view spread to the U.S.A. from France (Hyppolite, 1946, 240–249; 1974, 248–258); Hyppolite depends on Hoffmeister (1932, 61ff.). The view is an article of faith for Kojève as well (1947, 81–82, 83). In fact I have not found this *canard* in English at

all. There is a certain substrate of truth in it, at least. For the critique of the reduction of qualitative variety to simpler (or reciprocal) identities of quantity strikes the Schelling of 1802 as well as his friends and followers. But Hegel's own adherence to the triad proves that in his view a speculative interpretation was possible. So his contention (in lectures and letters) that he did *not want* to be seen as attacking Schelling should be taken seriously. The proper way to see the polemic is this: that whatever errors Schelling himself may incidentally have fallen into, he was *also* the father of the *speculative concept* of the organism. The other "observational" natural philosophers could *not* plead this defence. They were simply guilty of degrading and trivializing the speculative theory. The following commentary has been composed in this perspective.

50. See M. J. Petry's note in Hegel: *Philosophy of Nature*, III, 302; von Haller's *Dissertation on the sensible and irritable parts of animals* appeared in an English translation in 1755, and a reprint (edited by Owsei Temkin) was published by Johns Hopkins in 1936.

51. Bichat died at the age of 31 in 1802. His *Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et la mort* were first published in 1800. The auction catalogue of Hegel's books gives "Paris, An VIII"; and his first reference to Bichat is in 1805/6 (*G.W.* VIII, 171, line 20). So although Michelet's references are to the fourth edition (1822) I think there is no doubt that Hegel owned the first edition, and that he had studied it by 1806. The auction catalogue contains many mistakes, but the Revolutionary style is a strong argument in favor of its accuracy here. In view of the marginal note in the Jena Heft, it seems to be beyond question that Hegel was already depending on Bichat's theory in 1806. (Compare *Encyclopedia*, sec. 355—the citation in Michelet's footnote should be compared with Hegel's distinction of the vegetable from the animal organism here). Bichat's famous definition of "life" as "l'ensemble des fonctions qui résistent à la mort" is Hegel's interpretation of the *Selbstzweck* expressed negatively; and Bichat's insistence that the *nature* of life was beyond observation corresponds exactly with Hegel's critical conception of "observing Reason." (Petry, *Nature* III, 126–127 gives Michelet's abbreviated citation; his note at III, 317 gives the full text.) The editors of *G.W.* VIII think Hegel's reference is to the German translation of 1802. So perhaps they *know* that the auction catalogue is mistaken. But the question of whether Hegel owned and used the French text or the German translation is not of great importance, once Hegel's early *study* of Bichat is granted.

52. Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, III, 302.

53. The developed image of the tripartite soul as man, lion and many-headed hydra (*Republic*, 588c–589c) clearly expresses it. For Hegel's own theory of the internal "shape" see *Encyclopedia* section 355.

54. Different *forms* of the fluidity can be observed—notably the circulation of the blood (via the pulse etc.). But the *universality* that relates sensible with irritable phenomena (or with the digestion) is the "law" which is *not* observable (par. 269).

55. For the Kantian critical standpoint generally see T.E. Wartenberg (1979 and 1992). Bichat's mistake was corrected by the discovery of the *cell* while Hegel was still alive, but some twenty-five years after Bichat's death. But even had he lived to Hegel's own sixty-one years, it hardly seems probable that Bichat would have made that crucial discovery himself, because—quite apart from looking in the wrong direction—he distrusted the microscope.

56. John Brown's "system" is the obvious example of the bad logic that is involved. But even about a seemingly useless theory it is dangerous to be dogmatic. The taking of "blood-pressure" is a valuable diagnostic tool for many kinds of stress.

57. The theory expounded in the *Encyclopedia* was certainly constructed with the criticisms offered here in mind. Thus, in section 354, the three “systems” are presented as containing one another as their moments. This resolves the difficulty raised in paragraph 270 and clearly illustrates the alternative (mentioned in par. 271) of “distinction according to the *Begriff*.” I do not see how to derive any methodological principles of experimental planning or observation from Hegel’s philosophical procedure; but I think it is clear that he recognized *good* observers, and that the attack in the *Phenomenology* is directed only at *bad* observers, and more fundamentally, at an exceptionally naïve conception of experiment and observation. (The best work on the relation between philosophy of nature and scientific method in English is that of G. Buchdahl [1972, 1973, 1984].)

58. Hegel clearly felt that “lunatic extremes” reveal the *logic* (and especially the logical limitations) of more moderate and rational projects. Thus John Brown shows us mistakes that we should never recognize in Bichat’s own work. This prepares us for the importance of Physiognomy and Phrenology.

59. This is the view of Petry (see *Subjective Spirit*, II, 576). He also notes that in the *Philosophy of History* lectures Hegel uses “Selbstgefühl” in the more ordinary sense of “self-confidence.” But he does not see (or at least does not say) that the link between the uses is Hegel’s view that as the resultant of the organic life-process *Selbstgefühl* is the implicit shape of *Fürsichsein*. That is what is required by the present passage.

60. See the *Erster Entwurf*, *Werke* III, 217, 230–231 (the “law” of inverse relationship is on 231). From 230 it is clear that Schelling understood it as a “logical” law. But in 1799 he seems to have thought it was useful for something.

61. This is the theme that Hegel develops in the *Encyclopedia*, but we can see it emerging in the Jena manuscripts. In 1805 the cycle of the three moments is summarized in a way that fully confirms my reading of paragraph 270 here (*G.W.* VIII, 149, line 30–151, line 7). But it is in 1803/1804 that we find the “systems” developed so that each involves the other moments. It is the “irritable” system that is taken as primitive there. Hegel speaks not of a “system of sensibility” but rather of a “system of sense.” This is because of the primacy of *consciousness* in the developmental orientation of 1803/4. (*G.W.* VI, 215, line 15–216, line 5; 245, line 6–249, line 11.)

62. The Kielmeyer reference (with adequate quotations) is given in *G.W.* IX, 500. (The editors also give the necessary references to Schelling’s early essays: *Von der Weltseele*, *Werke* II, 562–563; *Erster Entwurf*, *Werke* III, 195–199, 201, 203, 231. Both works are in the *Ausgewählte Werke* reprinted by Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1967.)

63. Hegel’s own debt to Schelling’s pioneer essays makes his apology for the imperfection of “science at its first beginning” in the Preface (par. 14) an indispensable act of honesty; and since he knew that Schelling had recognized these imperfections in his own early work, he probably felt sure that Schelling would not take his critical comments personally at this point.

64. He must have felt this himself, since he explains the reason (copiously) in the Preface.

65. *Erster Entwurf*, *Werke* III, 203–204.

66. This “outward” manifestation is not directly observable because it is internal to the organism. The relation of the inner organism to the *visible* outward form will be taken up in paragraphs 283ff.

67. I am expanding upon the argument slightly here, and relying upon the new turn that it takes in paragraph 275. But compare the levels of observation distinguished in paragraph 242 above.

68. Hegel regards statistical generalizations with proper respect in economics. His attitude to the precision of the sciences is Aristotelian. The scientific observer must know what degree of free variability to allow for in order to recognize what is genuinely *wirklich* in the common *Wirklichkeit* that is sensibly *vorhanden*. As we shall see at the end of the present section Hegel is very much aware of the potential interest of the still unborn science of ecology. But in the theory of the organism, it is precisely the sin of confusing commonsense observations and distinctions with *a priori* concepts that Hegel finds in the “reborn formalism” of “Schelling’s School.” (See the commentary on pars. 51–54 in chapter I above for full discussion and references.)

69. Rosenkranz, 25.

70. One of Hegel’s most significant critical reactions to the Enlightenment is that in stark contrast to virtually every major thinker from Bacon to Kant he does not regard the question of how our stock of empirical knowledge is improved and increased as a matter of primary importance to the philosopher. Philosophy for him is the general “guide of life” rather than the special guide of the scientific investigator.

71. *Encyclopedia*, section 354 Zusatz; Petry, *Nature*, III, 115, line 18–116, line 3. Petry’s note (*ibid.*, 305–307) gives the facts with admirable objectivity, but the comment that Hegel “should have investigated the matter more carefully before making this statement in public” (that “Goethe communicated the treatise [of 1785] to Oken, who immediately paraded the ideas as his own”) conveys a false impression. The only investigation Hegel could have made was to ask Goethe, and there is good reason to believe that he did that.

It was Oken’s own fault if he was “slandered and traduced” (as he claimed in 1836). Like G. H. Lewes I wonder why he spoke up only when those who might have testified to the “slander” were dead. Lewes gave what still seems to be the most balanced and sensible evaluation of the facts in his *Life of Goethe* (Everyman, 369–377).

72. Physiognomy actually has an ambivalent status, since it also points in the direction of a properly *behavioral* psychology. Hegel is implicitly guilty of injustice towards that, as he is towards the exact science of symbolic logic. Even “phrenology” is a fantastically *distant*, but not unconscious, anticipation of “brain-models.”

73. Miller mistranslates “*wie die Anatomie sie auseinander legt*”; see Baillie, 309 for an accurate version. It is not “anatomy” but Reason that comprehends the organism as *three* systems. As far as anatomy is concerned, on the contrary, there are *many* systems. Thus Hegel’s phenomenological critique *does* point one way forward for observation. It must overthrow Hegel’s “systematic concept” by discovering the *functions* of all the elements “left over” on the dissecting table.)

74. This is the conceptual relation that the organic/ inorganic distinction represents.

75. It is idiotic to suppose (as Croce does) that Hegel ever *forgot* or lost touch with this insight. Any mistakes that he may make, must arise—like Croce’s own errors—from a too rigorous *negative* application of it. In other words, he is more likely to draw the *a priori* limits of Science too narrowly, than to claim too much for it. Even his categorical certainties about phrenology can be made to illustrate this, as we shall see in due course.

76. Compare paragraph 150, where the principle of “universal attraction” is called the “concept” of physical necessity in the perceptual sphere.

77. Hegel says simply that there are no such laws because no fixed terms are available. But the Understanding can *fix* its terms with absolute freedom; and no one can forecast what it may find available for fixing. So the logical necessity that he is trying to state is more clearly and safely conveyed in the way that I have put it.

78. We ought rather to say one *cycle* of states, since its self-preservation is a *process*, and death is as natural to it at the climax, as life was during the process. It is the cycle that is identifiable as one “thing.”

79. There will of course be some “observers” who find this kind of knowledge completely absorbing (and Hegel is quite sensitive to this in the appropriate context of systematic “Anthropology”). One of my reasons for filling the commentary with this kind of counterpoint, is the desire to exhibit the abiding validity of every “shape” of consciousness. Hegel’s polemical preoccupation tends to obscure this quite seriously in the section on “Observing Reason.”

80. At this point it is the pernicious influence of Newtonian determinism upon the supposedly *organic* philosophy of Nature, that Hegel is especially concerned about.

81. He is not aiming directly at Schelling either here or earlier—see paragraphs 270–271. In criticizing the Schelling of 1802 Hegel is criticizing himself also. He went through his own Brownian phase. But he must have realized that Schelling would be stung by the dismissal of the *Potenz* terminology as “dog-Latin.” Even that terminology came originally from Eschenmayer; so Hegel could hope to persuade Schelling not to not take the attack to refer to himself. (Miller’s text “and a bad Latin at that” renders what Hegel originally wrote; but in order to restore an accidental omission by the printer a few lines further on, he had to substitute “in ein Deutschlatein” here. This, therefore, was what all readers of the first edition—and indeed of the first two posthumous editions—read; and it is what Baillie translates.)

82. For more detailed discussion of “schematizing formalism” see the commentary on the “Preface” (pars. 51–55) above. John Brown is evidently the great model of it in organic theory. But the root of the problem is in overenthusiasm for “polarity” at the inorganic level. The critique in the “Preface” makes this “reductive” tendency clear.

83. *Enz.*, section 370 Zusatz; Petry, *Nature* III, 184, 29–39. I quote Petry’s translation of Hegel’s German. For the original French see Petry, *Nature*, III, 360. Hegel’s first published reference to Cuvier’s work is in the *Encyclopedia* of 1817 (sec. 292). It seems that he was not familiar with Cuvier’s *Leçons sur l’anatomie comparée* (1799–1805), though he was interested in Cuvier’s achievements as an educational administrator in that period—see Letter 309 (10 Oct. 1816) to Niethammer (Briefe II, 141; Butler and Seiler, 328).

84. In the appropriate *systematic* context Hegel’s attitude would—or at least should—be different.

85. See especially *G.W.* VIII, 244, 10–20; Rauch,

86. Cf. *G.W.* VI, 321–326; Harris and Knox, 246–250.

87. *G.W.* XII, 179, 182; Miller, 761, 764 (compare *G.W.* IX, 99, lines 26–31; Miller, par. 162).

88. There seems to me to be a sufficiently close affinity between Hegel’s theory and that of Lamarck, to make a careful comparison of the *Recherches sur l’organisation des corps vivants* of 1802 with Hegel’s Jena texts worthwhile. At Berlin he owned and used extensively the *Philosophie zoologique* (2 vols, Paris, 1809). He did not own the *Recherches*; but in the Jena period (from 1803 onwards) he was very short of money. His eager interest in all of the scientific work stimulated by the Revolution is unmistakable; and he had scientific friends from whom he could borrow new books.

89. *Metaphysics* N 5 (1092b 8ff.).

90. In Lamarck (who actually believed in a temporal development of life, and hence in an “ascending” scale) the conceptual assumption is clear. He preferred to exhibit the chain of

being as a “descending” series (presumably because the top limit was known, and perhaps also because it was singular, whereas the lower grades could only be ordered in descending spheres or ranges).

91. *Werke* IV, 452–454. Hegel’s attitude at Berlin was quite different. In 1806 he names no names at all, but the distinction between Schelling and Steffens is clearly made; in his Berlin lectures he names both of them but Schelling is the primary object of criticism (*Enzyklopädie*, sec. 296 Zusatz; Petry, *Nature* II, 64 note). The hypothesis that in the *Phenomenology* he was attacking Steffens only as a surrogate for Schelling is extremely implausible. The polemic against Steffens goes back to 1803 (*G.W.* VI, 122, line 10–126, line 18).

92. This is a criticism of Schelling for giving improper importance to the perceptually observable static moment of a concept which can be comprehended only as a process.

93. Miller’s translation is at fault in the last sentence of the paragraph. *Read*: “. . . find series of bodies that run in sequence according to the simple parallel of two sides, and would express the essential nature of the bodies according to a law of these sides, must be regarded . . .”

94. In the Berlin period Hegel decided that magnetism was a *higher* development; and he made this a ground of complaint against Schelling. But in 1805 his willing dependence on Schelling is evident (see *G.W.* VIII 50, line 15–57, line 10).

95. The implicit suggestion (in *Night Thoughts*, 4) that Hegel simply took over Kant’s usage of *Ideal* was unintended and far too simplistic. M. Fujita (1985, 126–127) rightly points out the importance of Schiller (for whom the ideal is the perfect harmony of sensibility and Reason, or the union of “grace” and “dignity”). Compare the passage of Schiller’s *Letters on Aesthetic Education* echoed by Hegel in Letter 14 to Schelling (Hoffmeister I, 30; Butler and Seiler, 42): “You have tossed your work silently into the infinity of time.” Schiller’s artist does this with the “Ideal” (Letter IX, 5; Wilkinson and Willoughby, 58, 59).

96. This was the view of Buffon; and it was espoused by Lamarck. Petry suggests that Hegel probably became acquainted with Buffon’s views through the *Biologie* of G. R. Treviranus (6 vols., Göttingen, 1802–1822)—see Petry, *Nature* III, 230. What is certain is that Buffon’s ideas are actually discussed in volume II (1803); and we know that Hegel was using and depending on Treviranus in other parts of this chapter (see the commentary on paragraph 255 above, with note 32—and paragraph 296 below). But of course, Hegel may have known Buffon’s views from other sources also.

97. The appeal to “number” as a middle term has both a rationalist and an empiricist interpretation. On the one hand, the Leibnizian “great chain of being” entails the possibility of giving every form of life its place in the ideal “number series.” On the other hand, the classification theory of Linnaeus depended on the *counting* of common characteristics. These are “inner” and “outer” shapes of the same hypothesis, so quite probably Hegel means to embrace them both. See Hyppolite (1946, 228; 1974, 238), and especially D. Lamb (1980, 154–156), on empirical taxonomy. But Hegel never refers to Adamson (1727–1806) whose “numerical” system of classification Lamb briefly describes. Hyppolite (who does not comment on this section separately) is on safer ground (see Petry, *Nature* III, 186 and notes).

98. Compare *Itinerarium mentis ad Deum*, chapters I–III. As far as I can see, Hegel anticipated the argument of Schelling’s “Freedom” essay (1809); and his response is: For philosophical *comprehension* we must look in the opposite direction.

99. *Enzyklopädie*, section 339 Zusatz; Petry, *Nature*, 22. For Hegel’s criticism of evolutionary speculation in his own time see W. Bonsiepen (1986) and O. Breidbach (1987). For its relevance to our scientific situation see O. Breidbach (1989).

100. J. Windischmann, one of the earliest reviewers, commented that there was no need to take such a long road to reach this point (see W. Bonsiepen, 1979, 21).

101. The sceptics should study *Enz.*, section 246 Anm.

102. Both Findlay and Kainz seem to think that this part of the text is a critique of Schelling or of the "School." Neither cites any evidence in support of this, and I do not know of any. There may be a classification scale in Steffens; and there could be some Leibniz-inspired fantasy in Schelling that I have not come across. But I think both interpreters are simply generalizing rather wildly. See Findlay (1958, 107) and Kainz (1976, 109 and 154). Kainz is probably only using this *developed* form of Hegel's critique to support the thesis of Hoffmeister and Hyppolite (see note 49 above). In that connection his remarks make good sense. But I doubt if the Hoffmeister thesis was sound to begin with.

103. Hegel's claim that "Organic Nature has no history" is vigorously criticized by J. van der Meulen (1958, 247ff.). But what Hegel *means* seems to me to be unexceptionable.

104. This principle obviously applies even to the *conscious* living thing, although in that case what exists "for the sake of life" becomes the instrument for the appearance of the spirit at a higher level.

105. The critical editors refer us to volume II (1803) of his *Biologie* (6 vols, Göttingen, 1802–1822) for the "great influence" of the environment upon organic forms. Hegel has already referred to this (with detailed examples taken directly from Treviranus' text) in paragraph 255 above. This factual arbitrariness is the point of identity, where the circle of empirical scientific observation begins and ends. It is only when observation takes place in the context of a concept of the *whole* that it becomes rationally scientific.

106. Compare the commentary on paragraph 287 above.

107. We can be sure that Treviranus did not speak of "friendly encounters with the Concept." The difficulty is that no one except Hegel spoke this way. Schelling comments that the function of the *Begriff* in the *Phenomenology* is strange and unfamiliar. It looks as if Hegel is translating the actual terminology of some Schelling imitator into his own preferred language. One side-result of this translation, which probably pleased him, was the assimilation of the "formalist" philosophy of Nature to Bardili's programme for the "reduction of philosophy to logic." (Schelling's own interest in "siderism" was an example of a supposed "friendly encounter"—see D. E. Shannon's discussion [1988].)

Chapter 12

Rational Observation of the Self

V A(b): Observation of Self-Consciousness in Its Purity and in its Connection with External Actuality: Logical and Psychological Laws

The transition to Reason was in accordance with the experiential method expounded in the Introduction. The objective result of the self-abolition of the Unhappy Consciousness is the “will of God.” As the subject of a new experience the “will of God” is “Reason,” the consciousness that is “certain of being all reality.” This certainty has to be raised to “Truth” by experience. The birth of Reason is like the creation of Adam; and Observing Reason is like Adam in the garden of Eden naming the animals.

The transitions within “Reason as Observation” are also methodically in order: “The moments of its movement are to be dealt with, how it takes up nature, the spirit, and finally the connection of both as sensible being, and [how it] seeks itself as subsisting being” (par. 243). This sequence of “moments” seems logical enough (in Hegel’s cumulative sense). There is a logical puzzle caused by the fact that the “experience” of the consciousness that we are observing becomes increasingly alienated and impoverished. But something of the same sort happens already in the Unhappy Consciousness: “devotion” (at the Mass) is the concept for which prayerful labour and thanksgiving provide a conflicting “experience”; and “absolution” (in the Confessional) resolves the discord, so that the result of the movement is the emergence of the humanly mediated “Will of God.” For us this is a great advance; but for the Unhappy Consciousness it is the experience of “devotion” that is the moment of true fulfilment.

In the movement of Observation, the impoverishment is more obvious, and the reason for it is simply logical, so it is easy to identify. Observation becomes less and less competent to comprehend its “object” because it continues always to employ the mechanical logic, and law-concept, of the Understanding upon its material. As instinctive Reason, it is actually operating with the higher schema of selfhood furnished by its own intuitive consciousness of “being all reality”; but that is only evident “for us.” We have arrived at the phenomenological observation of the Weltgeist; so it is speculative thinking that is now the object of our observation. But for the observing consciousness “mathematical schematism” continues to provide the objective structure of the “thinking self-consciousness” that it can observe. So its observation is not worth much; and the concluding phase in which it will observe “the connection of Spirit and Nature as sensible being” will be worth even less.

This should not blind us to the enormous strides that our observation makes. In the Observation of Nature, we comprehended first the identity of "mind" and "nature" in principle; this gave us our concept of the organism as a self-realizing actual form; and through that we comprehended the whole programme of observational biology as the display of this self-realizing form in a bad infinity of the shapes of "life" in unity with its environment. This totality finally reached back, and comprehended the abstract concept of "mind in nature" from which we began; and the "bad infinity" of it, both as the "impotence of nature," and as the abstractness and inadequacy of the intellectual comprehension that the observer can achieve, directed our attention inwards towards consciousness itself as the true infinity of the Concept, and the sphere where the true experience of Reason will unfold. Even for Observing Reason, the Concept evolves and fulfils itself as comprehension (at least programmatically). For us, it inverts itself into rational Self-Consciousness—the Concept proper.

Observing Reason will now observe itself as an abstract object, or conceptual thing. In spite of the abstractness of this thing, and the virtual emptiness of the "experience" of it, we must not forget that we are observing Reason making this self-observation. Our object is actually "subjective spirit as the logical Spirit"; and when we move on to the pseudo-sciences that aspire to observe human behavior, our object is this same Spirit as the creator of history both as "experience" (res gestae) and as "science" (historia rerum gestarum).

The living organism is the real concept of Reason. Nowhere else but there can Reason find itself as the given object which is "all reality." But Reason's destiny is not to find itself as an object, but to know itself as the activity that is "all reality" as subject and object equally. Reason's progress at this stage lies in the purification of its subjective aspect. By observing the living organism in its environment, we have discovered that the Concept as subject, the concept as the source of life and motion, is "not there," it does not come forth. Instead, the only concept that is there is the mathematical order that we put there, the order that is generated by the "reasoning" of the observer. (I use the word "reasoning" here to express the subjective movement of "instinctive," i.e. pre-critical, Reason.)

The Observation of Nature (organic and inorganic) is one of the greatest of human enterprises. Furthermore (as Plato, Aristotle and Democritus all insisted in their widely varying perspectives) it is one of the noblest (i.e. one of the most humane). So no one who is seriously engaged in it, and devoted to it, is likely to be put off by a philosopher who complains that as compared with some mysterious "absolute knowledge" (which he contends that we can have) the pursuit of knowledge in this mode is an "idle interest," because its most advanced results must always be "external," and its most systematic formulations must retain the character of hypothesis and guesswork. It is obvious, moreover, that Hegel's criticism is partly ironical. He certainly believes that Philosophy—which he wants to make into a "Science" by providing it with its own absolute perspective—is higher than the "observational" sciences. But that is precisely because he believes she is their Queen. If they did not exist, the quest for "absolute knowledge" could hardly be carried very far and would lose much of its point and significance.¹

Of course, Hegel's irony aims to make us see something. The discovery that the understandable order of observable nature as a whole is a formal construction of the Under-

standing—that it is all “numbers,” because it voluntarily lets go of the empirical variety of life, and the inward essence never becomes observable at all—leads us to the observing intelligence as the object of observation that is necessarily the next one. This transition is “behind the back” of the naïve observing consciousness, because for that consciousness there is no necessary order of observation. The empirical observers pursue all of the sciences side by side: mechanics, chemistry, physics, biology, zoology, psychology.

Logic, which Hegel is about to thrust between zoology and psychology, is recognized by naïve observation to be an odd case because (like mathematics) it is an exact science. It deals with pure law, pure necessity. This recognition expresses the way in which the naïve rational consciousness is aware of what is “behind its back.” What we call its “back” is for it a curtain that is in front of it. In the earlier world of the natural consciousness, there was no curtain. For that Hellenic consciousness, the difficulties and criticisms that Hegel (or more accurately, Newton, Locke, Hume and Kant) has (have) raised were really “behind its back”; and when the Sophists successfully brought them into the open, the result was the tragic-comic fall of natural consciousness into Scepticism.

In the world before that fall it was Socrates who first suggested that the observation of Nature was an “idle interest.” But Plato, Aristotle, and even Democritus, philosophized about nature without the smallest doubt that Reason (with its “numbers”) could deliver the truth of it. For them it was the world of phenomenal experience that was condemned by the Socratic doubt. “I had rather discover one [true] causal account than have the kingship of Persia come to me,” said Democritus. For him (self-conscious materialist though he already was) the identity of mathematical Reason with “true causation” was as rock-solid and as indubitable as it was for Plato.²

That world of Nature perished, and the appearing of the Spirit began. By the time we arrive at the rebirth of Reason in the phenomenology of the universal Geist, it is common ground for everyone that we men have no knowledge of “true causes.” This was what the Sceptics proved to the Stoics; and it was the necessary presupposition of the authoritative revelation of “true causation” to the Unhappy Consciousness.³ When Reason emerges with a renewed proclamation of the old certainty of natural consciousness, the discovery of this ignorance becomes its first experience.

In the dawning of Reason something else happens. The very concept of “true cause” becomes problematic. The naïve Sceptics used the concept of “cause” without hesitation to prove that we do not know any “true causal accounts.” With the work of Hume and Kant this situation changes. The rational consciousness itself recognizes that causal connection is an act of the human intellect. Hence, once we have brought the conscious intellect back to its original natural awareness that it is the actual function of a living organism (upon which it is dependent) we can legitimately hope to make an observer like Bichat realize that the curtain between him and the “true cause” is only the one that is logically posited by his own act in adopting the observational attitude. He can remove it whenever he wishes. That is why Hegel insists, Socratically, that gazing at it has only an “idle interest” (like the occupations of the prisoners in Plato’s Cave). The Phenomenology aims to produce a “Socratic turn.”

How slow and painful that turn is bound to be, we can observe in the next ensuing paragraph (par. 298). We are the real observers of Self-Consciousness; and we can see

that because naïve observation truly finds its Concept realized at the inorganic level in a system of observable laws which determines the connections between definitely identifiable perceptions, it must hold onto this concept (of a Law in which sense-perception is directly identical with some abstraction such as motion, acceleration, weight, mass, attraction, repulsion). It is bound to hold onto it all through an "experience" which contradicts it ever more completely, until the moment of resolution (or reconciliation) between concept and experience is reached only in death. The dead body on the dissecting-table in the anatomy lab finally returns within the range of "observable law"; so in our next experience we shall observe the life of a thinking whose essence is to kill.

(a) *The Observation of Thinking*

- 1./298. At the inorganic level, the Concept can be observed as Law (whose moments are things that also behave as abstractions). In the Organism the Concept becomes a simple object, and the antithesis of Universal and Singular is unsundered. The syllogistic totality refers observation to itself.

This paragraph sums up the motion of Reason so far. The *concept* of "observable law" formulated by the Understanding is completely contradicted by the experience of observing the singular organism. Life (as the Genus) eludes it completely, and never becomes observable. But in the *Vorstellung* of organic life as a great array of *species* determined by the environment, Observing Reason is able to realize itself *formally* (as Understanding) in a mathematical system. This total experience of Reason producing a formal system is now the object of a new observation. The observer now seeks to observe what "observing Reason" is. But being still naïve, the observer has not changed the criteria of observation itself. Even in the perspective of the "Reason" that we are observing, the movement is exactly in accordance with the method described in Hegel's Introduction; but at the level of Observing Reason we have only a formal image of Hegel's method. What is crucial *for us* is the recognition that the real "inner" of the organism is rational consciousness.

Hegel presents the transition in its negative (critical) aspect. Following an instinct that it cannot justify, Observation and classification goes along happily enough, sorting out all the things in the perceptual world, and experimenting to discover their natures. Then, in observing the organism, it comes to grief. The organism is a "law unto itself," and there is no way to get at it. The Universal and the Singular are no longer separable (as they are in the proper sphere of the Understanding). They are immediately united; and the lesson to be learned from the organic law that "the outer is the expression of the inner" is precisely that the "true inner" of organic life is in the consciousness of the observer. There is no Universal to be observed in the organism itself; as the immediate identity of Universal and Singular it is the self-contained *species*.

The totality of these opposite experiences is not *observed*, because the real concept of universal Life in which it is comprehended is not observable. The totality is constructed by the rational observer; hence Reason is logically obliged to observe

itself in its own activity—the activity that produces the formal order of the Understanding. We are now going to observe Self-Consciousness as that formal activity; and then as the “sack” that contains the kind of “formalities” with which it operates.

- 2./299. Observing *itself*, self-consciousness finds first the “laws of thought.” These are purely formal and without truth. Two-valued logic is an *ens rationis*. On the other hand, as principles of pure thinking, they really are “laws of thought,” i.e. concepts that unite opposites in a cyclic motion (for which the formal principles are the content).

Critical readers have often complained about the brevity of Hegel’s discussion of logic in the *Phenomenology*. In sharp contrast with the lengthy (and even repetitive) discussion of the “formalism” of the preceding and following stages, formal logic and observational psychology are dismissed together in a few pages. Hegel follows his own precept about *lingering* with the biology of his time (which is all the more tedious for us because his biology is no longer ours); and then he lingers again with Physiognomy and Phrenology—two “observational sciences” that have completely lost their scientific status in our world.⁴ But he leaps over Logic with seven-league boots.

Yet formal logic is still very much with us; it has developed vigorously in many directions; and we have become quite sophisticated about the subjective character of the “laws of thought.” So those of us who can recognize how serious Hegel was about logic in the formal sense, and how sophisticated he often was in applying even those aspects of it (such as the logic of relations) which had not then been formalized, are surprised because his discussion of it is so brief (and because it is so one-sided).⁵

All such surprise is mistaken. We have arrived at a moment (like Scepticism) where there is literally *nothing* to linger with. The point is an immensely important one, but there is no way to underline it except to state it as plainly and simply as possible (hence also as briefly as possible). The necessary “lingering” can only be done in the book as a whole; and *that* is brought out by Hegel’s return to it in the Preface. So his procedure here is quite deliberate; and the proportions of his discussion are well calculated.⁶

Hegel’s point is that the “laws of thought” belong only to the realm of thought. They cannot tell us how they are to be applied in the real world of observation, not even in the inorganic sphere. *No* empirical statement has (or can have) the necessary truth of a logical relation of ideas. In this sense, the laws of logic are “without truth” altogether. To a world which has long been accustomed to distinguish sharply between formal validity or “acceptability in the system” and material truth, this is not news.⁷ To us, indeed, it seems to be just another “formal” truth; and as such it is the object of an “idle” interest. But as soon as we stop applying our formal logic to dead things (or to the strictly quantifiable aspects of things whether dead or alive) and start applying it to ourselves, and to the concrete concerns of our own existence, this truth ceases to be merely formal and takes on a material significance that is absolutely vital.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away" says the Scripture. Even those of us who have no more use for Newton's Divine Clockmaker than Laplace did, can still nod our heads (with Newton rather than Laplace) and let our physicists quantify the proposition for us in the cosmological theory of the Big Bang. This illustrates the gulf between *reality* and the assertions of logic (which cannot "pass away"); but at the same time it overcomes it. For if it is true that all real things have a life-span, and that all propositions about reality must equally have a life-span, it is also true that the life-span of much of reality vastly exceeds our own; and that there are many things whose life-span (whether short or long) is a matter of merely instrumental concern because they are indifferently replaceable by others of the same kind as often as is necessary. For them the on/off switch of the computer will supply all the logic necessary.

But our own lives, and the things that make life *meaningful* for us, are not like that. The rationality of our thinking about ourselves, our living experience, and the vital components of that experience, is *not* reducible to the "laws of thought"; indeed, it is not explicable in terms of them at all. The truth of the simple proposition, "I am alive," contains and involves the knowledge that my life began at some definite point, and that it will end at some indefinite point in the future, i.e. that once I was *not* alive, and the moment will come when I shall not be alive again. According to the "laws of thought" these two conditions of non-being are identical and only my being between the two limits *counts* as reality (cf. "what belongs to the organism" in par. 260). But this view is radically mistaken. For the proposition "She is dead" does not merely involve the obvious truth that once she was alive; when the proposition is made meaningfully (even without being *uttered*, as when the Gravedigger in *Hamlet* identifies Yorick's skull) it involves *also* the truth that "She is still with us" (as Hamlet's vivid evocation of Yorick at once indicates).

This is what the concrete (non-instrumental) propositions of real life are like; and the working logic of such an everyday unphilosophical discourse as the Gravedigger's is *not* expressed in the "laws of thought" as observable "entities of Reason." Instead, the laws themselves must be comprehended as pure Concepts; in *real* thinking—the thinking that constitutes my conscious being, not that which is a mass of verbal algebra designed for the practical manipulation of my environment regarded as a complex of *things* both physical and abstract—identity and contradiction are always united, and the middle is *not* excluded. (For a fuller account of this we must go to "Essence" in the *Science of Logic*.)

Rational life is a whole that has divided itself into the form and the content. But the content is not a dead (or *ad hoc* quantifiable) *stuff*. The sundering is between pure thought—the speculative logic whose moments are Identity, Contradiction and Mediation as pure concepts—and scientific experience. The pure concepts are (and must be) already present in the experience. The sundering is precisely the separating of pure logic from *its* content; we could not do speculative logic at all, if we did not already have a comprehension of experience that is sufficiently developed, and sufficiently intellectual, to deserve the name of "science." Speculative logic can only emerge from the comprehension of the whole as a whole.⁸ Thus it is

a necessary presupposition of speculative logic that there is a “content” in experience that is “neither in contradiction with it nor separated from it at all.”⁹ The very existence of “speculative consciousness” is its emergence *from* and its return *to* this content. The emergence is its formulation as “logic” in the *pure* (or speculatively formal) mode; and the return is its application to the organization of the sciences (as “real philosophy”). The methodical comprehension of this motion is the “absolute knowledge” to which speculative logic itself leads. The “absolute knowledge” towards which *we* are headed is a comprehension of experience as a whole (already conceptualized in the lower forms of representation and thought) from which speculative logic can methodically emerge. But experience can be comprehended as a whole in many ways (even Sense-Certainty is a mode of being aware of “the whole”); and only one mode of experience can *demonstrate* its adequacy for this *logical* function. We have not reached that yet. So we can only recognize it here in the way in which the ordinary consciousness is aware of “speculation” from the first. But now we are *starting* to see where it fits in.

- 3./300. Only the formal contents can be *found* by observation; and the motion of the cycle is stilled. When these still moments are supposed to have truth, they are in fact withdrawn out of the true form. The laws are properly one process, and *qua* static forms they are limit-concepts [like dX]. Observation is *frozen* knowing; and it inverts its own nature (as knowing) into the shape of observable *being*. This is all that need be said about logic here. *True* logic belongs to speculative philosophy.

Observation separates the living logical moments of identity, difference, and their mediation in wholeness, in the way that it separates the sensitive, irritable and reproductive systems of the organism on the anatomy table; I have used this analogy deliberately because (as I have already pointed out) anatomy is an extremely important science, and Hegel himself studied it. The truths of logic are “withdrawn from the form” in the way in which the cadaver is withdrawn from life. But the mathematicians (whose *quantities* are withdrawn from the dynamic flux of motion, as well as from the qualitative flux of sensation) have learned how to apply their abstractions to motion by inventing the calculus.

The principles of formal logic are like the limits or differentials in the calculus. When we apply them formally we treat them as if they were real quantities. In this application they are *not* pure forms but material requirements. Anyone can see this if she is required to *restate* some argument of hers as a syllogism (or a series of syllogisms). Students were regularly trained to do this in the medieval period, and the practice endured at least until the nineteenth century. I expect that Hegel had done some of it. In the modern custom of training students to *symbolize the form* of a concrete argument, the “form” that is abstracted is not quite so “external,” but even students who are quite competent at it, often object that it is foolishly artificial. (Hegel had learned to form syllogisms in all of the “figures” by the age of twelve.)

These symbolic forms bring us closer to the right awareness of logical laws as “vanishing moments.” In this guise, as Hegel says, they are “knowing, i.e. movement of thinking, but not *laws* of knowing.” What he means is succinctly (and

concretely) expressed by the adage of the computer programmers: “Garbage in, garbage out.” We can also see in the computer programme the “perversion” (*Verkehrung*) of the nature of speculative knowledge into the “shape” of Being. For the programme is written in terms of the excluded middle: one or zero. This—we may notice in passing—is the logic of choice and of action; but it is not the mediating (or reconciling) logic of comprehension.

One of the most important ways in which we have come closer to the right consciousness of the “laws of thought” is in the general recognition that it is perfectly legitimate to speak of different “logics”; but one of the most tragic errors of those who become conscious of the possibility (or need) for a speculative logic is to regard it as an option or *choice*. The adage “He who is not for me is against me” has no more place in philosophical comprehension than T and F or one and zero.¹⁰

(b) *The Educator’s Manual*

- 4./301. Self-consciousness is not just a thinking motion, but a practical agent. Observation must study this (as the applied reality of the “laws of thought.”) But this appears to it as a new field of inquiry, because action is *self-assertion*.

With this, we can pass from the observation of our own thinking activity to the observation of the self as active: from logic to psychology. The “reality” of pure thinking is the active rational self. Only an individual consciousness can think; and it must think its *own* thoughts. Self-consciousness became the “consciousness of itself” by discovering its objective embodiment. This is the “nature of the Thing” that draws the naïve observing consciousness on. It involves an inversion that we have already gone through in the dialectic of Understanding. But in the splitting of the Unhappy Consciousness (and indeed in the formal freedom of Stoicism before that) the dependence of thinking on empirical consciousness was denied. The divided structure of the self in Unhappy Consciousness is still present in the inverted (or happy) consciousness of Reason. Hence it is quite obvious to the observer that the laws of rational action are distinct from the laws of thought. The laws of thought are infinite in range, while the laws of action are finite.

This is not remarked on in the text, but we are expected to remark on it for ourselves. Hegel sets us a logical problem when he says that the observing consciousness is “led on by the nature of the Thing” without being aware of the connection [*Zusammenhang*]. We are supposed to be observing “the nature of the Thing”; so for us the *Zusammenhang* must be there. We have to realize that the distinction between pure Reason and practical Reason (which originates as a simple matter of rational observation here) is a mistake. Reason is always both theoretical and practical. Whenever this is forgotten, the metaphysical mistakes and the pseudo-problems begin (such as the theological question of par. 162 or the teleological one of pars. 255–256).

We must also take note that the psychology whose genesis we are observing is a *normative* one. We are observing practical *Reason*. Our own comprehensive obser-

vation of Observing Reason abstracting its logical laws, puts Active Reason before us as our *object* here. In its theoretical posture it is the activity of defining the “good life.” A purely behavioral study of the active life of the human animal is not Psychology in Hegel’s sense. It would be one division of ethology or zoology. We are observing the self that transforms what is *other* than its will into what accords with its will.¹¹

- 5./302. *Psychology* formulates the relations of this self-assertion to its social world as given. The subjective Spirit first *receives* habits, customs, beliefs; but it is always aware that it can defy them. It must either deny itself as singularity, or as universal being; either giving being the form of conscious individuality, or imposing at least a personal accent (if not violating it by crime).

What Hegel calls “Psychology” observes the active capacity of the thinking being to form habits, follow instructions, make choices, rebel, and in general do what the serf does: reform herself and the environment. When the rational observer studies logic, she is actually observing the Concept; now she is actually observing the movement of Spirit. The *logical* individual is not an empirically singular self; for empirical singularity involves the body, which is not yet under Observation. The logical individual is the self-conscious Category of singularly existing universal thinking. She is “Reason” because she reasons for all rational animals. Similarly, the rational agent observed by Psychology is “Spirit” because she is the practical “Category”; she is knowingly doing what everyone can do.

Hegel explicitly tells us that our object is now “Spirit.” The terminology of Psychology is that of subjective spirit; and Psychology is actually the last and highest science in the range of subjective spirit in Hegel’s *Encyclopedia*. But what is properly observable is *objective* spirit. So the observational approach to psychology is necessarily backwards. It is a general truth about Observation that it must go from the “outer” to the “inner”; and a general truth about speculative science that it goes from “inner” to “outer” in order to “return into itself.” Psychology studies the “faculties” that are at our disposal, the “capacities” that are under our control. It defines the range for Ethics (in the Aristotelian sense). But this is a necessary truth, only because our subjective psychology is a social product—an ethical science of the formation of character—in the first place. The natural organism is shaped and molded, its faculties are defined, its capacities developed, and its failings identified by, and in terms of, the actual ethical structure of our community. What is physiologically given belongs to the natural organism, and so to the “observation of organic nature,” not to psychology proper.

The argument of the paragraph is clear enough already from the analysis. But a brief elaboration will help to show that what Observing Reason has before it is *educational* psychology, or the applied ethics of the schoolroom. The progression of “Observing Reason” is natural (or in accord with “the Thing itself”) for the empirical observer also. We have advanced from the training of thought to the forming of character. We start here from the schoolteacher’s side. The desirable habits and customs are part of the common stock of adult knowledge; and the subjective spirit

that is subject to this formative activity is the natural self-consciousness of chapter IV. It is primitively *free*, and rebellion is essential to its educational experience. “Spirits” were often *broken* in schools of the rigorously disciplinary kind in which Hegel was educated (and in which he became a teacher very soon after he wrote these pages). But a properly educated spirit is not a broken one; it is one that has tried the path of defiance, and has come around to the pursuit of Aristotelian “virtue” voluntarily.¹²

- 6./303. Observation finds this active subject to be an astonishing bran-tub of faculties, urges, passions.

What Hegel is talking about therefore is the rationally mature *soul*, as conceived by philosophers and moralists from the time of Descartes and Bacon onwards. The basic inspiration is Aristotelian; and even in the most systematic thinkers (e.g. Descartes, Hobbes and Spinoza) the distinctions made in ordinary social intercourse force the theory to sprawl. Spinoza needs only the three terms imagination, reason and intuition for mental activity; but he has to define a long list of passions. The run-of-the-mill writers on “faculty psychology” in the eighteenth century endowed the soul with a great mass of mental machinery.

What Hegel means by “dead resting things” is real “parts” that are conceived to be still there like cogs, wheels and springs when they are not in motion. In other words, the mind is modelled upon the skeleton on the anatomy table. Hobbes views it like this; and so do French materialists such as Condillac, LaMettrie and Helvétius. The official rationalists—writers like Wolff and Baumgarten—would deny that they *meant* that the mind has resting parts (I suppose). But they all use the model of the machine.

We still read some of these psychologists, and we read a mass of general literature that they influenced; so we are still interested in this faculty psychology and we would like to see it more fully dealt with. The reason that it is not, is given as soon as Hegel begins to use the word “Spirit.” His whole book is about the evolution of Spirit; so if that is what the psychologists are actually replacing with their mechanical toy, Hegel would be wasting time if he were to discuss their work in detail here. Besides there is no agreed model worked out (like the actual machinery that is dissected in anatomy). Observational psychology operates with a mechanical toy that is all in pieces, so that the soul is observed and discussed like a bag full of loose bits. The mistake involved is elementary, and it is easily stated. *Nature* gives us our bodies; and we can take them to pieces when they are dead. *Society* gives us the furniture of our minds (in a much less regular way); and death is precisely the point at which those given “minds” vanish. There is nothing left to take to pieces.

Laws are conceivable here; and it is a logical fault in the flow of Hegel’s argument that he does not say something about them. Why, for instance, does he not say something about doctrines such as *hedonism*? (The supposition that he is saving this up as a moment of Self-actualizing Reason is quite mistaken.) In order to make the proper logical pattern out of his argument, we have to take the next paragraph

as an implicit answer to complaints of this kind. But a good deal of imaginative inference is necessary; and Hegel does not even make the sort of dogmatic statements that we can take as a deliberate challenge (like the reference to the *Natur der Sache* in par. 301).

- 7./304. Observation lists the faculties, etc., in the interest of abstract universality. The individual is the spiritual unity. But classifying individuals would be more stupid than the classification of organisms (which are proper observables). The rational individual is always the universal spirit. Observation looks for (and finds) a *law* here.

This observational approach turns the soul into a bag full of universal abstractions. The only observational “science” that can properly be based on it is a pseudo-mechanical theory of “characters.” Since Hegel is later going to use the metaphor of the “spiritual animal kingdom” it is interesting to see how rudely he dismisses the psychological project of classifying individuals in terms of their propensities and aptitudes.¹³ This, after all, was what Plato identified as the fundamental social science in the *Republic*; and Schiller’s theory of aesthetic education had made the Platonic project visible as the best available cure for the ossification and fragmentation of human nature in bourgeois society into a great machine.

What then is the function of the “law of spiritual individuality” that Observation seeks? Hegel appreciated the value of Schiller’s *Aesthetic Letters* from the first,¹⁴ and his own conception of domestic education remained in accordance with Schiller’s ideal. But by the same token his conception of social education was always severely disciplinary. He habitually writes as if every state-certified teacher were the authorized voice of “the Laws” that Socrates heard in his prison. As we have seen on several occasions already, the logical programme of the *Phenomenology* requires that we should treat every *Gestalt* of consciousness in its full maturity. By definition, the maturely formed character has “put away childish things.” Schiller was quite correct in identifying the spontaneous “play” of the child as the moment of harmonious transition from *nature* to *freedom*. We shall eventually come to the observation of this harmony too in its maturity (Antigone, or womanhood as the natural self-consciousness of the family). But to choose this harmonious model of *Bildung* would be logically obtuse at present, when we are observing scientific observation itself.

I have called this section “the educator’s manual” because that gives us the right perspective for the transition. The school-teacher must “observe Nature” and know logic (both concrete and abstract) in an instinctive way. But the conceptual distinction between “nature” and “spirit” is of the essence here; and their logical relation is one of strict opposition and stark contrast.¹⁵ So the *Phenomenology* must make the contrast between the observation of nature, and the observation of self-consciousness as spirit, as sharp as possible. If we remember this, we shall easily see that the observational classification of socially made characters that are fully mature is almost completely pointless. If the characters really are maturely formed, their essence will be fully visible in what they do, i.e. in their social function; apart from that, their subjective interests are an appropriate topic

for interpersonal conversation, but not for science.¹⁶ Properly speaking, normative psychology is the practical science that educates the individual to be a *whole* (i.e. autonomous) rational (wo)man. Observational psychology is sadly inadequate for that purpose; but there is a speculative mode of it, which has an educational *end* that we shall now come to.

One further incidental note is needed before we go on to that. Hegel himself refers to the criminal self-assertion of subjective spirit as one of the necessary aspects of observational psychology; so we might be tempted to argue that the observation of individual psychology has an important function in social medicine. This was important to Gall's Phrenology. But Hegel is severely Kantian in his philosophy of punishment. The rational aim of punishment is not to reform the character, but to stimulate the criminal to use her own reason. We may well feel that an understanding of her nature and its needs is vital to the development of Reason (which is never a singular, but always a communal, function). Hegel cannot make any logical objection to that claim. But we should be clearly aware that all *hedonic* calculation belongs to the observation of *nature*. What is proper to the criminal as subjective spirit, the individualization of the Genus, is the absolute moral respect that is always owed to the freedom of Reason. Confronted as we are by the spectacle of communities that regard their prisons and their psychiatric hospitals as part of the same educational continuum, and knowing as we do that this attitude belonged to an earlier phase in the *Bildung* of our own community (the "age of Faith," and not the "age of Reason"),¹⁷ we must agree with Hegel's logical point here.

(c) *Observing Concrete Individuality (Biography)*

- 8./305. On one side is individuality, on the other culture. So the observer asks "What is the *law* of that relation?"

Lasson marked this paragraph as the beginning of the third phase of the section. He titled it "The law of Individuality" (which Hegel himself introduced at the end of par. 304). It must be correct to make a division here, because the concept of the *Individual* is clearly the result of the section, the object that becomes the moving subject in the next phase. But it is not easy to see how this "result" arises as the methodical product of a *motion* from logic through psychology. The brief discussion of logic appears to make no contribution to the motion that produces the concept of "the Individual." The "law of Individuality" is presented to us as if it arises from the motion of rational observation in psychological inquiry alone. The discussion of observational psychology has the proper logical structure: concept (par. 302); experience (pars. 303–304); and result (pars. 305–308). But how the initial concept is inherited from Logic is not evident. There is only a transition (whose necessity we are expected to understand without having it explained) from the theoretical to the practical Ego (par. 301).

Even the admission of a special kind of transition (like the move from logic to

nature in the system itself) will not get us out of difficulty. For the “concept” from which the movement of “Psychology” begins is not the practical Ego as *conceived* by the naïve observer. It is “Spirit” as conceived by Hegel and “observed” by us. Our perception of the finitely active self as “Spirit” is “behind the back of consciousness”; and it is only allowable for us to see more than the naïve consciousness does, after the game starts—i.e. in the moment of “experience” not in the initial formulation of the “concept.” So in spite of the plausibility of the “division” offered just now, the whole discussion of “Psychology” must really belong to the “experience” of this stage (as we should expect, since Psychology observes the “empirical” self); and we must find the Concept of this stage in “self-consciousness in its purity,” i.e. in Logic.

The problem is analogous to one that we have already noted in the “Observation of Nature”; but mirror inversion is involved. In the Observation of Nature the paradox is that the concept of rational observation matches its *inorganic* object perfectly, but does not match *itself* as an object (the organism) at all; so that its experience in the quest for itself is an inevitable failure. In the Observation of Self-Consciousness this pattern is reversed. There is no match at all between rational Observation and Logic as its inner Concept; the logical Concept is not directly *observable*. We observe only the dead forms of “ $A = A$ ” etc. Even we, the *philosophical* observers, can only see that the living “laws of thought” are vanishing limit-concepts (like the “infinitesimals” of the calculus).¹⁸

The real concept of self-consciousness (the “Spirit”) on the other hand is perfectly observable. By definition, we must all be able to observe the laws and customs of the community (both theoretically and practically). So Hegel’s sudden introduction of the word “Spirit” is perfectly logical. The observation of logic is the vanishing point of “theoretical spirit.” We can see that quite clearly (though of course the naïve consciousness does not). Hence the immediate appearance of “practical spirit” is exactly what the method of determinate negation validates. What results for *our* observation from the cumulative movement of the paragraphs on logic is the “Science of Logic” as an object. What moves the naïve observer unknowingly, and us knowingly, in the paragraphs on Psychology, is the Spirit as a substance that is a rational subject. Speculative Reason (as the formally objectified concrete universal) becomes Reason as a spiritual subject.

Now, therefore, we have to see how these abstract moments of Logic (the thinking self) and Psychology (the spiritual world) come together most immediately in the rational being as a mature *individual*. Anyone who tries to write a biography is in the position of “Observing Reason” at this level. To write someone’s life properly is to write her “life and times.” So the “law of individuality” is something that we do actively strive after, and it is very much worth having—at least if the “individual” is someone like Goethe, or Beethoven, or Marx, or Darwin. Much of the record has, of course, been lost or forgotten; but the evidence, whether “determinate” or “general,” is all out there to be seen (*Vorhandenes*). My examples already illustrate how pointless it will be to observe individuality with the project of discovering a *general* law. That is the “experience” that we must now move on to.

- 9./306. There are two general relations: reception and reformation; and indifference. But all moments are essential, and the explanatory law of observation is tautological. For rational observation the relation of world and individual is Leibnizian-monadic. Every individual mirrors the world in his own way.

The law of self-conscious individuality is just like the law of the organism, except for *two* logical differences. First there is the already mentioned fact that one is the law of individuation, while the other was the law of species formation; and secondly there is a related difference: Natural speciation remains indeterminate (so that life is always flowing beyond or across the specific boundaries); whereas spiritual individuation is by definition completely determinate (and transparent). Leibniz states and exemplifies the law of spiritual individuality perfectly. For rational observation every monad mirrors the same world in its own way. Each side logically has to be the way it is, because the other side is the way it is. The *individual* is *both* receptive and reactive within the social whole (as an active agent); and equally she is a completely indifferent, free logical awareness of the whole active and reactive process. We have to take the Leibnizian *indifference* which Hegel suddenly introduces—the doctrine that the monads neither act upon anything outside, nor are they acted upon by anything—as a return to, or recuperation of, the theoretical self of the logical process. Otherwise the sudden appearance of the *Monadology* would be gratuitous. “The law of individuality” is the proper logical “resolution” of this section;¹⁹ and the *Monadology* is the stably permanent *Gestalt* of self-consciousness as the logical subject and the psychological object of rational observation.

Hegel recognizes the importance of the “laws of thought” in the theory of Leibniz. But he pays no attention to the postulational aspects of the *Monadology*. Self-conscious individuality defines itself freely, just as the Earth (the Universal but unconscious Individual) determines what natural species exist, without respect for any logical principle of continuity or plenitude. What remains valid is the logical principle that a monad can only express “for itself” what it is “in itself.” A rational being can only display *its own* essence.

Again it is helpful to consider this from the standpoint of a biographer whose ideal is to comprehend her subject as completely and coherently as possible.²⁰ Every individual “belongs to the time” and we do not speak of “influence” where she simply expresses its *normal* attitudes. But we may say, for example, that Marx was “influenced” by Hegel, or Mozart by Haydn. It is transparently obvious in these instances that they were influenced in their own peculiar way. The influence of the earlier figure is real and important; we cannot imagine Marx without Hegel, or Mozart without Haydn. But it is also true that no one else interpreted Hegel in quite the way that Marx did, and we shall not understand Marx by reading Hegel (or anyone else whom we know Marx read). To comprehend Marx we must begin from what Marx himself wrote. Yet he could not have written any of it if he had grown up in the ghetto which Napoleon’s armies gave his father the opportunity and the occasion to leave.

The case of Mozart and Haydn is even more revealing because Haydn outlived Mozart and was influenced by him in his turn; and Mozart, of course, was writing

music before he knew that there were any other musicians (apart from his father). There is no doubt of their mutual independence, and equally no doubt of their mutual influence. But to understand it we must always begin from the side of the one who is supposedly being influenced.

Anyone who sets herself to *observe* as faithfully as possible the life of another individual, must first adopt the “indifferent” posture of a *mirror*. She must try to mirror the cultural world in which the subject lived; but her goal is not achieved until she can go further and mirror it *the way the subject saw it*. And the subject observed was not just a mirror in that world. She was acting and being acted upon. But her life is not worth writing—even though in some cases the “times” may well be worth writing *about* using her as a mirror—unless we have always the sense of an individuality who interprets what happens to it *in its own way* (in the conscious pursuit of active projects that it defines for itself, and which express for it *its own essence*). The Leibnizian thesis that every rational consciousness is properly an eternal self-identical essence that does not develop, but only unfolds, seems absurd to an active living audience in which everyone is conscious of continually being *made* to do things, and also of discovering and learning new things all the time. But Hegel has rightly seen that no one can properly “observe” another self without making the Leibnizian assumption that there is a real self there which always *preserves* itself, and which cannot do anything that does not express “itself.”

Any “real” self is an interpreting process, and its self-preservation depends upon a living body. The interpreting process depends on the cultural world that it interprets, just as the living body depends on the natural environment in which that cultural world exists. All of this Hegel accepts quite commonsensically, and does not explicate in the Leibnizian way at all. But the “independence” of the self as world-interpreter, logically requires us to grant it the logical autonomy of a “monad” as defined by Leibniz.

Of course, real individuals are not just monads. We already know that we could never become mature organisms if other adults did not care for us; and we could not become interpreters of the cultural world if it were not there for us as a great repertory of routines for which others have mediated our reception. Thus (on the side of nature) we have good cause to weep for the music that Mozart did not live to write; but (on the side of culture) even Mozart would not have begun to write music at the age of four, if he had not been born in the family of a great music teacher. In a prodigy like Mozart, who never had a childhood, and never ceased to be in many ways a child, the aspect of routine reception is reduced to the psychological minimum. His monadic uniqueness shines out in virtually everything connected with him that survives. Yet even Mozart did many things automatically; so that if a biographer alludes to these matters at all it is only because the customs of Mozart’s time are different from our customs. I suppose, for instance, that no one cares much about the laundering of Mozart’s *linen*, or what he liked for breakfast. But Peter Shaffer (with able assistance from Hollywood) has made everyone aware that Mozart’s anal fixation was as powerful as Luther’s. In Mozart’s case, the shape of the fixation interests us partly as a sidelight on the time, and partly because of

Freud's theory of the unconscious connection between organic and rational life. It is not significant (as it was in Luther's case) for what Mozart self-consciously was and did. His bathroom humour belongs to childhood in all times (I suspect) and to the adult society of his time in a different way than it does (or did until recently) to ours. But (unless we prefer to listen to Freud) we can dismiss it (like the laundering of his linen, and what he had for breakfast) as belonging to the "circumstances, situations, customs and so on which are shown on the one hand to be *there in the world* (*vorhanden*) and on the other hand to be in *this determinate individuality*" but which "express only the indeterminate essence of the same, which is not what we are dealing with" (i.e. it is not part of the individual's self-definition).

The individual's self-definition is the self-definition of the world in her. This follows analytically from the fact that the raw material of her life and action comes from the cultural world, and the real self that she creatively defines *is* her world. The world *of the individual* is the only one that we can directly "observe." So the totality of a world of "individuals" for which the observer is a pure observer, and in which all action has been stilled into the limit-abstraction of formal identity and difference, would be like a long hall housing two exactly corresponding series of pictures: on one side there is the objective world of which the active individual (say Mozart) is conscious, and on the other side there is her active consciousness of it. This is a deliberate transposition of the Leibnizian monad-image. For Hegel says that the outer world-picture is the surface of a sphere; and the inner self-picturing is the reflecting centre of the sphere.

So far Hegel has dealt properly only with the observable world as the undetermined generic essence of the individual. Whatever is observable in the individual must be in her "world." By introducing specific examples of the kind of individuality that interests a biographer, I have already anticipated much of what Hegel has only implied about the possibility of a law that connects the individual with her world. We can see that the "law of identity" connects them; and that turns out to be more interesting than it sounds, because the *real* law of identity includes contradiction and mediation. The hall of pictures is never simply a hall of mirrors.

- 10./307. We have to start from the centre of the sphere because the mirroring is *not* Leibnizian-logical. The individual mirrors the world in an ambiguous practical relation to it. Freedom alone determines where the relation is identity and where contradiction.

According to the Leibnizian view, the individual and the world are *identical*. The *mirroring* of the world at the spherical surface is the unfolding of the monadic essence at the centre. But this is not the kind of identity that exists between rational individuals and their world. For actual individuals the world exists both to be accepted, and to be negated. The biographer must first try to mirror the world of the subject as it was "in and for itself." But even for *observing* Reason this means not just the world as it existed for other people generally, but the world that *could not be overridden*—the world that determined the success and failure of individual projects. It is not only success but failure that interests a biographer; and failure has to be comprehended in terms of the world as it is "in and for itself." But

(adopting Hegel's own metaphor) even failure can be comprehended properly only from the active living centre of the sphere, i.e. from the viewpoint of the individual concerned.

This is what the "windowlessness" of the monad means for actual observation. We have to see the world the way the subject did and know what she was trying to do, even in order to estimate her failure; and Leibniz himself agrees that (since we are all finite and none of us is God) this effort of the pure observer *must* fail. The self-definition of the subject remains an act of freedom. Hegel simply adds that *for observation* this means that the identity of the individual with the world includes contradiction (even the contradiction of outright crime, which is failure by definition, and ought to fail in fact). What mediates between identity and simple contradiction—the middle way between them—is observable only as arbitrary choice. Biographers do not try to explain everything; and the observer's comprehension (whether of success or failure) can never be "perfect" (in the formal or Leibnizian sense).²¹ Our justified right to lament the early death of Keats, or of Mozart, springs precisely from the fact that we *cannot* infer the poetry and music that they might have produced, from *any* degree of comprehension of what they did produce. Here we have the "psychological necessity" that is not an "empty phrase" but the lesson of Hegelian logic. We are not supposed to be reconciled with the world because we see that nothing in it could have been otherwise (as Leibniz thought), but rather because we comprehend that *our seeing that things could have been and can always be otherwise is the way things absolutely are and ought to be*.

- 11./308. Thus the *sides* do not have a lawlike relation. The individual *is* the *identity* of the world that he accepts, with what he does with it or in it.

The reconciled *result* of the movement of the logical concept of the individual through its psychological experience is the concept of "psychological necessity" (or the concept of the rational monad as identical with its world). But because the world of the individual does *not* exist in and for itself, but is only her "indeterminate essence"—for even a successful life of crime is possible after all²²—the concept of "psychological necessity" inverts itself directly into "psychological freedom." The arbitrary "freedom of choice" of the individual is precisely what the "laws of logic" reveal to our observation as the essence of Reason in its self-observation. Individuality is the indissoluble unity of a cultural heritage that is accepted, with a cultural mark that is made. Where and how the acceptance stops and the mark is made, is logically unpredictable and formally incomprehensible. In flat contradiction of all of Leibniz' logical applications of the "laws of thought," this is the truth enshrined in the Leibnizian concept of the *monad*. So the hypothesis of a divine knowledge of the monad that is purely logical (in the formal sense) is quite absurd. There is no hall where the pictures become mirrors, and "God" is the self in the middle; and, if we divide the unity into the world-in-itself, and the individuality that subsists for itself, i.e., if we try to treat them both as subsisting on their own account, we only experience this absurdity. They can be observed like this, for

the world is there, and the individual comes into it and leaves a mark; but no “necessary” relation can be observed at all.

The active individual who is observed is *embodied*. This is something that I have been ignoring in using the paradigm of the biographer as observer, since biography is usually concerned with the dead (and generally treats even a living subject as one who is no longer active). Hegel’s psychologist, on the other hand, is an ethical scientist concerned with living individuals. So observational Reason has one last chance. We can take our identity of “outer” and “inner,” of “necessity” and “freedom,” and separate the sides for observation by taking the organic body as the “outer” through which the expression of inward “individuality” is observed.

V A(c): Observation of the Connection of Self-Consciousness with Its Immediate Actuality: Physiognomy and Phrenology

Since we have seen that the biographer is the best paradigm of the observer of rational individuality, it might seem that we can leave out the study of the rational individual as a living organism altogether. Our object is already the object of the biographer: the individual in her own world.

But it is precisely the living organism which is educated to be a rational agent; and the rational psychologist (whether she is aware of it or not) is visible to us in the context of the Aristotelian order of the practical sciences. She observes the living individual, and she discovers that the individual escapes the bounds of her observation. When the biographer observes that individual in her own world, the problem is overcome—but only because the individuality is observed as a “complete life.” We can now take this “result” and observe it as the subjective focus of life in action.

This advance involves taking the living embodiment of the individual into account. In Logic we were observing only the universal aspect of the “mind” (for the instinctive observer) or of the “spirit” (for us). Like the universal unconscious Life (of which it is the subjectivity) the logical Concept turns over necessarily into the Concept of Subjective Spirit. In Psychology we observe this in its particular shape; the naïve observer is writing the educator’s manual of the later Enlightenment. But our object was the sort of Psychology that Hegel offers in his Philosophy of Spirit. The two poles come together in the problem of the “individual” as it is faced by a biographer. The discovery of the point at which the biographer must fail, brings us logically to the observation of the actual living individual; and we must necessarily turn back to the “Observation of Nature” now, because the living individual is an embodied organism in the natural environment. Thus, the whole movement of Observation is a circular logical progression in accordance with the method of experiential development.

Also, the recognition of freedom (upon which the perfect observation of individuality founders) brings us back to the normative project of psychology. Both for us, and for the empirical psychologist, the object of observation is the structure of Sittlichkeit. Formal logic is the instrumental science of rationality, and normative psychology is the science of good citizenship. We find that we have to return to natural science, with its ideal of predictive knowledge, in order to carry out the project of educational psychology. The obser-

vation of crime is peculiarly important here. It is easily shown that individuals who are perfectly familiar with the laws and customs, and who can conform when they know they are observed, sometimes try to evade observation because they want to "break the law." It is a truth of formal logic that only cases of failure to evade observation can actually be directly observed, but the existence of many successes can be inferred from the observed results of deeds whose agents remain unknown. Thus the search for a law by which the criminal type can be identified, is logically imposed or dictated by the concrete logic of ethics or statesmanship; and this social motivation was consciously present in the minds of the actual proponents of the observational sciences that we shall study in this section.

Physiognomy fails to be an observational science, first because "body-language" cannot be effectively translated into the language of science, and secondly because all physical expression is subject to voluntary control. When the living body proves to be an impossible means of access to the "inner" as an sich (precisely because it is the medium of transition for the an sich into Fürsichsein) what is left is the body as an Ansichsein. As a "thing" its being-in-itself is directly identical with its being-for-us as the perceivers. We have discovered that we cannot read from its living use, what the user means. Can we read from what it is outwardly, the truth of what its living consciousness is inwardly?

It is debatable how we ought to take this final transition of Observing Reason methodically. Hegel himself says that our last result is to be taken two ways (par. 344). We might argue that Physiognomy negates itself so directly in "experience" as to leave this dead result. But Hegel is careful to record Lavater's rejection of Phrenology. So he wants us to see this transition as the movement of the "self-conscious body" Concept into its simple antithesis: the dead body. This closes Observation into a perfect circle, since the observer now observes herself as a mere element in the Mineralogical Organism. But it means that the progressive result of this phase of Observation is not visible in Section A of chapter V at all. It only becomes visible in the transition to Section B. The real thinghood of Reason is the embodied consciousness expressing itself actively in its environment.

(d) *Observing the Soul in Its Bodily Expression (Lavater)*

- 12./309. Since there is no law for the relation of self and world, observation distinguishes between self-consciousness and the body. It attends to the antithesis that is wiped out in the peculiar determinacy of the singular active agent.

In the first paragraph Hegel merely presents the positive result of the preceding moment; my analysis goes slightly beyond that and partially anticipates the next paragraph because it is difficult both to express the argument in ordinary English, and to abbreviate it, without looking ahead. The positive individuality that escapes from rational observation is a *free* agent who is both in and for herself. As "for herself" she is free. But as "in herself" she is part of the observable world. She is a living organism that relates to the world as such.

Pure self-consciousness is *Fürsichselbstsein* (par. 301). But we have known ever since the "first experience" of Self-Consciousness that this being-for-self is dependent upon the living body. So now in the third moment of rational Observation we

are “driven back to” the living organism which was our (adequate) object in the first moment. In the Observation of Nature we observed the body; and in Self-Observation we observed the soul. Now we must observe the relation of soul to body. This is the overall structure; and although the explicit outcome is more comprehensively negative at every stage we must not lose sight of this logical movement. At the same time, the advance from stage to stage is methodically regular. In logical and psychological observation we discovered that the individual is free. We must now look for a rational law *within* that self-liberated individuality. We know from our earlier experience of it that it has an observable and a non-observable side. Can we now find the clue to its “self-conscious” inwardness in the organic shape that we left behind earlier?

We should not overlook the Spinozist background of this new standpoint. Spinoza taught that “the order of Ideas is the same as the order of things” and that the human body is the proximate object of the human mind. He was thinking of how all of our knowledge of the world is necessarily mediated through the bodily senses; but it follows from his general position, that some motion of the body must correspond to every motion of the mind. The fundamental project of Physiognomy rests upon this presupposition; and all behavioral approaches to the mind are “physiognomic” in principle. Physiognomy was a very crude and primitive form of science, but not a pseudo-science. Hegel’s own naturalistic reinterpretation of the Leibnizian monad allows, and implicitly justifies, our being “driven back” from Leibniz to Spinoza at this point. Our object may not appear to be greatly enriched by this, but we shall see in due course that “appearances” are deceptive.

- 13./310. The individual has a body (naturally given); and since he *is* only what he has done, can we not read off what he is from this original record of his doings?

The individual has an “*original determinate being*—a determinacy that is in concept the same as what psychology wanted to find outside him.” The “*original determinate Being*” is the individual’s body; and it is “original” because it was formed by the life-process before she is conscious of it. What psychology wanted to find outside, but could not, was the individual’s conscious “world.” Our own world belongs to each of us in a “windowless monad” way. So the claim that the body is “according to the Concept the same” should be interpreted in terms of Spinoza’s doctrine that “the object of the Idea constituting the human mind is the body, or a certain mode of extension actually existing, and nothing else.”²³ Our bodies are the key to our private worlds. The world in itself (both physical and social, i.e. natural and spiritual) is the “indeterminate essence” of all individuality. What determines it, on the hypothesis of this new mode of observation, is its reception and transformation in and by the bodily organs, without which the individual could not be conscious of it at all. The body is an observable object, so the problem is to learn to interpret from its outward shape what is going on “inside its consciousness.”

- 14./311. Observed in its own natural and cultural environment the body is the visible record of the individual’s active self-expression. How then is this record to be interpreted?

Hegel did not have an actual science to deal with, which aspired to explain singular acts or even the routinized oddities of single individuals. The underlying assumption of Lavater's Physiognomy was that different individuals would take the impress of general natural and cultural conditions in different ways according to their *nature*, which was assumed to consist of a repertory of dispositions or tendencies. If we ask how Physiognomy can expect to fare any better than the educational psychology that we have already observed (which attempted to comprehend individual behavior on the basis of these same assumptions with the clear consciousness of individual freedom) the answer is that now the bodily signs are supposed to give us a reliable index of the activity of arbitrary choice. Physiognomy is the putative science of "body language." The body as naturally given (including its natural and cultural environment) determines the range of what the individual *can* do; as the expression of what she *has done* (against that background) it shows what she is now disposed to do.

When we try to observe the psychological formation of character, it becomes apparent quite rapidly that we cannot do it. We can never tell that the desired habit has been properly formed. We can observe the performance of the action, but we cannot know when the individual is doing it "for its own sake"—to use the Aristotelian language—rather than because the agent knows we are watching. Sherlock Holmes, however, is an expert physiognomist. He frequently reads the observable bodily signs of what the individual *habitually* does. That his imaginary performances are so plausible for us shows that we believe (or would very much like to believe) that this kind of observation is possible; and it also illustrates the advance over simple psychological observation. "This being"—the body that the individual has certainly molded *for its own sake*—"is the expression of the inner [conscious] agent." Observing the body makes the process of discovering the "law of individuality" *sylogistic* in Hegel's sense. The body serves as a "middle" term—a visible record of the Aristotelian character. Here is our new lawlike expression relation.²⁴ But we have to discover how we should *read* the record.

- 15./312. The body is an "organ" of expression. I affect the world through it. But that (uttered) expression I lose. My speech and work is not an expression, it is *me*; but because it is my *uttered* self, it falls prey to reworking by others. Also I may be faking, or I may fail. And the "organs of utterance" are then just part of the fake or failure.

Before we examine this paragraph, we ought to notice first that in paragraph 311 Hegel began by mentioning the natural and cultural environment as impressed in the bodily type. Travellers, observing local "types," were among the most enthusiastic physiognomists of the time. The novel *Sophia's Journey*, which distracted the schoolboy Hegel for most of a day from the studies to which he had intended to devote his time, was full of physiognomic observations; and Hegel himself recorded a few observations of his own some years later when he was hiking in the Swiss Alps.²⁵ So although he may have been sceptical about physiognomy even in this generic application by 1806, Hegel was not insensible or unsympathetic to the eighteenth century conviction that there were national and local types and characters.

But as a means of understanding *individuals* he does not believe that it has any validity; and he does not hide that fact, even in his initial presentation of Lavater's case (which begins here).

We work on our bodies to make them the effective instruments of the self-expression that is really important to us. The body is the mediating term of our real utterance; mouth and limbs are our principal "means" of expression. But our real expressions become free *from* us. On the one hand others can twist them to suit themselves, and on the other hand, we are free of them ourselves; and quite apart from the wilfulness of others, we may fail to express what we meant to, or we may mean to deceive others and succeed in doing that.

In its actual instrumental use the body cannot be the reliable *sign* that the rational observer needs. If our expression is both truthful and successful, then it is not an *expression* of our intent; it *is* our intent. It is the inner itself "uttered."²⁶ What we say or do is identically what we mean. But because the utterance is there independently no one can be intuitively certain of its truthful status, or its correct interpretation. This forces us to consider *how* it is uttered. But the mouth or the hand is just the instrument of the intent; if there is a failure, or if the intent is to deceive, then (in so far as they are instruments under voluntary control) they can become part of the deceit, or be the actual occasion for the failure.

- 16./313. As an inert thing the body is no use for interpretation, because the conventions for reading what is "written" there are arbitrary and cannot be fixed.

Having disposed of the mouth and limbs, which simply become part of the action, and hence are of no use as an independent index of the intent, Hegel now gives us *Lavater's* argument against the *skull*. The hypothesis of the phrenologists, Gall and Spurzheim, was precisely that the outer *Gestalt* received the impression of the inner organism *passively* as a subsisting thing. Lavater's reason for rejecting this approach is that there is no rational way of determining what the "impression" means. One can take any bump as the sign of anything. This already anticipates what Hegel himself will say later in its proper place. We can only understand why it needs to be said here, if we grasp that paragraphs 312 and 313 are intended to eliminate the two extremes, between which Physiognomy is the rational mean.

We ought to notice at this point the affinity between Lavater and Lamarck. Whatever impress the body takes from its struggle either with the natural environment or in cultural discipline is physiognomically interpretable. A very important spiritual inference can be securely founded, for example, on the state of the old man's teeth in one of the fossils found at Chou kou t'ien. He could not have reached the age he did, with his teeth as worn down as they were, apart from the existence of a family bond, which Hegel would be happy to have me call *love*. This is a proper *physiognomic* inference, and it concerns individual relations. It is quite a *rational* observation, and it must be sharply distinguished from the quasi-phrenological arguments about the advance of human intelligence that are based upon measurements of surviving fossil brain-cases.²⁷

- 17./314. Physiognomy, however, claims to study character as the identity of conscious essence and subsisting shape in their natural and necessary connection (unlike astrology or palmistry).

Lavater eagerly insisted that whereas there are many arts of divination which are nothing but superstition, Physiognomy is a scientific discipline. From the *Gestalt* of the body we can infer the character of the individual. Among the superstitions from which he distinguished it, the most venerable is astrology. The tradition was probably old when Plato made a mythic use of it in the *Timaeus*, and a mythic criticism of it in the *Phaedrus*.²⁸ I do not know where palmistry originated, but Hegel's willingness to call both astrology and palmistry "sciences" is a backhanded slap at Lavater who distinguishes his "science" as a proper one from the others which are not sciences at all. Hegel does, however, draw the appropriate distinction between them; and we may notice that palmistry does not suffer by comparison with phrenology. The configuration of the heavens at the time of birth *is* more external; and any causal influence *must* there pass from "outer" to "inner."

- 18./315. Next to the tongue, however, the hand is the instrument of our self-definition. So palmistry can *almost* claim to take the same short cut as physiognomy. The hand *is* our potential.

This paragraph is a puzzling interjection into Hegel's statement of the case for Physiognomy. Lavater did consider the hand as a physiognomic index (and also the handwriting). That is alluded to in the next paragraph. But unlike the palmist (or for that matter the policeman) Lavater was not concerned with any patterns that are put on our hands by nature. If the physiognomist believes in natural hand types his belief is of a Lamarckian kind, and is not the fortune-teller's faith that the *future* is revealed in what is naturally given. Hegel seems to have brought in this ironic comparison of physiognomy with palmistry in order to make two points of his own.

The first is that what we do with hand and tongue *is* our actual self-definition. What we say actualizes our rational individuality more immediately and unambiguously; but what we do with our hands (including writing, though that is not explicitly referred to until the next paragraph) is the abiding *record* of our individual existence. The hand can with justice be called the *Ansich* of rational individuality, because it makes the mark that is our *Anundfürsichsein*.

The second point is that this realization of the rational self as a monad can only be rationally observed and assessed after our death. Solon's proverbial saying (recorded by Herodotus as part of his conversation with King Croesus: "Call no man happy until he is dead")²⁹ expressed the Greek *tragic* sense that one's "destiny" (*Schicksal*) is always at the mercy of higher powers. The word *eudaimon* (which is ordinarily translated "happy") meant etymologically, and in the popular mind, that one enjoyed the favor of a spirit or *daimon*. But Heracleitus (and others after him) insisted that we are the architects of our own good fortune, and that "character is the *daimon* for man." Aristotle, who developed the concept of *eudaimonia* as "the life in accordance with the best and most complete virtue"—i.e. with

the perfect *character*—dealt with Solon’s point by distinguishing between “happiness” (which can be *marred* but never destroyed by misfortune) and “blessedness” (the perfection which only the favor of fortune can add to “happiness”).³⁰

It is here, I think, that we find the reason for Hegel’s curious decision to linger with palmistry, and to contrast the fairground fortune teller as well as Lavater with Solon. The hand is (as he says) the principal agent by which we “make our fortunes.” But the palmist recognizes (and Lavater does not) that our fortune or destiny is “out of our hands” (as active agents). The introduction of the word *Schicksal* is the key here. “Destiny”—in the naked conceptual form of Necessity—will be the first experience of the self-actualizing rational self when we get to it. Between now and then Destiny will appear to the supposedly rational fortune teller (the phrenologist) as *death*, the one rational certainty for which the skull is a non-arbitrary sign. But Destiny appears prophetically here (in its ordinary guise) as that aspect of the individual’s real life in the world which the rational observer of individuality as an organic totality is ignoring. The addition of palmistry makes the hand into a *complete* image of human destiny. It is the oracle of our fate, as well as the agent of it.

- 19./316. We can see now why we need an organ of expression that is no more than that (i.e., it does not complete a *deed*, such as speech, which *is* the self and also a free object). We need a sign that is *simply* observable (so that we don’t have to collect a universe of fragments). Characteristics of the hand, timbre of the voice, handwriting, are fair candidates.

We are now ready for Lavater’s solution to the problem of what to observe. The organs of the body are not to be observed as the actual *agents* of the intended deed. For then the “intention” of the deed becomes ambiguous. What is being done speaks for itself, and if the deed is a concealment, that is what the doing realizes (see par. 312 which is simply summarized here). The organ is to be observed as the necessary middle term between intention and action. It is there to be studied all the time both before and after action. It is outwardly visible, but never separate (like an action) from the inward thoughts and intentions of the agent. The individual’s deeds are many and various, but all are mediated, all pass through hand or mouth, so hands and face and tone of voice (and the handwriting) are where the simple disposition will show.³¹ All that the agent has done, and all that she has suffered through circumstance and destiny, is recorded in these organs of the will. The handwriting is included because although it can only be observed in specimens that are external *products* of acts it reveals character as much as the tones of voice or mobile expressions of the face; and it has the advantage of permanent observability as a *thing*.³² All of these observable traits are windows on the monad whose singular acts are just isolated details of a complex interaction with the world.

- 20./317. But the whole body is a language of gesture, of inhibited action, and of self-feeling (especially the face).

Once we understand the principle, every movable aspect of the body becomes a possible object of physiognomic observation. The whole body is the medium of an unself-conscious language. Actors, of course, make this naïve expression the object of conscious technique (and that will be the downfall of this “science” in a nutshell). But even in acting the goal is to let the expression come as spontaneously as it did and does before the actors controlled (or when they are not controlling) it.

Lavater anticipated Freud in regarding body-language as a system of *inhibited* impulse, and hence as a rational source for the betrayal of secret vices. But there is an important difference. The *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* is directly continuous with Lavater’s “physiognomy” as far as conscious and preconscious motivation is concerned. But Freud thinks the body betrays genuinely “unconscious” impulses and wishes. Lavater thinks, rather, that we can observe the “act of concealment,” and thus make all action essentially truthful. The body betrays how the agent is “reflecting” upon the outward act.

It is in this perspective that we can recognize physiognomy as the resolution of the problem posed by the psychological discovery that the individual *may or may not* accept the values that make virtuous acts genuinely virtuous. The body shows what she is saying to herself. That is the function of physiognomy as a science of “individual” observation. It aims at the discovery and unmasking of dishonesty. Thus, if one says that nail-biting is a sign of ethical “tension,” that is sufficient for the instrumental needs of rational observation. It does not matter that the tension may have many causes. Even the rational psychologist will be able to discover what the trouble is as long as the nail-biter is *honest*. It is where she starts *lying* that physiognomy is needed.³³

- 21./318. Thus the inhibited action reveals the *real* intention of the actual one. But the bodily expression is both inscrutable and controllable; so that if physiognomy *were* a science one would only have to study it in order to defeat its observational use. The face can tell us something or nothing—like the behavior in psychology.

The case for Lavater’s “science” is now complete. The rational observer is supposed to be able to see in the bodily demeanour what the real mind of the active agent is: it is “the reflectedness of the individual out of his actuality.” In ordinary life we *do* “see” whether people mean what they say or not.³⁴ But just as we need conventions about the signs used in writing, so there are conventional interpretations of bodily expression; otherwise the expression is inscrutable, it means nothing. For the interpretation to be “scientific” the convention must be known; and once it is known it can be inhibited or used falsely. Animals in the wild *learn* to interpret the cries both of their own and of other species. But the reliability of the interpretation depends precisely on the fact that the behavior is not inhibited, *not* controlled. In a minimal sense the cries may be *meant*. For instance, the blue-jay’s excitement may be reinforced by the reaction that its alarm provokes. Animals teach their young, and many species enjoy playing (both activities involve controlled and inhibited behavior).

Chimpanzees may even reach the stage of “the boy who cried wolf.” But whether any species other than our own can *pretend* at that level or not, this is the point where physiognomy breaks down. Anyone who has played poker much, knows that Shakespeare’s Duncan goes too far when he says: “There’s no art/ To find the mind’s construction in the face.” There *is* an art, a Platonic art of opposites—i.e. an art both of finding and of hiding. Some have it (in one or both forms). Others don’t (and steady losses can teach those who have it not, that it exists). But it is an art that logically *cannot* become a science—not a proper Platonic art in fact. For, supposing that one *can* say how one does it, that is just what one must *not* talk about; so it is essentially what Plato called *empeiria*, a knack. It is effective only within a limited circle of individuals. There may be some who have an almost universally effective poker face; but by the same token there is no one who can read all faces equally.

Lichtenberg, like Shakespeare’s Duncan, overstates the case. But it is probable that the best poker players win more by concealment than by insight. Sherlock Holmes is imaginary; but there are great illusionists in every generation. In any case, the very fact that the “art” is “of opposites” (as Plato would have said) proves Hegel’s essential point: the physiognomist is in no better case than the psychological observer. As soon as the individual who wants to live in a private world realizes that a window has been discovered she can take steps to obscure it. Observing Reason must learn, in the end, that the private world contains nothing essential. The will and the deed are public and identical. This is far from being the end of the story of the private self, but at the level of rational observation at least, Hegel is explicitly a behaviorist.³⁵

- 22./319. Individuality expresses itself in its work. Reason instinctively treats this externality as the unessential (inverting the truth as in Understanding). “What he really *means*” is what counts, and we see that in his spontaneous expression.

The “experience” of physiognomy is very quickly displayed. In essence Hegel finishes with it in his first quotation from Lichtenberg: if one knew that one’s expression was being read by a scientist, a courageous resolution would defeat her. This is a contrary to fact conditional, and there is another one like it coming from the same source a bit later on. But this first one reveals already the interesting and paradoxical fact that no one actually has the “experience” of physiognomy as a science, because there *is* no science.

Once this is recognized—and Hegel has proved that there is no experience corresponding to the concept by showing why there cannot be one—the interesting thing for *us* to observe is the context of rational assumptions that leads the ethical observer to think that there ought to be such a science. That structure of assumptions must be tested against the experience of ethical life. Then the second Lichtenberg quotation can tell us why there ought *not* to be any such science, why it is unethical to act and speak as we would if we believed in it.

The basic hypothesis of the physiognomist is that the outer can be separated from the inner aspect of action, and that the inner aspect is what is *true*. This

assumption arises naturally from psychological observation as an educational discipline. Rational psychology is the theoretical foundation of practical science (in Aristotle's sense). That is to say that it gets its standards and its goal-definition from ethics. It is important for the educator to know whether the subject is really becoming "virtuous" or not. This seems to lead us toward the Kantian concern with *intention* as what determines the worth of the act. But what Aristotle was concerned about was the reliable performance of the act which a practically wise man would define to be appropriate to the situation. Theoretical certainty that the act was indeed virtuous was not the goal; for if the underlying habit was not really a virtuous one, that would eventually become apparent.

Practical expression, not theoretical intention, is what counts. The whole Kantian approach to ethics is upside down or backwards; it is the extension of the law-mechanism of Understanding into the free world of Reason. According to the first inversion of Understanding, it is the intelligible, inner world of perfectly stable order that is *real*. But it is only in the sensible world comprehended as "appearance" that this noumenal world is actually realized. Kantian ethics must be understood through a similar comprehension of the world of real actions. Lavater's attempt to invert the "true intention" into the *body*, so that it can simply be there for us to see, only makes the falsity (and indeed the *evil*) of the whole theoretical concern with inward righteousness explicit. Reason came forth from that inwardness where sin and righteousness are eternally united in their contradiction. There cannot be a greater error than to want to go back there. This was easy to grasp at the inorganic level. But the lesson is only learned slowly and painfully about the self-consciousness of the organism. The absurdity of a distinct *observational* standard of "intention" is the first lesson.³⁶

- 23./320. We all make spot judgments about one another based on impressions. These are judgments about the "Spirit" conveyed in the impression. But such judgments are unreliable opinions. Physiognomy wants to make them into a science and say "he is a *potential* thief, murderer, etc." But its descriptions of the relevant facial characteristics remain hopelessly inadequate. The individual's facial *expression* cannot *be* verbally expressed. That alone makes it certain that physiognomy cannot be a science.

Having shown why a "science" of physiognomy is impossible in practice and absurd in theory, Hegel turns now to the actual practice of physiognomy as an empirical art. Obviously the physiognomy that we all practice ("I don't like the *look* of him," "She has such an *honest* face" and so on) is frequently no more than the sort of prejudice that tells more about ourselves, or the mood of the moment, than about those who are subjected to it. It is doubtful that we ought to concede Lavater's assumption that there are "natural" physiognomists whose first impressions are usually right. The insight of a good card-player is not immediate but a trained expectation; and it is soundest where the group are old acquaintances. It is always guesswork no matter how "educated" the guessing may be.

In order for physiognomy to be even a natural skill, there has to be some bodily aspect that reveals the *capacity* for murder, or theft etc. In fact, Lavater did not

believe that “capacities” were distributed by nature in that way. He was a Protestant minister, with a fully developed (Augustinian) Unhappy Consciousness. Anyone was capable of any sin, he thought, if the stresses and temptations of the moment were great enough. At least, he says explicitly that anyone can be a thief; therefore, he reasons, anyone can show the bodily “mien” of a thief.³⁷ So he would be the first to agree that the “thievish potential” is quite lost in “the concrete infinitely determinate character of the *singular* individual.” No matter how carefully we characterize a bodily mien, the description can never be detailed enough to capture the individual. We can describe three people as a thief, a nice man, and a natural, unspoiled girl; and we can say the first has a flat forehead, the second has a long nose, and the third has curly brown hair. But we cannot make any description adequate to our immediate impression either on the ethical or on the physical side. We are dealing here with the intuitive “feeling” and the “look” of people; we have come back to the kind of sense-certainty that is in principle *uncertain*, precisely because it is linguistically ineffable.

- 24./321. The “laws” of how the body expresses the spirit can only be vague conjectures (and the physiognomist cannot fail to know that). Also the guesses will reflect personal prejudices.

James Joyce solves the problem of physiognomic description about as well as it can be solved when he uses the same form of words to describe a young girl, and the stream that is to become a river (it is accurate to say that he is facing the physiognomic problem, because he intends the river as a symbol of the course of human life): “She was just a young, thin, pale, soft, shy, slim, slip of a thing then, sauntering by *silva* moon lake.”³⁸ This is ineffably “subjective,” but it creates a presence with *universal* import. It does not state (or presuppose) any laws that I can think of; but it *suggests* the identity that Lavater was conscious of, and wanted to make laws about; and it contributes something more significant to “the understanding and love of mankind” (which Lavater’s science aimed to advance) than the “laws” which Lichtenberg wittily compares with the prejudiced generalizations of a more prosaic washerwoman. It is not part of “science,” but it illustrates the two-sided genius of language, which points away from sense-certainty, while creating an image that has all the immediacy which makes occasional moments of sense-certainty radiantly memorable for all of us. For me at least this unforgettable example illuminates how Physiognomy belongs to “absolute knowledge.”³⁹

- 25./322. A man’s true being is his deed. If I say I know him better by his face, he will hit me [and let *my* face show what I am]. The face is there to be hit, and the hitting teaches us that individuality is action, the negating of what is there. There is no ambiguity or guesswork about it; the spirit is not yet explicitly present, but what is *actual* is clear enough. Someone who thinks only of his supposed potential, deceives himself. Of course one’s deeds can be misinterpreted, but if they are anything real they will outlast that.

The second quotation from Lichtenberg tells us why we *ought* not to aspire to a science of physiognomy. A black eye would be even more appropriate than a thick ear for someone who commented that being honest was costing the agent a great effort, and took this as a sign that she was really not honest at all. The effort might indeed be perfectly observable in one's demeanour; but one wonders how Lavater (whose "love of mankind" was as genuine as his understanding of temptation, for he died of an infection incurred while tending the wounded victims of Napoleon's Swiss campaign in 1801) would have diagnosed the physiognomy of Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas morning. Certainly he agreed that "the true being of the man is his deed"; yet the accompanying "physiognomy" may be either that of self-conquest, or that of liberation.

It is more interesting to consider the relation of Hegel's thesis to the work of Freud. For the whole psychoanalytic approach to our behavior is a subtle and sophisticated development of the physiognomy of conflict. It is not the face, so much as things one says spontaneously, and the dreams one has, etc., that the analyst looks at; but he says just what Lichtenberg promises that no "brav Kerl" will *ever* tolerate, and he does not get punched for it. The point is, of course, that no one goes to the analyst feeling like a "brav Kerl"; and the analyst is not passing judgment like one of Plato's examiners after a battlefield test, or after one of the drinking parties proposed in the first book of the *Laws*.

There are a few points about the identity of the real individual with her deeds that deserve to be underlined (though for the most part the argument of this long paragraph is unwontedly clear and simple). The black eye (if we may substitute that case) is the "sublated being" of the face that provided the physiognomist's triumphant insight. What the blow means is fully expressed, and the helplessness of language in that respect is no longer a difficulty. "Explanations" are still called for; one would hardly expect the physiognomist to take the point that his *theory* has been refuted without some further discussion. But in this appropriate act (appropriate given that the physiognomist is not an old man, a woman, or even like Lavater a man of the cloth, and so on for all the relevant customary expectations) the *brav Kerl* has established his character.

In the simple act, "he is not posited as spirit." What does that mean? If the physiognomist protests, and our *brav Kerl* is articulate enough to say what Lichtenberg says for him—that he has *only* done what any decent guy would do "bis ans Ende der Welt"—then what Hegel calls "true Spirit" is "posited." But there is some ambiguity about this positing. It is easier to see that he is "posited as spirit" when he is not a *brav Kerl* at all, but a veritable *Schelm in Herzen* ["a rogue at heart"] talking to his analyst.⁴⁰

When Hegel speaks of the individual's "deceiving himself . . . and fancying that in his own inwardness he is something other than he is in his deed," he is anticipating the dialectic of Reason as *die Sache selbst*; and this is true again when he comments that "in as much as it goes to work and becomes the work [*zum Werke wird*], individuality surrenders itself to [or becomes fair game for] transformation and perversion." It is necessary to make a proleptic allusion to that final resolution now,

because it is perfectly possible for the active individual to take the part of observer, and to observe herself. Being *ex hypothesi* rational she cannot deceive herself in direct psychological observation; and one would think that she neither can nor needs to be her own physiognomist (except in the limit case of the professional actor, or the agent setting out to defeat a physiognomist). But, in fact, “physiognomy” is exactly the conceptual structure of psychological self-deception. One can look at one’s own “inner face” and convince oneself that one has all kinds of unrealized potential, and that *that* is one’s “real self.”

So the place and function of physiognomy in establishing Observing Reason as a stable self-maintaining *Gestalt* is a crucially important one, even if the pretence that sense-certainty can become the foundation for a proper science is logically absurd. We must not be misled by Hegel’s rhetorical zeal. He wants us to see how hypocritical it is to admire the virtue of one’s own character, simply as character; and how lazy it is to believe with Lady Catherine de Bourgh that “There are few people in England, I suppose, who have more true enjoyment of music than myself, or a better natural taste. If I had ever learnt [to play the piano], I should have been a great proficient.”⁴¹ He wants us to see that the position is *sterile*. But he emphasizes all this because we have to understand why the rational spirit itself becomes dissatisfied and moves on.

The very fact that the emphasis is needed indicates that there is a temptation to stay, that the position can *satisfy* people of intelligence who take themselves and life very seriously. Lavater’s “science” made a great impression on some of the best minds of the time, from Goethe downwards. We can readily see why it was an interesting and attractive project for all writers and readers who were interested in the portrayal of “character.”⁴² But Hegel recognized that as a science (or even as a perceptual “art”) physiognomy promised to be just the conceptual complement that the Aristotelian ethics needed to make it into a properly modern form of rational observation. Hegel was himself an Aristotelian in social ethics. To expose the error of Lavater was, for him, a first step in the overthrow of the prevailing Kantian moralism; and this was an essential prerequisite for the proper regeneration of the “substantial” spirit that Aristotle’s *Ethics* expressed.

(e) *The Outer as a Record of the Inner (Gall)*

- 26./323. Psychology looks at the relation of self-consciousness to the outside world; Physiognomy looks to the body for its most direct expression; finally we can look to the body-structure as a mirror of the spirit’s potential.

In Physiognomy we returned to the observation of the organism as the key to the hidden activity of self-consciousness. Thus the speculative inspiration of Lavater’s science (whether he knew it or not) was Spinoza’s doctrine of the perfect parallelism of soul and body, thought and extension. But the rational psychology that recognizes the *freedom* of self-consciousness, is obliged to conceive individuality in the manner, not of Spinoza, but of Leibniz; and the rational observer of the organism

only finds herself with a proper “object” for the formulation of universal “laws” about the parallel of thought and extension, when she has a dead organism on the anatomy table. Logically, therefore, the reintegration of the successful observation of the inorganic, the one mode of rational observation that does produce laws, into the observational philosophy of Spirit, is the necessary climax of Reason as Observation. There must be some way in which the free, self-defining, fully *monadic* character of the individual can be acknowledged, without the monad’s becoming really “windowless.” Reason itself, which demands and presupposes its own freedom from the inside, equally requires that from the outside everything it observes should be rationally determined.

One can see this Spinozist imperative working in Leibniz himself; and the antinomy of rational freedom and determinism came to its critical resolution only in Kant’s separation of the noumenal from the phenomenal world. Hegel’s philosophy of Spirit aims to sublimate that dualism, which is typical or definitive of the standpoint called Understanding. But Understanding (and hence that dualism with it) remains the primordial form of Reason itself; all rational activity is, and must remain, founded upon it. Hence (according to Hegel’s own doctrine of “absolute knowledge”) we absolutely *know* that any acceptable resolution of the antinomy of freedom and determinism must leave open the possibility of an *understandable* explanation of *free* actions.

I feel sure, for instance, that no one will ever explain the composition of *Hamlet* in terms of “observational Reason.” But I always hope to be enlightened by the efforts of psychoanalysts (whom I take to be the modern “physiognomists”) to explain it; and if my hopes are generally disappointed, I can still become interested in the *difference* between what the observer takes to be enlightening, and the enlightenment that I was looking for.

This reflection helps us to understand a paradox. When we come to “Phrenology” in its place in the sequence of observational sciences, it appears to be nothing but a freak. Physiognomy or Mesmerism we can readily understand as passing fashions. They were bubbles that burst quite soon; but they expressed the rational optimism of the time, they were the sort of *scientific* fashions which we expect to find in a world that believes in the perfectibility of man, and the imminent arrival of an age in which the advancement of science will make human lordship over nature complete.

But in order to believe in Phrenology it seems that one has to be as naïve as the young town girl who “crosses the palm” of the gypsy woman with silver at the annual fair, in order to hear the old folktale of the sleeping beauty applied to herself. How can it be, we ask, that in this age, a *scientific* fortune-teller could impose upon the educated who laughed at that girl even more readily than they did at her pious sister who still prayed to the Virgin for a miracle—for the old gypsy was a social outcast, but one still had to be careful what one said about prayers and miracles, even in Protestant circles where the Virgin was fair game.

Yet the fact is that, although physiognomy only ever looked like a “science” at the level of the *species*, and never at the level of individual observation at all, Phre-

nology was an important science, with many practitioners and with its own societies and journals. It lasted a long time, and was no more troubled by the attacks of critics like Lichtenberg and Hegel, than “natural theology” was by Hume. In Europe, at least, it was supported mainly by intellectuals with an active social conscience and a strong commitment to social reform. It perished only when the development of neurophysiology made the cruder approach to the brain via the skull superfluous; and while it existed it made a significant contribution to the nascent science of sociology, especially the sociology of deviant behavior.⁴³ In this area it produced the one scientist whose name is as well (or better) remembered than that of the founder: the Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso (1836–1909). The founder himself, Franz Josef Gall (1758–1828) was respected as a brain-anatomist, even by medical men who were properly sceptical about whether the study of the living skull could effectively be used to interpret, test, and extend the findings of the knife in the cadaver.

I mentioned the pious sister, who prefers the help of the Virgin to the second sight of the gypsy woman, for a reason. The intellectual freethinkers agreed with the gypsy and her client that there were no miracles; and of course they were *not* fortune-tellers as far as the external fate of the individual was concerned. They *believed* in “fate” at that level too. But it was the impersonal fate of scientific law, not the gypsy’s Providence (which is as directly concerned with Cinderella or the Sleeping Beauty as the Blessed Virgin was with Joan of Arc and the coronation at Rheims). The freethinkers believed that everything had a cause. The fact that when this view is extended to the human mind it becomes dangerous to religion, and gets censored and condemned as such,⁴⁴ only underlines its “scientific” character, and strengthens the faith of its intellectual supporters. The fairground gypsy is an enemy of *orthodox* religion too. But no one has ever mistaken her for a scientist. She belongs to the older religion of the “happy” consciousness. Her classical sister was the Pythian priestess of the oracle.

27./324. This is a direct return to the Understanding’s formulation of causal connections.

Phrenology is a causal theory. However unsuccessful it may have been in practice, it is not conceptually absurd in the way that physiognomy was. Hegel will seek to show that the project *is* conceptually absurd; and he will show that to his own satisfaction. But the absurdity involved is only the *general* (or dialectical) absurdity of the Understanding at its plainest and most explicit: the absurdity of identifying the concrete with the abstract, the living with the dead, the form with the content, the mathematical with the rational. *That* identification of opposites is the eternal fount of all empirical science; the “error” is radically different from the logical mistake of trying to make sensory immediacy into one of the terms of a scientific law. Physiognomy is not, and cannot possibly become, an observational *science*. Its data are not measurable and quantifiable, for they are not even properly determinable (or linguistically describable).⁴⁵

Physiognomy corresponds, at the level of self-consciousness, to the dynamic

theory of physiology as a sensible, irritable, and reproductive system. That theory could never become a properly scientific one either, on account of its logical indeterminacy. The “spiritual science” that properly corresponds to our modern physiology (which is quantitative and hence “scientific” in the observational sense) is depth psychology. It is still doubtful whether this can become an observational “science” because of the essentially singular (and hence ineffable or unquantifiable) status of the data. But dynamic physiology became a science when it became technologically possible to apply anatomical methods to the living organism; and it is clear that the advance of depth psychology to properly scientific status must depend on whether the neurological and genetic sciences that have replaced “skull-theory” can similarly provide an observational foundation for the *id* and the *super-ego* (or whatever theoretical constructs may replace them).⁴⁶

To draw attention to these developments and possibilities is not to be anti-Hegelian (or even neutrally *un-Hegelian*). It is not even to criticize Hegel. It is only to criticize a certain *understanding* of Hegel—a reading of him which is certainly plausible and very widespread, but which is nonetheless demonstrably mistaken. Hegel waxes very eloquent about the folly of “skull-theory.” The closing pages of his discussion of it are among the most memorable in the book; and I shall try to show when we come to them that his absolute contempt is logically justified, and that his irony and wit are as deeply wise as he obviously believes they are. “Skull-theory” is the *absolute* turning point of the book. This is the Calvary where singular Reason is crucified, and the spirit of “absolute knowledge” rises from the grave. The book divides here. The negative part ends, and the positive part (the part that needs to be recapitulated in chapter VIII) begins. Here, if anywhere, therefore, Hegel must be absolutely sincere in his criticism; and here, if anywhere, he must be categorically correct if his “absolute knowledge” really is *absolute* in any determinable sense.

But “absolute knowledge” is only the *goal*, not the *content*, of the “science of experience.” And what the science of experience castigates as absurd, it has first declared (and shown) to be *necessary*. We have already noted that Hegel *studied* anatomy; and that the result of his studies was *not* just the negative critique in the *Phenomenology* but the positive deployment of his knowledge in the “Philosophy of Nature.” “Skull-theory” belongs to the *Phenomenology* alone; Gall’s “science” offered nothing to be recuperated in the system.⁴⁷ There can be no doubt that Hegel regarded it as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the observational attitude, and the logical vanishing point of empirical knowledge.

That assessment was in essence correct; and the insight that it was correct, certainly facilitated the birth of “the science of experience.” I will not say that the “science of experience” and the concept of “absolute knowledge” could *only* be born when Gall was lecturing to enthusiastic audiences. It seems to me unHegelian to suppose that historical necessity is like that; it brings us too close in spirit to the Providence that sees the fall of every sparrow. But I *will* say that if the birth of “absolute knowledge” had somehow been delayed from 1807 until 1977, we should have seen our latter-day Hegel assailing the thesis of J.Z. Young that “for our study

of man we should try to proceed as far as we can with the use of principles of physics and chemistry”⁴⁸ almost as violently as the historical Hegel assails Gall’s thesis. But then in his “Philosophy of Subjective Spirit” we should find an impressive survey of Young’s attempts at brain-modelling.⁴⁹

- 28./325. Where should we look? To the causal ground of the organ through which consciousness controls the body. If we can identify the organ of self-consciousness we can’t be defeated by a mere *resolve* [see par. 318].

Hegel knows, of course, that Plato and Aristotle believed pure thinking was a disembodied activity. But even for them, phenomenal consciousness was a bodily function; and Hegel rejects the incipient dualism of spirit and body present in classical thought, just as he rejects all of the Christian theological and intellectual developments of it. So he agrees with Gall’s hypothesis in this respect: there *is* a bodily organ of thought, and if it *can* be observed, then the physiognomic problem of concealment and deceit cannot arise. Wherever my thinking goes on, it is *for myself*. I cannot *both* think, and conceal my thinking from another, or be directly concerned with how it looks to another (as an actor is concerned about reproducing the physiognomy of intentions). The bodily organ of consciousness is its “being”; and this being is not an *objective* being towards which consciousness can be *indifferent* and act manipulatively. The problem is to identify it, since in some sense it is the whole body that is conscious.

- 29./326. What about the liver for example? The organs in the torso are clearly the seat of animal functions.

Consciousness is spontaneously (i.e. unmaskably) present in the body in two modes. There are the involuntary sensations and feelings, and those that are subject to voluntary control. Hegel chooses the *liver* as the paradigmatic organ of the involuntary life of organic sensation, because Plato suggested it as the organ of supernatural inspiration. Plato was probably being ironic (or at least Hegel took his teaching in that sense).⁵⁰ The “prophets” of Hegel’s time are the romantic high priests of “genius,” so by implication he is putting *them* in their place here. He brings this point out explicitly in the Preface (pars. 57, 68–70). The liver is the household hearth of the body, so to speak; and hence he who appeals to the “oracle in his own breast” is “antihuman” since “what is bestial consists in sticking at the [level of] feeling, being able to communicate only through that” (par. 69). The supposed union of the highest spiritual and the lowest animal functions in the liver is fraudulent. Seen in that perspective the liver is analogous to the skull (with Gall as the prophetic priest of that *scientific* oracle). When we have properly observed the very peculiar spark of truth in “skull-theory” we shall be offered an analogy with the organ that genuinely does unite the highest and lowest functions of *organic* life.

- 30./327. The nervous system controls movement. But this leads us to the brain and spinal cord as the centre from which it is controlled. The brain can be thought of as having

different functions in its different regions (in spite of the essentially fluid nature of the life process). Surely it *must* be thought of in this way, for it is only a middle term between incorporeal spirit and the body.

The voluntary functions of conscious life are carried on mainly by the brain and nervous system. Hegel knows that brain and nervous system sustain many involuntary and unconscious functions, but these are not relevant at this point. He repeats only as much of his theory of physiology and anthropology as is necessary for the purpose here. At present, he is only outlining the groundwork of Gall's theory (which he accepts as scientific fact). The spinal cord, which is the lifeline of the nervous system, is encased *within* the *spine*, which is the bone upon which the whole structure of the organism as a "being-for-another" is founded; and the brain, from which all the organic functions are directed (so that all the systems or moments of the "absolute fluidity" dissolve into it) is similarly encased in the skull.⁵¹

Gall was noteworthy as one of the early theorists of differentiated brain functions; but when he states this part of Gall's theory, Hegel ceases to speak categorically. He says that "it can be imagined [*vorgestellt*] that the fluid *being* of spirit's being-within-self is an articulated one; and it seems (*scheint*) that it must be imagined in that way." Clearly he regarded this as no more than a possibility; and he doubted whether it was the case. He would be delighted by the evidence we now have that although some brain-functions (control of tongue and hand specifically) are localized, the function can be taken over by other parts of the brain if the original location is damaged. This is just the sort of empirical finding that he would take as confirmation of the thesis that "all the cycles . . . are immediately dissolved and no distinction is expressed as *subsisting* (als *seiender*)."⁵²

- 31./328. What this organ presents to outside view is a bone. It exercises a causal effect on skull and backbone; but we can ignore the latter because, as Gall says, we always do. Except, of course, in flogging (but *that* is no argument because corporal punishment goes beyond *that* area). This corporal punishment "proof" is as good as any "construction" to show that spirit is not just in the head. The very concept of phrenology proves *that* and experience supports the view (we don't *do* anything with our skull). The brain is the living organ, and the skull is "dead head."

The crucial hypothesis of skull-theory was not the already debatable view that every part of the brain had its own function, but the further one that the physical formation of the brain is perfectly reflected in the formation of the skull that encases it. Gall clearly held that the controlling function of the brain in life was matched by a spiritual control over the whole process of bodily formation from the embryonic stage onwards. Thus the skull was the "effect" of the brain that it housed. Modern theorists of the evolution of human intelligence accept one very general form of the basic thesis of phrenology: that the increase in the size of the brain-case is an index of the increased size of the brain, and that this in turn indicates the possession of a more complex repertory of modes of behavior, and an increase in that capacity to control behavior which we call "intelligence." But (as

far as I know) Gall's original view that brain development somehow *causes* skull development is not maintained, even in the inverse form, by anyone.

In any case, no one in Hegel's time pretended to know how the "spirit" was causally effective in and upon the body, so it makes little difference if we state Gall's theory as the view that there is a *preestablished harmony* between the formation of the brain, and the formation of the skull that houses it. If we regard the human head as the materialized form of a Leibnizian monad—so that the observation of the external shape provides us with a *window* upon what goes on inside—then we can appreciate the attraction of Gall's hypothesis for an intellectual world which believed equally devoutly in universal causal determinism as the foundation of the order of nature, and in the rational freedom and responsibility of the individual agent as the foundation of any rational social order.

The *priority* (both ontological and teleological) of rational freedom *vis-à-vis* physical necessity is absolutely essential to the resolution of the antinomy between determinism and freedom; and this was clearly recognized by Gall's disciples. But the conceiving of this priority as a *causal* relation involved the implicit resurrection of the antinomy. Hegel is only obliged to take skull-theory seriously at all, because his own "Logic" is a reformulation of this priority of rational freedom as the priority of Spirit (which he conceives of as a *communally* founded movement of individuality). The basic thesis of his discussion of Observing Reason is that "causality" (as conceived in Newtonian mechanics) cannot express the actual relation between the organism and its environment. Obviously therefore it cannot express the higher relation between rational freedom and physical necessity. Skull-theory is where the rebirth of the antinomy (as the postulate of a "preestablished harmony") becomes so patent that every intelligent observer can see it. Hence it is the turning point of Reason where the Hegelian concept of spiritual freedom is born into its community.

Punishment is the most primitive, and the most generally evident, shape of the causal influence of the (social) spirit upon the individual body. So Hegel points out that men are flogged on their backs to drive out their bad habits and inculcate good ones.⁵³ But he concedes ironically that we may accept the claim that the skull is the "peculiarly proper place where the spirit is [*eigentlichen Ort des Daseins des Geistes*]" because that is what we always *do* think of. We can be satisfied with this argument, because his own counterargument is not a sound reason for including the backbone.⁵⁴ It proves "too much" since corporal punishment is also administered to other parts (e.g. in schools the backside, or the hand); and it takes many shapes in which the bones are not directly affected at all (such as restriction of diet and incarceration).⁵⁵ Hegel *wants* to prove too much here, because the inclusion of the backbone within the acknowledged scope of skull-theory would not make it any less arbitrary and absurd; and the point of his comment that Gall's argument on this point is "not too bad" will soon become apparent. It would be difficult for an argument to be "too bad" for this theory, since the evidence offered has, generally speaking, no weight or relevance at all.

Gall counts, in Hegel's eyes, as one of the *formalist* philosophers of nature. His

appeal to our ordinary common sense assumptions is typical of the naïve empiricism of the formalist standpoint. Actually his position is adopted *a priori*. The brain is the immediate being of the spirit; and the skull is its way of “being there” passively. The rest of the organism is a system of “organs,” which are conceptually excluded from the sphere of rational observation, because they are not simply *there* as a passive record.

It is precisely because we do not *do* anything with our skulls, that we can expect to find in them a reliable (uncorrupted) record of what we naturally *are*. Experience guides us to the right view of where and how the inner freedom of the spirit is expressed in the outer determinism of nature. This is the “construction” of skull-theory which Hegel says is “as good as that of many other doctrines of natural philosophy.” The question asked is: where can the record of what the spirit naturally *is*, be observed, undistorted and undefaced? and the answer is: *the skull* contains the immediate organ of spirit. The brain is the living head that controls the body; and the skull is its dead record (in the dead Latin of the alchemists).⁵⁶

- 32./329. The only relation possible is a quantitative one. The differential development of the brain creates bumps and flat parts. But the bone is a living formation so *its* spontaneous development affects how the brain can develop as much as vice-versa. For the interpretation it would make no difference. If both sides develop spontaneously, however, there is *no causal* link (but a preestablished harmony). Yet it is a causal relation of reciprocity that is actually posited.

The last sentence of paragraph 328 seems to mark the end of Hegel’s formal statement of the “Concept” of Phrenology. If this view (which originated with Lason) is correct, then the “experience” of this *Gestalt* of rational consciousness begins with *our* observation of it.⁵⁷ In the view of Gall as Hegel has stated it, it is obviously a serious problem to decide whether it is the growth and formation of the skull that conditions that of the brain, or vice versa. Gall himself (like most other “nature-philosophers”) was a “spiritualist.” But Hegel himself is what we may call a “vitalist” (of a non-vicious kind), i.e. one who believes, like Aristotle, that the full actualization of each level of organic function is the precondition for the development of the next higher one. So he is more inclined to think of the formation of the skull as conditioning that of the brain. He points out that it makes no difference to the logical functioning of the concept if it is inverted in this way. But he silently ignores the fact that the doctrine takes on a naturalistic (and hence irreligious) tinge if it is looked at in that perspective. The *adequate* perspective (as I have already suggested) is that of perfect *reciprocity* (or “preestablished harmony”), rather than a *causal* dependence in either direction.

This is the one logical improvement that *our* observation can contribute to skull-theory as a *Gestalt* of Reason. But when we improve it in this way, we have to admit at once, that the development of skull and brain are empirically independent. Far from being Leibnizian, the sort of preestablished harmony that exists in living growth means precisely that brain and skull need *not* “correspond” in any necessary way. They are like the shape of the grape and the taste of the wine. If the

grapes are stunted in their growth, the wine will not be as good as it might be; but there is no positively necessary relation between shape and taste at all.

As far as I can understand it, this is exactly the view of the modern students of the fossil and the living human skull. Hegel's view sublates the position of Gall altogether; and what matters to him is that the postulate of a perfect causal reciprocity *along with* the naturally necessary "harmony" is absolutely gratuitous. But his position leaves plenty of room for empirical inquiries and hypotheses that do not make extravagant causal assumptions; and that is not accidental, because even skull-theory is a permanent *Gestalt* of Reason. Reason itself is not a *memory*; it is the "daylight of the present."⁵⁸

- 33./330. The two spontaneous organic processes can only have an indefinite, unbounded connection. Supposing the brain were regional, physical growth need not correspond directly with "strength" or "weakness" of the function. But regionalization is an irrational assumption, for what is regionalized at the body's periphery must be fluid at the centre; and if we cannot know what the spontaneous formation of the brain means, still less can we know how to read its effect on the skull. A plausible analogy can be found in support of any view.

We can argue both for and against a variety of views about the relation of the brain and the skull. If the brain is the immediate organ of self-consciousness then already we do not know what the relation of this outer side to its own "inner" is. The organic formation of the skull proceeds independently of that of the brain (and is certainly not mechanically determined by it). Even if Gall's view that the brain itself is a collection of distinct organs⁵⁹ were correct, it would not follow that a bigger organ was a better one (or a smaller one for that matter). So the bumps and hollows on the skull cannot tell us anything about the capacities inside.

Hegel's own view is that everything in the brain must *logically* be "fluid" since the systems it controls cannot themselves be separated, but exist only as recognizable "moments" in one living process. In principle he has turned out to be right; but Gall's view about the regionalization of the brain was right too. So it is good to see that Hegel gives pride of place to the "critical" standpoint; we can argue the point both ways, and the question must remain open until some way of investigation is found. This is the *only* view he offers about the "bigger equals better" thesis, and about the consequent significance of the skull's capacity, and of its bumps and hollows.

- 34./331. It does not matter what the brain/skull relation is, since we are dealing with the skull/mind relation. Observation is claiming "Man is his skull-bone."

In any case, the thesis that the skull is a visible record of the capacities of the mind can be examined on its own account. This is where the "experience" of Phrenology begins properly. Hegel's own view of how consciousness can logically express itself in the brain needed to be stated, since otherwise, the positive result of this moment of the dialectic would be much less than "absolute knowledge"

requires. But Hegel's own theory can only claim the status of a logical theory that *we* observe. So we might argue that we have only helped the observed Concept to complete itself. On this view, the two preceding paragraphs are somewhat like the sections on "Life" and "Desire." We have to step in and take the part of the Concept itself that we are observing; otherwise this *Gestalt* of consciousness would not properly survive our passing. But now the *reconstructive* phase of the critique is complete, and the destructive experience of the dialectic can take over.

What exists as the embodied self-consciousness (in its maturely stabilized form) is an ethically active character. We know already that this needs to be formed and molded by a process of social education. What could it possibly mean, therefore, for it to be *naturally registered* in a bone that is formed independently through a process of nature that was virtually complete before the social formation process begins? The hypothesis involves a return to the standpoint of "external teleology" and postulates a Designing Mind that poses the created mind-body to itself as a riddle.

What aspect of human life and experience can be signified by the proposition "the observable actuality of human nature is the skull bone"? We already know that no empirical scientific significance is to be looked for. So although this point is repeated and illustrated in the "experience" that follows, we should be expecting the discussion to take a new turn. The outcome of this experience will not be an object which can be inverted into a new *theoretical* subject. The next inversion will be from theory to practice. Only a *practical* shape of Spirit can be generated now. "Observation" has reached the point of self-nullification.

- 35./332. The skull-bone does indeed have the general *Bedeutung* of being the immediate actuality of spirit. But how can it tell us anything?

When Hegel concedes that the skull-bone "does, of course, have in general the meaning of being the immediate actuality of the spirit," we must grasp at once that a transition in meaning has occurred. For in paragraphs 329–330 he has already demonstrated clearly that it is *not* the "immediate actuality" of spirit when we consider its natural origin. "Experience" is now going to transform our interpretation of what this proposition means. Gall wants the interpretation to be that the different areas of the skull represent different aspects of spiritual being. How are we to interpret this *Bedeutung*? Even to translate *bedeuten* in this paragraph is difficult. For "meaning" and "to mean" are the expressions which we have conventionally adopted for *Meinung* and *meinen*. Yet we cannot use "significance" and "signify" here (as we normally do) since Hegel is about to remind us that the logical difference between Physiognomy and Phrenology is precisely the fact that (unlike facial expression, gesture, handwriting, etc.) the skull is not a *sign* and it makes no *signs*. So I am obliged to use the *meaning* terminology by anticipation, since it can only be that mode of interpretation which is involved. The areas of the skull *intimate* or hint at different aspects of spiritual being.

- 36./333. It does not move expressively or appear to us as a *signal* (the name *Yorick*, not his skull, is a signal for Hamlet). It *reminds* us of the brain and of other skulls.

Gall himself emphasizes the passive inertness of the skull. Nothing that it supposedly tells us is an activity in which it is itself involved. It can be *used* to make signs—for “nodding” and “shaking” the head have firmly established conventional meanings, and a jerk of the head can beckon or point a direction—but it is not even a natural pointer like a signpost.

Yet if a dead skull is identified for us, we may recall the whole life and character of the living person to whom it belonged. It would not seem nearly so natural for Hamlet to recall the “fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy” if the gravedigger presented him with Yorick’s thigh-bone. When the person is dead, it is the skull that is most reminiscent of his or her living presence. The jests and fancies were born in Yorick’s skull. Hegel throws the point about Yorick in with the immediate purpose of showing what a difference the *name* makes. But it has the important significance of drawing our attention to the fact that the skull is *not* just a bone. More than any other bone it is unmistakably *human*; and it tells us that the human owner is *dead*. Hamlet, with Yorick’s skull, remembering how imbued with the “comic” spirit of happiness Yorick was, brings us back to Solon’s point about human happiness. The happiness of comedy is what the good character cannot guarantee. In general, it is a gift of fortune. Yet the spirit of comedy itself is a human (i.e. spiritual) gift, which arises from the cultivation of naturally given capacities. Hamlet can remember what Yorick was like; but even if his *natural* endowment could be read from the skull-bone, no one who was simply interpreting the bone, without knowing the name, could possibly say how that natural endowment had been employed in actual life.

When Hegel himself writes that “there is nothing else to be immediately seen or meant in [or on—German *an*] the skull than just itself” he is obviously adopting the standpoint of Gall himself (as a *scientific* observer). Gall observes the skull in the living subject. For him the suggestion of *death* is not *direct* (as it was in Shakespeare’s graveyard, or in the tomb that the Crusaders fought for because they believed a dead man had been placed in it who never became a mere skull). But the spiritual associations which the skull as an “immediate” symbol of death mediates, are very much in Hegel’s mind. The “skull-place of the spirit” (i.e. Golgotha or Calvary, the place where the divine man who rose from that empty tomb died) is the last image that the book will leave with us; and the way that the “recalling” in that final chapter begins from “Phrenology” shows that the echo is deliberate (par. 790). It is the shift from the observing perspective of Gall to the recollecting perspective of Hamlet that makes this moment the fulcrum upon which the whole book turns; and it is a perfectly natural and proper shift, since the whole context of the “observation of self-consciousness”—including the aims and purposes of Gall’s own science—is *ethical*.

- 37./334. Might its bumps etc. perhaps tell us what capacities are inside? When we consider how difficult it is to diagnose the significance of a headache this seems unlikely.

Supposing that the skull does somehow receive the impress of the brain, we can only tell what part of it receives a certain impression by locating the feelings that

we have in our heads. But feelings are hopelessly ambiguous. Some people find it hurts to think; but no one can distinguish the feelings associated with different kinds of mental activity; and even the “meaning” of simple pains like headache defies all medical skill as far as reliable diagnosis is concerned.⁶⁰

- 38./335. If there is a relation it must be an arbitrarily pre-established harmony of spirit and matter. For the spiritual side we must depend on the present contents of our psychology-sack. (The simpler and more ossified these are, the better.) But the atomized content of the soul would actually, like Israel, surpass the sands, and how could we know which grain belongs to whom? The idea that there is a *connection* is absurd.

What actually happens in phrenological interpretation is more arbitrary (and less empirical) than any appeal to feelings. The names of spiritual capacities are conventionally associated with bumps and hollows on the skull. So what the skull can mean depends on how varied the contents of our sack of observed psychological faculties is. If our list of ethical capacities is short our skull-mapping will be easier. But since the goal of the science is to interpret character and to make ethical discriminations, and since everyone has *all* human faculties in some measure, even the task of applying our general interpretive map to any particular head becomes hopeless. Supposing there *is* a murderous bump, how can we identify it among all the possible locations where there *might* be a bump if the bumps had not been elsewhere? The nameable facets of human character are like the numberless progeny promised to Abraham (Genesis 22, 17); whereas our “ossified” list is more like the twelve sons of Jacob who fathered the tribes. What observation actually teaches us is that a poet (or a murderer) can have a head of any shape just as the rain can come at any moment upon any day; so experience shows that we do not have any actual science of the skull-shape.

As Flay says, the *obviousness* of this difficulty is clear evidence that “Observing Reason” has encountered the impossibility of discovering a “law of individuality.”⁶¹ Observing Reason has reached its *limit*. There is nowhere else to go within the observational standpoint. We must not deny or belittle the great achievements of the regionalized brain physiology and neurology of which Gall (together with Comte and all of Gall’s earnest Victorian admirers) had a dim and distant prophetic vision. But *for us*, the logical trap has closed: Observing Reason is forced to depend upon the arbitrary and irrational interpretation of what is observable. All that remains for us to do now is to sum up its experience as a whole, in order to see where we must go next.

- 39./336. The possibility of a correlation is there; but it is easier to correlate a rascal’s bumps with what *other* people do (like the cuckold’s horns). What is absurd is the idea of discovering the correlation.

“But there could be a science of the skull,” says the enthusiastic follower of Gall. “Of course, we do not have it yet, but we have to work on it.” Hegel’s answer is to point out how the everyday phrenology of common sense works. We assign

imaginary horns to the man whose wife deceives him with someone else; and we give someone real bumps (but of a non-bony kind) when we catch them stealing from us.

We can *imagine* anything we like. Science is only possible where there is a certain logical structure that makes this free imagining illegitimate. Our children sing of “the cow jumping over the moon”; but the actual cow of rational observation cannot do that, any more than the bone of the skull can have for the scientific observer the spiritual significance that it assumes for Hamlet once he is supplied with the name of Yorick.

- 40./337. But suppose we go to work. We only claim to discover a potential; so whenever experience contradicts our findings, we say that nevertheless the “tendency” is there and experience ought to correspond, but things don’t always work out because of freedom.

If we suppose that we need no logical principles except the axiom that “the outer is the expression of the inner,” we can still make the attempt. We may think (as Gall did) that the comparative anatomy of men and animals will help us. But how are we to decide what the *spiritual* disposition of the animal is? We can only enter into its inner life (in the conscious sense) in a limited way (and with much difficulty). We learn just one thing from this comparative study: the vital importance of human freedom.⁶² The observation of the individual’s natural capacities in the skull can only tell us what “tendencies” (*Anlagen*) are actually present. But laws about tendencies are infinitely elastic. They will always allow for surprises and exceptions.⁶³ So the assumption of lawlike necessity in the order of nature, which is fundamental to Observing Reason at every stage, is now consciously surrendered. The experience of rational observation has been one of failure from the moment that Reason sought to observe itself in the organism. But now the inevitability of failure is posited by the observing subject; and in this way Observing Reason finally sublates itself.

- 41./338. So what the bumps, etc. *actually* signify is a self-contradiction. The “tendency” is only what *ought* to be, but *need not* be. The bone tells us something yet nothing (necessarily).

Since “tendencies” are mere *oughts* which are unaffected by their failure to be actualized, Reason (which, by definition, is “that which actualizes itself”) has now arrived at the moment of explicit self-contradiction. The “meaning” of the bone is equally *no* meaning. The logic of the observer’s own position makes this admission necessary. The facts of observation have already shown that no actual science is possible. But now the assumptions of the science about its *object* lead to the admission that the project is logically absurd. The bone is a perceptual object; but its *Meinung* is a return, at the level of Understanding, to the immediately contradictory character of sense-certainty. This is so far true that even a statistical quantification of the *Anlage* probably cannot save it. The list of “psychological tendencies” in the sack (i.e. the head) is either too short for the possible meanings

of each tendency to be enumerated and statistically measured, or too long to be localized, even in the most tentative way, upon the skull.

It is important to see that the possibility or impossibility of this quantification does not interest Hegel. He is not attacking the possibility of a behavioral sociology (or political science) in which the alternative outcomes are logically identified, the empirical responses classified, and the results statistically tabulated, to produce a theory of *probabilities*.⁶⁴ What interests him is the logical character of a theory of *tendencies* as it applies to the individual case. Here the observation of the self-conscious individual reaches the point where it must necessarily affirm an *infinite judgment* (or a logical contradiction). Thus a point of transition is reached; and the transition is not to the higher level of generality involved in the statistical observation of populations. But that is because it is not the structure of the observational sciences with which we are concerned. We are generating “the science of the experience of consciousness”; and consciousness has a natural focus that is logically and inalienably *individual*.

- 42./339. This approach glimpses the truth that *Sein* is not the truth of *Geist*. Consciousness is only *actual* through the negation and abolition of Being in this *external thing* sense. So what Gall does is a denial of Reason. The critical distinction between “outer” and “inner” makes it appear legitimate, but it is not. The appropriate response (on the thick-ear analogy) would be to break the phrenologist’s skull.

In Gall’s science Reason experiences nothing but this self-contradiction. What is determinately true is the negative side: Being is not the truth of Spirit. This is only a simple negation, the simple inversion of the skull-theorist’s position. Phrenology contains and acknowledges it explicitly. The negation of the negation must establish the truth of both sides of this *Gegensatz* (not simply, of course, but at a higher level); and in the process the living soul-body unity (with its practical relation of end and means, as asserted by Physiognomy) must be reinstated likewise.

First then, the truth that “the spirit is not a bone” is easily grasped, because the proposition “the spirit is a bone” is an *infinite* judgment. To put this another way, the proposition involves a category mistake: a bone is logically not the kind of thing that “the spirit” can be. But if that is the truth of the matter, how can there be *any* sense in which “the spirit is the skull” is reinstated as true?

We have to start with the fundamental assumption which made Gall’s science appear to be a plausible project in the first place. In his overbold attempt to develop the anatomical theory of the brain through the study of the skull, the *only* logical foundation that still survives is the abstract principle “the outer is the expression of the inner.” We have already seen that the physiognomist uses this proposition to give a mistaken interpretation of “inwardness”; and from that experience we have learned that *expression* has to be taken in a very strong sense. The outer is the *expression* of the inner only when, and so far as, it is the *actuality*, the true fulfilment of the inner. Human self-expression is the work of tongue and hand, and of the rational cunning that saves the hand and back from labour; it is not a matter of smiles and frowns, or of handwriting legible and illegible.

Once we know this, why do we bother with skull-theorists at all? We can see why the psychologists and the physiognomists were led on to this extreme. But why did we have to follow their lead? We know that it is not always necessary for the science of consciousness to study how some particular problem is resolved in the system of the sciences itself; and since the move from face and gesture to the skull is an error in the perspective indicated by *our* science, why must we accept the necessity of the detour? What can Phrenology teach us when we have already passed through Anatomy? Why do we not go straight on from anatomy to study rational self-consciousness as self-actualizing?

The answer is that at that point the concept of self-actualizing self-consciousness was not fully formed. It shows itself clearly when the indignantly (and perhaps painfully) honest man gives the physiognomist a black eye, for suggesting that in his heart he is a rogue. But even then the Concept is not self-consciously finite; it does not yet contain the limit that makes it truly an individual. If the skull-theorist makes the same accusation against our sincerely committed but inarticulate honest man, on the score that his skull bone reveals a mass of "evil tendencies," the logical response, says Hegel, would be to break his skull. We should notice that the phrenologist's claim is tantamount to that of the dogmatic theologian who preaches to the Unhappy Consciousness that we are all involved in *original* sin (whereas the physiognomist is like a moral adviser who says simply that we are sinners).

No one, however inarticulate, will consider it legitimate to go to the length of this revival of the life-and-death struggle. But that is what the "infinite judgment" of Observing Reason has brought us back to. A man with a broken skull is either dead, or in imminent danger of death until the bone mends. That is the hidden side of Hegel's comment. We are now passing from nature to Spirit, from necessity to freedom; and that point is aptly made by recalling the original breach with nature made by the free self-assertion that cares nothing for death. But now the transition is from *rational* nature to *rational* freedom. The insulted citizen will *not* actually go beyond the black eye that he already gave to the physiognomist; and the reason is that he knows full well that "the skull is the *immediate actuality* of spirit" (par. 332). If he breaks the idiotic fellow's skull, the man will die; and spirit is only *immediately* actual in *living* human individuals.⁶⁵ The actively rational self-consciousness knows that its true expression is its *work*. But it also knows (more adequately than the physiognomist) what it means to be embodied. That is why skull-theory is the *absolute* turning point in our story.

(f) *The Transition to Self-Actualization*

- 43./340. So Reason instinctively rejects this nonsense. But that is not the same as knowing why it *is* nonsense. What we face here is the error of observing Reason unveiled. Reason must now turn round completely. A great error is the portal of an even greater truth, just as the Jewish projection of God beyond nature was the portal of human salvation. To get *stuck* in the error is to be damned, but the *journey* is necessary.

Phrenology is a disease of the *sophisticated* mind. While Reason is still a “raw instinct” (i.e. before the advent of the Critical Philosophy, and in any mind that has not become accustomed to having it both ways in the matter of freedom and determinism) the scientific status of Phrenology will be denied, and its claims will be rejected out of hand. But the cultivated Johnsonian good sense that will unhesitatingly consign both Gall and the gypsy fortune-teller to the same limbo of irreligious presumption, cannot tell what the difference between them is (or even that there *is* a difference). Dr. Johnson will say “By their fruits ye shall know them.” But by that test you cannot tell one barren tree from another; so he will not recognize the kinship between himself and Gall.

Gall represents the last outcome of the *cultivated* instinct of Reason. He has caught sight of the goal of scientific cognition: a system of *comprehensive* knowledge. But he has only the formal principle of scientific understanding with which to achieve it. That is what is formulated in Kant’s deduction of the categories. But the “instinct of Reason” (both in its “raw” commonsense form, and in its sophisticated or scientific form) is essentially a pre-Kantian mode of consciousness. For Kant understood that his categories (and in particular his conception of causal law) applied *constitutively* only to the inorganic sphere.⁶⁶ Hegel’s critique of Observational Reason is essentially Kantian in its inspiration. The “instinct of Reason” regards all of Nature as one great system of “necessary” laws. Its great philosophical champions are Spinoza and Leibniz.

It was only with the advent of Kant that instinctive Reason became capable of self-transcendence. Kant showed how the antinomy between the freedom that is essential to Reason as self-conscious, and the necessity that Reason posits in its operation as Understanding, could (in principle) be resolved.⁶⁷ We find the distinction between “inner” freedom and “outer” necessity in Spinoza and Leibniz. But Kant separated the phenomenal from the noumenal realm in the interest of a *radical* freedom of practical Reason, for which there was no room in the great rationalists. Gall is still only an “instinctive” reasoner; and the instinct of ordinary common sense tells us that he is *wrong*. But he has an *Ahndung des Erkennens* that will take us beyond the ideal of comprehensive Reason as we meet it in Spinoza and Leibniz.

Hegel unfolds the whole comedy of instinctive Reason in the context of the axiom that “the outer is the expression of the inner.” Franz Josef Gall appears as the scientific clown who brings the Leibnizian understanding of inner and outer into direct relation with the ordinary view of freedom and responsibility. The direct clash of Reason with itself as Understanding is necessary in order to breach the instinctive self-possession of Reason, and set it on the painful road of self-making and self-recovery that constitutes the cycle of its true actuality. Gall’s thought is about the worst that can deserve the name of Reason at all (the belief of the fairground gypsy does not). To mention Phrenology in the same breath with Spinoza’s *Ethics* and the *Monadology* of Leibniz is a kind of intellectual blasphemy. Yet Gall’s skull-theory was demonstrably inspired by the intellectual ideal of science found in those works. That is why the theory found, and for a long time retained, a following among freethinking intellectuals, and even among scientists.

As Hegel clearly intimates, it is a case of the worst being the corruption of the best. But he uses the "Aristotelian" dictum dialectically. The highest intellectual vision of the old culture must be inverted into its most flagrant stupidity in order to be inverted again into the concretely rational scientific ideal of the new age.⁶⁸

It is in this light that we must interpret Hegel's comparison of the followers of Gall with the Jews. This is another sign that the book has reached its absolute turning point. For the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is essentially the story of how the invisible spiritual Lord of Abraham and Moses became visibly human in Jesus, and by this route became the universal spirit that manifests itself in the history of mankind. The Jewish people rejected Jesus (who announced the coming of a new Kingdom, and the abiding presence of the Spirit) and demanded the release of Barabbas, the robber. Since Jesus was crucified between two thieves, they can be said (symbolically) to have chosen the skull that remained on earth; and their descendants have paid dearly for this in the cultural world of the "second relationship" of Unhappy Consciousness (where "the whole mode of existence steps over onto the side of singularity as the shape of the Unchangeable"—par. 210).

"Reason" is the *immediate* aspect of the arrival of the third relationship (where the Changeable Consciousness "finds *itself* as the singular in the Unchangeable.") The comparison with Gall helps us to understand the status in the new world of the community that refused to move out of the first relationship.⁶⁹ Skull-theory is what most deserves to be "cast out" of the world of Reason, just as the Jewish *Volk* was *das Verworfenste* in the world of religious Authority. But Gall is the heir of Spinoza and Leibniz, and he has caught a glimpse of the true freedom of cognition in Kant; similarly the Jews who stand at the portal of salvation but refuse to pass through are the heirs of Abraham and Moses (who invented the Unchangeable Beyond and defined the "first" *lawful* relationship to it); and in their prophetic tradition they have glimpsed the possibility of the third relationship.

At this point, the fact that Phrenology is recognized as a necessary *Gestalt* of Reason becomes immensely significant. Hegel must surely have thought that with the arrival of a more adequate logic of science Gall's Phrenology would lose all of its intellectually competent adherents. And in the same way he must have expected that his gospel of Absolute Knowledge would be received as readily by philosophically minded Jews as by philosophical Christians. But he recognized that there would always be rational observers who were anti-philosophical, and for whom the commitment to science was identical with a commitment to "law" (i.e. to the assumption of universal determinism); in the same way there would always be a community for whom God was "the Law," and for whom the second relationship existed only in the "infinitely contradictory" form of their own status as "the chosen people." They must be accepted into the perfect charity of the Spirit, just as such freaks of the determinist spirit as Gall's skull-theory must be accepted into the scientific community.⁷⁰ The spirit of "election" (and of persecution) in religion is the analogue of the unreflective contradiction that we are observing in Phrenology. This hell of the "unholy void" (*unselige Leere*) is the extreme *Gegensatz* out of which the Spirit returns into itself. By comparing the Jews with the skull-theorists,

Hegel reminds us that the transition from theoretical to practical Reason is also a genuine and radical conversion experience in the history of our social life.

- 44./341. We must now survey the circle that we have just completed. From the first, Observation is an abstract intellectual process. We began with experiments at the inorganic level. The inner unity of phenomena was what *we* discovered by making things move; the organism, on the other hand, is a self-moving, self-maintaining inner unity. But its inner unity is not observable; it is either spread out in the perpetual variety of life, or else it is an invisible “inside.” Life is free but not *for itself*; so it refers us to the self (which is its own purpose).

The “experience” of Phrenology is now complete. But because it has brought us round to the observation of the inorganic being from which we began (so that Observation has become a cyclic self-standing whole) the *result* of Phrenology is twofold: Physiognomy and Phrenology bring us to a new concept of the singular self, whereas the completion of Observing Reason brings us to a new concept of the world as a whole. This last is the result of the whole process, and the statement of it requires a summing up of the whole process.

Rational observation is not concerned with singular sensible being (which is the object of Understanding on the side of Utterance) but with the *comprehensive* intelligible world. It aims first to observe the universal relationships of inorganic nature. The cases and instances in which these universal laws are observed “get lost” (through abstraction in the experimental process, see par. 251). All that matters is the structure of the process under observation.

In an inorganic process there is no self-maintaining inner unity. The unity is observed in the experiment, but it does not “stand up for itself” (*existieren*). This “standing forth” of the essence is what is distinctive of the organism.⁷¹ Life makes a cycle that is self-maintaining; and before that breaks down, it makes the beginning of another one like itself. The organism is the instinct of Reason in its *objective* shape.

We should notice, however, that in this review it is an objective fact that the organism does not match up to the self-consciousness that is observing it. It is only a singular thing that “is there.” It is a *living* thing, but its life, its real Concept, is not present for observation. It is implicitly free (i.e., it is spontaneous) but it does not exist for itself. It is an objective purpose (which refers *us* to the observing subject who has purposes). Hegel’s reference to the wisdom for which the organism exists as a natural purpose directs our attention back to the Argument from Design as the logical formulation through which Observing Reason provides itself with what it cannot observe. The representatives of this natural theology, with its hypothesis of the “Author of Nature,” were legion, so we do not have to give a definite name to this *Gestalt*. The theistic hypothesis is just the way in which the Observation of Nature makes itself into the resting concept of External Teleology (and so into a stable *Gestalt* of Reason). Interpreting the singular organism in terms of the inverse concept of Immanent Teleology teaches *us* the lesson that the “beyond” or the “inside” of the living thing points only to the true inwardness of

self-consciousness.⁷² Thus the organic object inverts itself comprehensively into the rational subject, which has its own rationality (or wisdom) as its purpose. This is the next object for Observing Reason.

- 45./342. This brings Reason to Self-Observation. The observational stance seeks first to ossify the logical moments of its freedom; when these run together (for us) into their unity, it observes the unity interacting with the world. Action has to be interpreted in terms of thought; and the thought is uttered as spontaneous body-language. But that language is essentially ambiguous for interpretation.

The summary of this stage makes the dialectical movement plainer than it is in the original text. The movement from Logic to Psychology depends on *our* knowing what the logical self is. This enables us to comprehend the singular rational self-consciousness as the actual Concept. The self as psychological agent is the inversion of the actual Concept within its opposite, the world; and *we* must comprehend that Spirit (though only *an sich selbst*) is the “necessity” of the relation between this observable self and its world. In the third moment of the observation of the rational self, Observation gets on bodily terms⁷³ with its object and compares its action with its private thoughts. For the intended object of observation is the conjectural (*gemeinter*) inward spirit. Both as thinking and as willing that inward subject is essentially *embodied*. This is the necessary unity “in its own self.” It is the embodied spirit that is objective; even the inner thoughts are observable in the body. But the utterance of thoughts and purposes in body-language remains ambiguous. It may be truthful or it may not.

This third phase in the summary is clearly Physiognomy; bodily expression makes the inner observable, so that we can compare the action with the thought. Physiognomy is presented as the methodical *result* of Logical and Psychological observation. It purports to resolve the problem of how psychological observation can achieve logical certainty.

Hegel is not mechanically repeating and epitomizing what he argued in the earlier discussion. His purpose is to focus attention on Phrenology as the *final* “result” of the whole movement. So he presents Physiognomy (which does offer a resolution of the problem of the ethical observer) in *that* perspective. Physiognomy is logically continuous with psychological observation, whereas the move to Phrenology involves a violent break, and a return to an external mode of experimental observation, in place of one that is “within the *gemeinten* Spirit.” Without this violent break we could not close the circle of Observation as a whole.

- 46./343. So we come finally to what is unambiguously fixed. But now we contradict the position we had reached at the very beginning. Lifeless being is now identified as what spirit is. Of course Gall himself is no materialist. But what he *says* is: Spirit is a *thing* like a bone.

The perspective within which Hegel developed the argument of chapter 12 was that of the science of consciousness—i.e. it was *our* observational standpoint. We

were obliged to take the Hegelian view of logic in order to make the transition to psychology; and as a result we were truly conscious of the real Spirit (objective and subjective) which was only *gemeint* for the psychological observer. The perspective of this present review, on the other hand, is that of the empirical observer herself. The observation of Nature (inorganic and organic) is its first position; the observation of Spirit (formal Logic, normative Ethics, rational Physiognomy) is its first inversion; and Phrenology (Spirit observed as a natural organic and inorganic whole) is the second inversion.

The shift of perspective is required in order for us to see Phrenology as the *result* of the whole process of Observing Reason; and that in turn is required in order for Phrenology to generate, by determinate negation, not a new form of *Observing* Reason, but a new form of Reason altogether—one that is no longer satisfied simply to *observe*.

The very concept of Observation dictates that the truth is what is “out there.” So the truth of the observing activity must be in the object that it discovers out there even when it is seeking the point of origin for its own thinking capacity. This is so natural and obvious that it is quite hard for many of us now—living as we do in a world in which scientific enlightenment is more general, and religious faith rarer and more attenuated than it was in Hegel’s time—to recognize the paradox involved in identifying even our own theorizing about brain states with the brain states themselves. *Nothing* observable *is* what we say that it does (or means) in our conscious activity. The great virtue of Gall’s phrenological approach, from the logical point of view, is that by identifying the brain-states with a supposed record on the skull he makes the paradox patent.

The brain is very much part of a living organism. When it is damaged, consciousness is impaired, or ceases; when the organism dies, the brain putrifies into what Hegel would have called a “chemical” mush, and is rapidly absorbed into the earth. Shakespeare’s Gravedigger (not perhaps the most respected of scientific observers, but the one whom Hegel’s text suggests) claims that the soft parts even of a tanner’s body will not last beyond nine years in the earth. The skull reveals its essentially *inorganic* character by lasting like a rock. So brain and skull together (which is how Gall’s science wants to connect them as “inner” and “outer”) form a very apt microcosm of the Infinite of Understanding in this “return of rational observation into itself” as the Observation of spiritual Nature.

Observing Reason, which began as the antithesis of empiricism and rationalism,⁷⁴ ends by incorporating the crudest form of empiricism into the most dogmatic formal schema of rationalism. *Our* initial formal comprehension of what rational observation is (that Reason seeks *itself*, as universal, in the immediate order of things, as singular) has finally come to be the explicit self-consciousness of the Observing Reason that we are observing. Of course, even the phrenological observer does not mean simply to identify Spirit with a bone. The bone *represents* what Spirit can do. The position is openly absurd because, being sincere spiritualists, the phrenologists admit that we do not, and cannot, predict what Spirit will do. But its absurdity is phenomenologically necessary, because it is only this

openly admitted contradiction that will lead us to recognize the logical contradiction involved in all of the subtler observational ways of filling in the formula "The spirit is . . ." ⁷⁵

In spite of the formal contradiction involved, it is still *true* that "the spirit is." For the spirit *to be* is contradictory; but the spirit *is* all the same. The proposition has two opposite meanings: one for us, and another for the rational observer who needs to make her standpoint into a self-preserving total *Gestalt*.

- 47./344. The significance of this is twofold: *philosophically* it is the fulfilment of the penitential discipline of the Unhappy Consciousness. *Reason* identifies itself as a *possession*. The *category* is the unity of being with my own [thing]. This category is what is observed as a possession in the skull. That "the self is a thing" is an "infinite judgment." But the recognition that our logic drives us to this mistake, is a great turning point, which we must never lose sight of from here on. This brute contradiction has to be progressively mediated into meaningfulness. The self is a thing, because it *is* the activity of producing itself as a thing.

In this paragraph Hegel states the positive meaning of the basic thesis of Observation *for us*. This is the determinate negation that produces for us the new object for our own phenomenological observation. The next paragraph closes up the observational standpoint into a stronghold within which the rational observers can forever continue to plant the flag of discovery in new territories. The final paragraph relates the two interpretations.

As *we* observe it, Rational Observation turns the inevitable and perpetual failure of the Unhappy Consciousness into the happiness of perpetual success. The Unhappy Consciousness strove to make its own selfhood into a mere object of consciousness. It strove to *be* "consciousness," and was *unhappy* in that role because it could never get away from being a self.⁷⁶ The only true Self was "the Unchangeable Consciousness," the divine mind in which (through the action of God's grace) the changeable finite mind could behold itself as "saved"—i.e. as the restored *image* of God or as finite Reason. Human life was for it an unending, logically hopeless, struggle (sustained only by the supernatural revelation of the action and motion of the Unchangeable) to harmonize finite desire, labour, and enjoyment with that vision, by abandoning and rejecting the conditions of human life itself. Natural life is to be viewed as a thing, or as something that has no essence in itself, but is only an *instrument* for Self-Consciousness. This was how it appeared to the primitive Self-Consciousness at the moment of its emergence; but at the end of its development there was the important difference that, like all other *things*, the living thing was seen to belong rightfully to the Unchangeable Self-Consciousness. Hence it should be developed and cared for.

Reason knows itself to be this absolute self to whom all things rightfully belong. It is the unity of "self" and "being"—the two sides that the Unhappy Consciousness strove to separate. Instinctive Reason (the animal that *possesses* Reason) is the conscious singular self as a concrete universal; it is the "rational being," the self that defines itself as *having* Reason. The Category is "the *immediate* unity of *being*

and *owning* (*des Seins und des Seinen*)";⁷⁷ the claim to *be* rational is identical with the claim to *have* Reason (as a property). Observing Reason surveys what belongs to it in the way that a Lord surveys his *things*. So it must observe itself as its own Serf, the most important of *its* things; and in doing that it beholds not its own servitude to necessity, but its essential freedom. That is how Observing Reason inverts its whole standpoint.

Observing Reason knows instinctively that it *is* all reality. That "certainty" has now been mediated into the proposition that Reason is the Category that *owns* everything. The Category is the Self that both *is* and *has* Reason. It has now passed through the whole range of *being*, and it has formed the concept of itself as both *being and owning* the body in which it sought finally to observe itself. But its observation has shown that neither the being nor the owning is directly possible. Death reveals the absurdity of both. Reason must turn from the question of what it *is* in the body, to the question of how it *acts*, how it *makes itself to be there* in the world. As a result it will emerge as the developed Category of rational individual action. At this present juncture, the attempt of Reason to observe itself in the skull, has taught us that the embodied life is Reason's own, and that it cannot be alienated into an object for observation. The "soft" parts (observed in Physiognomy) and the "hard" parts (observed in Phrenology) together form the *thinghood* of Reason. The rational thing *has* Reason, but only while it is alive; and being alive, it *must* die.

We shall find, by experience, that the converse relation is a more adequate comprehension of the truth. As Reason actualizes itself in this self-conscious thing, it will emerge that *Reason has this thing* as its agent; but the ambiguity of the proposition's being true in both forms will survive to trouble us until we reach the "absolute self" in Religion. The radical ambiguity is the shape of the "infinite judgment" that "the self is a thing." Reason as Observation adopted the position of the Unchangeable Consciousness who "owns all things." How unsatisfactory that position is, we finally realize when it tries to own *itself* as a thing (the skull-record). The *immediacy* of the ownership relation must now be mediated. The self is to *be for itself*, by actualizing itself as its own end. In this process all of the thing-world that it rationally owns will be used. The knowledge that *I have is for my use*; and the object of my using it is to realize my own ends, or to actualize *myself*. Using the rational knowledge of everything will be the new and higher way for Reason to express its "certainty of being all reality."

Because it is Observing *Reason*, even the consciousness that we are observing must, in some manner, see what we see (as rational *observers*). That is why Gall's clear admission that he is observing human *freedom* is important. He does not observe it in a concretely logical way; for if he did he would recognize that it cannot be observed like an object that is "possessed." It is a self-realizing actuality, and it cannot be observed in the world as a thing, but only as an activity. Gall can observe Reason as a potential that we *possess*, only by contradicting his own basic assumption. He is observing a necessity that is free, and creating a science that knows itself to be no science. This is important because this same contradictory assumption is made by all of the sciences which observe human potential in the

conceptual context of “natural necessity.” Of course, it is not necessary to make that assumption; but to begin by consciously avoiding it, involves *inverting* the whole concept of “science.” That is what Hegel does in the System.

- 48./345. Secondly this result is the descent from Reason to empiricism. We ignore the category-mistake by covering it up behind all sorts of categorical screens.

Phrenology represents the closure of the cycle of Observing Reason through a return at the highest level to the absolutely naïve empiricism from which it began at the lowest. The nature of the soul is to be read off from the skull-bone, like the shape and measurements of the body. What we comprehend is that the self is a thing that is nothing, a thing that acts to give itself finite objective thinghood, but always transcends that again. This meaning is not present for the empiricist self at all, because the first principle of its logic is (as Bishop Butler says somewhere) “Everything is what it is, and not another thing.” Because it is “honest,” and has a deep-down sense of what Spirit really is, this self covers up the disgrace of its assumption under a whole battery of technical terms. But these terms (beginning with the basic ones of “cause” and “effect”) cannot have their regular meanings, and because of the open contradiction of the assumption, they have no determinable meaning at all.

We shall meet the “honest” consciousness openly confronted by its own disgrace at the climax of the section on “culture” (pars. 520–526). At that stage we shall be observing the Concept of Observing Reason in motion as a Judgment. Here we can observe the structure of the Concept at rest. Phrenology shows us the whole structure without a mask. On the surface there is the honest observer who says “facts are facts, and we just have to find them out.” But the foundation of this “honesty” is the instinctive knowledge that its own self-conscious finding is not the kind of fact that can simply be found; so it erects a screen of words between the contradictory aspects of its “honesty,” in which both sides are mingled. The essentially two-faced structure of Physiognomy showed us how and why this is possible: Rameau’s Nephew, who is an expert clown, will expose it all to public view. Physiognomy is the “honest” consciousness *completed* through union with its *Gegensatz*.⁷⁸ Since it is Observing Reason (just as we are) it must know what we do. But it resolves the problem of the “speculative proposition” (pars. 60–66) in the *ad hoc* manner that Hegel calls *räsonnieren* in the Preface. The whole of his discussion of the “argumentative” and the “speculative” approaches in the Preface is relevant here (and that is another sign of how crucial this present turning point is).

- 49./346. My brain is not an “external object.” It is the way in which I am aware of *part of my world*. When we bring “observation” to this final object in which it recognizes that it has its own seat, we have to recognize that the self is an activity of self-production in the mode of objectivity. This is true even about the sensuous presentational world that is identified as the not-self precisely because it provides the stage and raw material for practical activity. That this raw material *is* the self seems absurd. But the “infinite judgment” becomes supremely meaningful when interpreted not as a fixed

identity, but as the *form* of a self-realizing process. That a scientific *folly* such as phrenology should contain the deepest truth is analogous with the combination of the functions of seminal discharge and urination in the same organ.

Behind Gall's truly absurd hypothesis about the skull, there lies his quite distinguished work on the anatomy of the brain. The Critical Editors think that Hegel's reference to "brain-fibres" reflects his reading of Charles Bonnet.⁷⁹ But I cannot see any reason to look beyond his knowledge of Gall's work here (however careless and secondhand that knowledge may have been). For Gall thought of the "nerve-fibre" as the basic element out of which brain and spinal cord were constituted; and it is *his* belief that these physically observable things impress a spiritual meaning on the skull that Hegel is concerned with.

Against this error, Hegel urges that the "fibres" of nerve *theory* are not the directly visible things; they are hypothetical entities whose being and action are not visible at all. The *visible* things are as "dead" in principle as the skull (which is not really dead either). They will still be there (though not for long) when life and spirit are gone; and it is then, indeed, that most of the observing will be done. The living brain and nervous system is a theoretical construct; and obviously there can be no "absolute knowledge" of such constructs. Hegel speaks more contemptuously of their cognitive status here than he did even about the "sensitive" and "irritable systems" as the theoretical bases of organic life. This is because we are now in the sphere of "Spirit" which has consciousness as its real "inner"; and "consciousness" is the object of *our* science. When we turn to the *Encyclopedia* and study the transition from the organism to subjective spirit, the importance of the transition is still obvious. But the dialectical continuity of scientific knowledge (and the interdependence of the two sides) is equally clear. Hegel's contempt for "hypothesis" is dictated by the fact that in this present book he conceives himself to be doing logic. But he only did logic in order to do "real philosophy."⁸⁰

To take the spirit for an immediately observable thing like the skull is the ultimate rational stupidity. The observer only retains contact with her rationality by denying her own fundamental assumption and admitting that the most she can observe is the free potential of the spirit. This is the inversion that carries us forward.⁸¹ To unfold the spiritual significance of what is so absurdly pictured in Gall's "science," to display the *actuality* of the free potential that he inconsistently aims to observe scientifically, will require the rest of Hegel's treatise. Absolute Spirit, for which the skull is only a necessary *moment*, will rise from Calvary only on the last page. But the very first experience of the singular rational organism whose freedom Gall was honest enough to recognize inside his skull, is the encounter with "Necessity" in the shape of death. Thus the most immediate spiritual significance of the "infinite judgment" that "Spirit is a thing" is that the finite rational spirit is mortal. This is also the rational ground of the "unhappiness" of consciousness. So Phrenology truly is the absolute turning point of the *Phenomenology*.

Hegel's parting shot for Gall is an appeal to what he regards as nature's metaphor for the infinite judgment. In the male animal organism the functions of urination

and begetting are combined in a single organ. The spirit employs the animal organisms which it uses up and wastes, to express its potential for the creation of its own world of free expression. Already at the end of Unhappy Consciousness, Hegel has let Luther express the spiritual awareness that the life of the body is a waste, and is fit only for wasting. Now he uses the water of the body in a traditionally religious way as the symbol for the life of the spirit.⁸² But whereas his use of Luther's symbolism for bodily life was veiled in a scientific expression—"the enemy shows himself in his own proper shape in the animal functions [*in den thierischen Functionen*]" (par. 225)—his metaphor for spiritual existence is expressed in Luther's own vulgar down-to-earth vernacular. He speaks not of *Urinieren* (as a professorial observer would) but of *Pissen* (as Luther's Bible does). Academic dog-Latin belongs to the old world of spiritual authority. In the "daylight of the present" even philosophic science must speak the language of the people, and not pretend to be an *authority*. But equally the philosophic observer must look for the depth of the Spirit in what is thus said "for the people"; and we must expect to find that the deep significance of what is said here is quite opposite to what appears on the surface.⁸³

Notes

1. Compare *Enz.*, section 246 Anm. It would not be impossible, nor would it lose *all* of its significance. There are many students of Hegel's *Phenomenology* (and even of his *Logic*) who want to make these works into the foundation for a "wisdom" that is far removed from the "Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences." But for someone who believes in *Hegel's* wisdom this is an occasion for regret, because those anti-scientific students interpret Hegel's logical criticisms of empirical scientific inquiry in a way that impedes the understanding and appreciation of his own goals by the scientific minds to whom his message was originally addressed.

2. D.-K. 68, B 118.

3. Hence, too, the condemnation of "Aristotelian" modes of speculative philosophy in 1277, and the eventual triumph of Ockham and the *via moderna*, was inevitable. But the *via moderna* is the critical principle of "pure insight," so the impending emergence of "Reason" is not hard to recognize.

4. We shall find it hard to linger at that stage, because we agree with Hegel before he can speak, so that the discussion has no point; hence we are apt to miss his point altogether, or to grasp it only superficially, and to find his vehemence bewildering and embarrassing. Hegel himself pokes fun, so we take refuge in laughter with relief.

5. There are, of course, many (on both sides) who will regard it as blasphemous (in opposite senses) to say that Hegel was both serious, and insightfully meticulous, about formal logic. But *they* will not complain of Hegel's brevity here; and (like all of us in the "Phrenology" section) they will never appreciate how important the point is, because they have already agreed (or disagreed) with the argument too quickly.

6. We shall see that a partially identical justification can be offered for the summary dismissal of faculty psychology. This underlines the *disproportion* of his discussion of biology.

7. Findlay is right, and Flay is wrong, about Hegel's attitude to the *Principia Mathematica* of Russell and Whitehead, and to all the numerous progeny of the original Turing machines

(see Findlay 1958, 107; Flay 1984, 326–327, n. 32). But Findlay is not correct about Hegel's reason for finding nothing valuable for the "science of experience" in formal logic. In *this* connection Hegel would "welcome" formal logic precisely because it recognizes its own "vanishing character." That is not a "more radical lack" (as Flay says) but a considerable advance in self-conscious rationality. It is Flay (not Hegel) who finds this "lack" antipathetic. Lauer (1976, 143–144) has Hegel's view right.

8. My nodding acquaintance with some forms of Indian speculation suggests that the comprehension of the whole need not be what *we* call "science." But then the speculative logic will not be "scientifically" developed either. This is not to say (as Hegel seems to have believed) that it cannot be developed beyond the most primitive categories of "scientific" logic. The speculative logic of Socrates was not systematically developed either. But Hegel would never make the mistake of arguing that it was confined within the logical sphere of "Being." That Indian speculation existed in the context of the caste system should not be ignored. But Socrates, Plato and Aristotle existed in the world of "natural slavery." (This whole problem belongs to the context of Hegel's seventh chapter; and only some dispositional suggestions can be expected from a consciousness formed by the same "experience" that is harvested in Hegel's "Science.")

9. This is obviously and explicitly true of the *Phenomenology* as the "science of experience" (see paragraph 30). But Hegel is here distinguishing Logic as the "science of the sciences." The empirical sciences that we have been observing are the "content" that Logic requires.

10. Compare further the discussion of both kinds of logic in the Preface (especially pars. 38–51).

11. We are not directly interested in "depth psychology" either. But in so far as that deals with the suppressed aspects of a *divided* will, it is continuous with our interest. But I do not think that this continuity can be formulated in naïvely observational terms. Our own kind of observation (which rests on the dynamic consciousness that "what is" contains "what was" in a sublated form) is necessary for that kind of psychology.

12. That is why the supremely learned Doctor Faust is such an appropriate *Gestalt* for self-actualizing Reason, when we get to it; he is the consummately *educated* spirit.

13. We can legitimately regard Hegel's remarks about the psychological observation of individuals as his own verdict on all the books that treat his "science of experience" as if it were a bran-tub of psychological types—a modern, and Teutonically mystified, version of Theophrastus' *Characters*, so to speak. Loewenberg's book is the clearest example of this type, but Robert Solomon comes close to it, and there are other offenders who should study paragraph 304 and then look at themselves in the mirror.

14. See the *First System Programme* (December 1796?) in *Sunlight*, 510–512. (As far as the argument here is concerned it does not matter whether Hegel was the actual author of that piece. The copyist (if that is what he was) is applauding an attempt to develop Schiller's ideas. Compare further Letter 11, *Briefe* I, 25; Butler and Seiler, 36).

15. Hegel's decision that the emphasis of Schiller and Hölderlin on the aesthetic harmony of "nature" was logically mistaken, and that the message of the myth in Genesis 2 is logically correct, was arguably the most important crisis of his Jena years. This was the real death of his "Greek ideal." Only the subsequent crisis in his conception of "logic" (which led to the birth of the *Phenomenology*) rivals this in importance. The crucial texts belong to 1803. They will be published in *G.W.V.*; see for the present, M. Baum and K. Meist (1977).

16. An enlightened society will want its citizens to be *personally* (or subjectively) “happy”; and to that end it may well find that scientific surveys of what people want, personally, and of what they do, privately, are useful. So a quantitative or statistical version of the observational study dismissed here may find its place in the “system of the sciences.” But *that* science is not relevant to the “experience of consciousness.” It does not focus on the individual, and hence it is not a necessary link in our advance to “absolute knowledge.”

17. Plato only justified the *isolation* of “thought-criminals” from the community, and the use of rational persuasion to cure them (not physical or physiological compulsion). As usual, he represents the “natural” consciousness at its best. During the *Bildung* of Spirit, ideological heretics were burned (by Catholic and Calvinist authorities) or executed as political traitors (in the Anglican communion). But physical torture was an essential part of all Western systems of justice before 1789.

18. The three paragraphs on logic have the regular structure: concept, experience, result. But the concept is a mere name, “the Concept itself that exists as Concept, or Self-Consciousness,” since for Observation there is literally nothing but the verbal definition there.

19. The structure of the sentence in which Hegel *seems* to list *three* relations of individuality to the universal should be noticed. Logically it is clear that the first two relations (passive reception and opposition “or rather *verkehren*”) refer back to paragraph 302 (where they are listed together and the *verkehren* is explained as *criminal* defiance of law and custom); whereas the *sowie* clause which follows the bar (and which also has two sides) refers back to paragraph 300.

20. Flay (1984, 127 and 327, n. 34) thinks that he disagrees with Kainz (1976, 111) about the law of individuality. But their views are not seriously in conflict with one another. The apparent disagreement arises, because they expound Hegel’s text, without trying to assume the posture of Observing Reason itself; so what they focus on is different sides of it. They think of “necessity” and “freedom” as contradictory opposites; but Hegel is interested in how the two sides are united. The commentators (quite generally) take it that Hegel wants to show that there is not and cannot be a “law of individuality.” But in fact, he shows us *first* that *there is and must be one*, and *then* that *there is not and cannot be one*. Without the positive thesis the posture of the observer would not be one of “Reason” at all.)

21. Thus Collingwood was still the unwitting prisoner of Leibnizian formalism when he argued that only “success” can be properly comprehended by the historian. Both he and Croce fell back into the rationalism of Spinoza and Leibniz in their belief that the historian must have no truck with “what might have been.” Instead it is precisely the appreciation of the “might have been” that gives history its human (or “spiritual”) significance. Yet Croce is right, of course, in arguing that the historian cannot rationally discuss “What would have happened if . . .” That question, too, presupposes a Leibnizian logic.

22. This is the point of Plato’s myth of Gyges; and when Hegel refers to crime at the end of paragraph 302 he seems to be referring to a *life* of crime. His use of the Kantian principle of universalizability goes beyond what a single act could justify: “or in that the individual sublates the universal actuality in a universal way, and thus acts for everyone, and brings another world, a different justice, law and customs [into being] in place of those already there.” The rational observer can only observe habitual crime *empirically* in the context of the operation of the *Recht, Gesetz und Sitten* that are *vorhanden*. So the fact that Hegel speaks of the world of the criminal as independent in this way (without any reference to the punishment that reveals its singular contingency) indicates that psychological observation is

concerned with what is subjectively *possible*. (This is also implied in the forward movement from logic to psychology; the latter must retain the conceptual generality of the former.)

23. *Ethics*, Part II, Prop. XIII.

24. The observer sees through the bodily sign to the inner disposition. Loewenberg (1965, 144), followed by Lauer (1976, 146), suggest that “if these pseudo-sciences had not existed, Hegel would almost have had to invent them, since that is the direction in which the dialectic as he describes it is moving”. But of course, the “dialectic” here is the dialectic of actual *experience*, so it must not generate any *inventions* on our part. Neither Loewenberg nor Lauer *explains* what the dialectical movement is. Flay (1984, 127–128) does this quite well. But as far as *explicit* logic is concerned, he suffers from the misguided belief that he has a pragmatic logic of experience that is better than Hegel’s “dialectic.” So he cannot deal with the social character of the *Phenomenology* programmatically at all.

25. See his two diaries (*G.W.* I, 31, lines 4–10; and *Dok.* 221–244).

26. This is the key to the transition from Observation to Real Individuality at the level of the individual consciousness that “has” Reason. But I have indicated in the previous paragraph why the observer does not make that transition at once. The observational scientist wants to overcome the twin problems of misunderstanding and deceit (which the Real Individuals will experience). In the rational society that is speculatively self-conscious, “misunderstanding” is “understood” as necessary, and deceit is “comprehended” as an aspect of the finiteness of individuality. Thus Hegel can say in the *Encyclopedia* lectures that “a man is nothing but the series of his acts” (*Enz.*, sec. 140 Z; cf. *Philosophy of Right*, sec. 124 Anm.). But in the *Phenomenology* we must follow the path of finitude to its *absolute* limit (death) in order to make the transition to “self-actualization” through the “living Infinite” of the *Volk* (which is Spirit’s *substantial* “thinghood”).

27. For brain-case measurement see, for example, Carleton S. Coon, *The Origin of Races* (New York, Knopf, 1962, *passim*). (He also describes the Chou kou t’ien fossils.)

28. In the *Timaeus* (42D) the Divine Craftsman *sows* the created rational souls in the earth, moon and planets. This was certainly influential in the later tradition of Western astrology (especially the Stoic tradition). In the *Phaedrus* (247A) on the other hand the souls *choose* the planetary God in whose train they follow.

29. Herodotus, *Histories*, I, 5. (Compare the last three lines of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*.)

30. Heraclitus, D.-K. 22 B 119 (Kahn, CXIV); Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 10 (1100a 10–1101a 21).

31. In paragraph 314 Hegel used “*diese Züge der Hand*” for the palm-lines which the fair-ground fortune-teller attends to. But the English translator should use “traits” both there and here, because the features referred to are quite different in the two contexts. Plato and Aristotle would have agreed with Lavater that (for instance) bitten nails and nicotine stains are *ethically* significant. We do not have to be Sherlock Holmes to do *some* effective physiognomic observation of the hands.

I do not see why MacIntyre (1972, 221–222) says that Hegel’s argument shows “that the physiognomist’s treatment of the face as expressive of character, and the physiognomist’s treatment of the face as (at least sometimes) the effect of character cannot be combined without damaging inconsistency.” As far as I can see, it is precisely this combination that gives the face (and other active organs) their status as a “middle”—and hence gives physiognomy the logical claim to be a science. There is no difficulty about the *logical construction* here. But, unfortunately—as Shakespeare’s King Duncan says—“There’s no *art*/ To find the mind’s construction in the face” (*Macbeth*, I, iv, lines 12–13).

32. The code can no more be broken, alas, than the phrenological code of the skull. But the successful dating of Hegel's early manuscripts through the evolution of various letter forms over time illustrates one way in which handwriting can, indeed, be studied as a record of "character." Unfortunately for Lavater there is little reason to believe that *ethical* character is what is coded in it.

33. Thus the Freudian hypothesis that the nail-biter does not *know* what the real trouble is, *sublates* the whole standpoint of Observing Reason. The *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* is a "spiritual" inquiry (in which the effective consensus of patient and observer is the only standard of "truth").

34. MacIntyre (1972, 220) remarks that "physiognomy was an ancient science." There is, in fact, a treatise on it among the writings ascribed to Aristotle. This is now classified as spurious. But it was accepted as Aristotelian by the Arabs, and by medieval Christian students. Bartholomew of Messina translated it into Latin at the court of Manfred in Sicily between 1258 and 1266.

Nowadays a lot of books are written about "games people play," and about the skilful interpretation of body language generally. All who are engaged in "public relations"—especially business or commercial relations, advertising, and sales promotion, but also, for instance, courtroom law—need to be able to read the signs by which they can judge whether they are really having the effect or influence that they wish to have. So books on "physiognomy" will always be sure of a market. But this is a "science" that belongs essentially to Plato's Cave; and I fancy that Lavater himself might agree with me that in this perspective its contribution to the "advancement of *Menschenkenntnis* and *Menschenliebe*" is a highly ambiguous one.

35. MacIntyre says that in his discussion of physiognomy "Hegel . . . sides with Ryle in the *Concept of Mind* in his enmity to the notion of dispositions as causes of the actions that manifest them" (MacIntyre, 1972, 221). One cannot quarrel with this statement, because Hegel's polemic against *causal laws* of the kind that Newton discovered is continuous from the moment that we reach the observation of the organism. But it is not a perspicuous way to state Hegel's position all the same, because the Aristotelian conceptions of disposition, habit, character (and "cause") are the fundamental building blocks of Hegel's position. (I think this is true of Ryle also).

36. M. Emerson (1987) is right in arguing that both Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty agree with Hegel's view that the distinction between "inner" and "outer" is a mistake. (Emerson himself is much indebted to Hyppolite [1946, I, 255–61; 1974, 264–71].)

37. *Physiognomische Fragmente*, Essay 4, Leipzig, 1778, 110.

38. *Finnegans Wake*, London, Faber, 1939, 202, lines 26–28.

39. It is different, for instance, from the idealization of girlhood that Hegel will locate for us in Greek religion—different even from the nymphs because they will never grow old—a destiny that Joyce's telltale "then" already suggests.

40. Or in the earlier time to his confessor; but then it was the "Holy Spirit" that was explicitly "posited."

41. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, chapter VIII. Lady Catherine is an admirable study of the simple "physiognomy" of the *strong will*. She is unquestionably both "determined" and "energetic." But she never *does* anything except mind other people's business. Hegel would have been delighted with this example of how it is possible to *exist* as a mere physiognomy. (Many of Jane Austen's secondary characters exist in this mode—and in great variety—

because there was so little real work that the landed gentry were allowed by their code to do. Lady Catherine, however, has clearly *chosen* her self-satisfied path in life.)

42. This is documented by G. Tytler (1982).

43. At the statistical level I am not sure that it has perished even yet. Charles Morris seems to have aimed to carry on the work of Lombroso; and, of course, skull-study is a fundamental aspect of the evolutionary science of human intelligence. But there is the important difference that modern craniology *depends upon* neurophysiology. For the students of phrenology the dependence went the other way.

44. Gall's views were legally condemned and banned as irreligious in some parts of Germany (see Baillie, 337). In England a law of Elizabeth against physiognomists was revived in 1743. But Petry (*Subjective Spirit* II, 632–633) indicates that practitioners were to be whipped as rogues and vagabonds. So it seems probable that Shakespeare's Duncan in *Macbeth* was giving the educated man's verdict on a recognized *fraud*.

45. With the advent of the movie camera and the computer, it is conceivable that this conceptual difficulty has been overcome. Thus a "science" of physiognomy may now be possible; and in the political world of direct democracy made possible by television, the rational ground for developing this science, if it is indeed possible, clearly exists. But it will have quite the opposite teleological structure to the science of Lavater. It will be a *practical* science of presentation not a *theoretical* science of observation. Its *telos* (as Plato would have said) will be not knowledge but persuasion. (The "lie-detector," if it can be perfected, will take us from perceptual observation to the "first inversion" of the Understanding—and so to an observational science of sorts.)

46. See E. M. Hundert (1987) for an interesting philosophical foray in this direction (Junian psychology looks too much like the observational theory of "faculties" and "passions" to be reducible to a "science" with a determinate conceptual structure).

47. Both physiognomy and phrenology are dismissed out of hand in the *Encyclopedia*, section 411. But there is a sympathetic discussion of body-shape and body language in the lectures. Lavater was given a couple of sentences in at least one course. *Systematically* speaking "the judgment based on physiognomic expression has . . . only the value of an *immediate* judgment, which can just as easily be untrue as it can be true. For this reason there has rightly been a withdrawal of the exaggerated attention that was formerly devoted to physiognomy, when Lavater made such a fuss about it, and the most extraordinary benefits were promised from it for the much vaunted 'knowledge of mankind.'"

48. *Introduction to the Study of Man*, 13.

49. MacIntyre's interpretation of Hegel's discussion of phrenology leads him to the conclusion (1972, 233–234) that "between the Hegelian mode of understanding human action and the mode that has dominated modern thinking about the relevance of such sciences as neurophysiology and genetics, there is a basic incompatibility." This is a mistake that arises from concentrating on the *Phenomenology*—which has its own special purpose—and ignoring the *Encyclopedia*. Also we must realize that the object of phrenology, neurophysiology, genetics, and Hegelian "anthropology" is the understanding of human *nature*; the theory of human *action* belongs to a different set of empirical sciences, and to other parts both of the "science of consciousness" and of the "system."

50. *Timaeus* 71–72. Hegel had appealed to this passage in one of his polemics against the romantic cult of genius (end of 1804, or possibly 1805 [Rosenkranz 186; Harris and Knox, 260]).

51. Hegel himself accepted Goethe's (and Oken's) view that the skull is a set of transformed vertebrae.

52. Eric von der Luft (1987, 27–29) has drawn attention to the existence of two modes of interpretation of “observation” in present day medical science: “reductionist” science and “hierarchic” science. He sees that Hegel successfully employs Gall's Phrenology as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the *reductionist* model. But it is important to Hegel that Gall himself was not a “reductionist.” Like most other interpreters, von der Luft sees only the negative programme of Hegel's experiential science (the drive to “sublate” and to pass on to the next rung of the ladder).

53. We should particularly remember the military and naval discipline of the time.

54. In point of fact, Gall did a lot of work on the evolution of the nervous system as it can be observed through the comparative anatomy of higher and lower organisms. He showed in this way that the formation of the brain is the climax of nerve-development. Hegel presumably knew this; and his substitution of a commonsense argument is an ironic comment on the general level of “skull-theory.”

55. Students in the *Stift* at Tübingen whose conduct was unsatisfactory were sometimes deprived of their wine-portions for a few days or subjected to a few hours of what was called *Karker*. Simple imprisonment is, of course, still the most widely employed of the “other external ways to get at the activity of the spirit, in order to stimulate or inhibit it.”

56. *Caput mortuum* was the alchemist's term for the residuum left after exhaustive distillation. Hence it applies to anything from which everything valuable or interesting has been removed.

57. I am not sure how *our* critical observations are to be regarded. We are only observers, so no real violation of the method is involved; but perhaps paragraphs 329–330 belong to the Concept. (See further the beginning of the commentary on par. 331 below.)

58. As my readers will have realized by this time, it is only the “brain-mind” identity that is a permanent *Gestalt* of Reason. (Physiognomy and Phrenology together are the *Gestalt* of the “body-mind” identity in Hegel's own time.)

59. He believed that “the very soul that sees through the organ of sight and smells through the organ of smell, learns by heart through the organ of memory and demonstrates goodness through the organ of goodheartedness” (*Schreiben über seinen Prodromus*, 321; cited in *G.W.* IX, 505 in connection with 181, 39 [Miller, par. 328, page 198]).

60. It is worthy of note that the criterion of *feeling* enters only at the level where scientific observation has reached its limit. This is clearly relevant to Hegel's polemic against the cult of “feeling” in religion.

61. Flay (1984, 131). He points out in his note that this point had already been grasped by H. Krumpel (1972, 41–46).

62. According to Hegel's own theory of the organism, animal life (and even plant life) is “free” too. Observational Reason is marked throughout by a rigorous acceptance of the dichotomy between freedom and determinism. Hegel's own view replaces this by a continuum; even the motion of the heavenly bodies exhibits what Spinoza and Leibniz were prepared to call “freedom,” and Hegel acknowledges *that* sense also. But the presence of consciousness (with the resultant possibility of foresight, calculation and choice) makes a crucial difference. This is where “Spirit”—self-awareness in otherness—begins.

63. This was, no doubt, a very convenient aspect of Gall's science for George Combe, one of Gall's leading followers in Britain, when Marian Evans, a friend of some years, and “the

noblest woman that I have seen” abandoned her freethinking intellectual friends (who were all true believers in Gall’s “science”) and formed her adulterous union with G. H. Lewes—one of the foremost critics of phrenology. Combe asked whether there was insanity in the Evans family. Was there not a bump somewhere that ought to have rendered the inquiry superfluous? (See G. S. Haight, ed., *Selections from George Eliot’s Letters*, Yale, 1985, 151.)

64. He is not *contemplating* any such science here either; but it is easy to show (from his own use of *physiognomic* assumptions at the level of general cultural interpretation) that he is not in principle opposed to it.

65. In the United States Phrenology became for a time a recognized profession. “Qualified” practitioners supplied “skull-readings”; and it was not unusual for employers to ask domestic servants to submit a “reading” with their regular letters of reference. I do not know whether there is any record of violence committed by disappointed servants either against phrenologists or against self-righteously credulous employers. But in the economic context of nineteenth century immigration it does not seem impossible.

66. This claim is more contentious than I realized. But see K. R. Westphal (1996b).

67. His “solution” was only an intermediate step in the maturing of Reason. We shall see it dialectically transformed in due course.

68. Kainz is therefore justified in speaking of a “paradoxical rebound” through which Reason “arrives at its highest point” (1976, 114). This is exactly what happens. Also his chart on 115 shows how and why the “rebound” occurs. So (unlike Findlay) he does not deserve the brickbat Flay hurls at him (Flay, 1984, 328, n. 47).

69. Hegel clearly credits the *invention* of the Unhappy Consciousness to the Jews here: “What it [the Jewish Volk] ought to be in and for itself, this essentiality of self [*Selbstwesenheit*] it is not for itself, but instead it displaces it beyond itself.” In the same way Gall displaces the actuality of his science (lawful correlation) beyond it. But his skull-theory has only a trigger-function, whereas Moses on Mount Sinai (and the people that set itself apart at his behest) created the *Gegensatz* which the whole *Phenomenology of Spirit* (as the objective movement of the *Weltgeist*) must resolve.

70. This is not the whole story. For the scientific community of Reason can cherish the legitimate hope that all such freaks will be eliminated as the logical self-comprehension of the community becomes more perfect. But it is not rational to hope that the “unhappiness” of the spirit (which logically brings authority and persecution with it) will ever completely disappear; and for a “people” to cling to the sense of being chosen by God as the vessels of his truth, when they are chosen for persecution by other peoples, is simply the alienated form that Reason is bound to assume.

We should remember the importance of Lessing’s *Nathan* in Hegel’s intellectual formation. Hegel was always conscious that what was “cast out” might actually be the saving truth. For a balanced account of his mature views about the “Jewish problem” in his own community see E. von der Luft (1989c); see also O. Pöggeler (1974).

71. Hegel believed that each of the four elements goes through a cycle of transformations—but this cycle does not have an inner dynamo. Only the whole weather cycle of the Earth (which is externally powered by the free motion of the Solar System) is self-maintaining. For the two-sided self-maintenance of the organism see further *Toward the Sunlight*, 261–279, 432–441.

72. The Concept is not visible as such in the living thing. It is outside it (in the mind of the observer), and beyond it (in the perpetual cycle of the generations). This “beyondness” is an

“insideness” because the real Concept is the always invisible *form* that drives the whole visible cycle.

73. “Er an sich selbst nur ist die Nothwendigkeit dieser Beziehung; die Beobachtung rückt ihm näher auf den Leib . . .” The referents of *er* and *ihm* are difficult to harmonize. Since *ihm* must be the object of *Beobachtung* De Negri took *er* to refer back to *Gegenstand*. But this produces no very obvious sense. The only sense that it does make is more easily secured by taking *er* to be *der Geist* (as the English translators do). We have to understand that *ihm* is only *der gemeinte Geist* (and that is what is meant by *an sich selbst nur*). So the sense is: “Spirit [as we observe] is the necessity of this connection; but Spirit is only implicit for Observing Reason [and we observe that too]; observation presses it [the *meant* Spirit] right to the body . . .”

74. Hegel says: “What was sublated from the very first observation of inorganic nature—viz, that the Concept should be present as thing—this last mode reinstates . . .” If we return to the beginning of the main discussion, we can see that the sublated empiricism is the *necessary* first moment of Observation (pars. 244–245); and it is precisely in the present paragraph that Hegel is constrained to acknowledge that Gall is not a materialist. So the properly comprehensive statement of the conceptual motion is that Observation begins with rationalism sublating empiricism and ends with empiricism sublating rationalism.

75. “The spirit *is* the skull-record” has *no* scientific content except a category mistake. But to suppose that this formal contradiction is all that should matter to a Hegelian in *all* of the observational sciences of spirit, is to suppose that formal logic matters more than Hegelian logic, or that formal falsity is more important than dialectical truth. The importance of uncovering contradiction in the rational standpoint that takes formal logic as its foundation, is that it legitimates our move from this standpoint in our quest for “absolute knowledge” (i.e. our quest for the *concrete* logic of human cognition).

76. It is here that Hegel makes the paradox of the Unhappy *Consciousness* (which is the climactic mode of *Self-Consciousness*) explicit. Eric von der Luft (1987, 37–38) has drawn attention to Hegel’s punning presentation of Gall as nature’s wrath, bringing us to the Calvary of the Spirit in the *Aesthetics—T.W.-A.* 14, 369–370; Knox, 715–716. The “skull-place” is part of the last image in the *Phenomenology* (par. 808).

77. Ownership of an *instrument* is the “instinctively rational” relationship of *external* teleology. The formula first appears in the Real Philosophy of 1805/1806 (*G.W.* VIII, 166, line 20). It expresses Self-Consciousness as Desire; so the circle of Self-Consciousness as Reason closes here for the first time. This is the Faustian self-consciousness in its developed shape.

78. The disrupted consciousness of Rameau is simply the dialectical moment of the self-consciousness of “honesty.” Mein Herr Philosoph and Young Rameau provide the opposite faces of Physiognomy.

79. *Analytischer Versuch über die Seelenkräfte*, Leipzig, 1770. Hegel owned this German translation by C. G. Schütz. Bonsiepen and Heede quote some passages about the hypothetical physical analogue of syllogistic reasoning, which would certainly have caught Hegel’s attention. Certainly it is Bonnet whose view was so rudely dismissed in the *Difference* essay—see Harris and Cerf, 162 at note 9.

80. We ought not to read the *Phenomenology* as if it was written by the nephew of Rameau (though that is now becoming rather fashionable). The last sentence of paragraph 65 contains Hegel’s verdict on what such interpretations are worth.

81. The observably embodied free potential truly is a “living *thing*”; the free spirit comes to birth embodied in an organism. So the “result” of Observing Reason is the rational living

organism (just as the “result” of Understanding was the eternal organism of free motion). The intervening process of “Self-Consciousness” was the production of the Spirit as absolute *authority*. The crucial difference between the two “results” is that the living organism is *self-consciously* rational. But that is only the positive side. Negatively, the crucial difference is that the living organism *dies*, it is mortal.

82. In the religious tradition it is the water of the Earth’s rivers that symbolizes the Spirit. The rivers are fed by the weather cycle which is the “life” of the infinite organism—the cycle of heaven and earth. Like the foaming forth of Spirit directly from the skull-place, Hegel’s move from the inorganic cosmic metaphor of religion to the organic microcosmic metaphor of Reason, expresses his speculative doctrine of God’s Incarnation in human Reason. (The transition from the phrenologist’s “reading” to the living *Volk* and the active agent is certainly one place where the rhetorical approach of J. H. Smith (1988), H. Sussman (1982) and C. Sills (1989) is in place. But the “metaphorical” connections are too many and various to be easily classifiable under any one trope.)

83. The only thing that could be more mistaken than Findlay’s belief that Hegel is simply making a joke (1958, 109) is his belief that Hegel regards a combination of functions which strikes us as an irony of nature as an adequate ground for a logical transition—compare M. Kusch 1984, 118, n. 4. I was amused to discover that the *N.E.D.* calls Findlay’s super-professorial use of “micturition,” for urination, *erroneous*. His substitution of “orgasm” for Hegel’s “generation” (in his Analysis of par. 346) is philosophically “erroneous” also, but it led Alan White to the insightful comment that the “I = I” of primitive Self-Consciousness is a philosophical orgasm (1985, 239–242).

Concluding Intermezzo

1. The Prospect

At this point where Reason has completed its survey of the reality that it instinctively knows to be itself, we can see why it is logically obliged to become aware of itself as a self-generating activity. The cumulative result of rational observation has been that Reason comprehends itself in the embodied consciousness as a thing. Observational psychology taught us that there is no "law of individuality." Physiognomy taught us that the individual agent cannot be indirectly observed; and Phrenology has shown that it is logically absurd to suppose that the rational individual is there to be observed at all. Thus the observing consciousness has learned what became apparent to us when we reached Psychology. We saw then already that we were observing the spirit in its world. We can observe that, because spirit is there in its world. But it cannot be observed immediately as a finite object (like the laws God gave to Moses on tablets of stone). We can only observe it because it has actively produced itself as a thing-world.

Of course, the empirical observer knows just as well as we do that the self expresses itself fully only in the social world; and that it can be observed there. But she deceives herself into thinking that the real self is the inner self, the unexpressed potential. If we are to know the self as it truly is, she says, we must find a way of observing that potential. To do that was the project of Phrenology; but the phrenological observer discovers only freedom and finitude (death).

That result, therefore, is the subject of the next experience. Phrenology is a necessary step in the dialectical progression of Observation because it successfully reduces the career of Observing Reason to that. The Reason that is all reality observes itself first as the "living Earth"—the macrocosm that maintains life in all of its forms. Then it observes itself as a rational life. In itself, it is not just a thinker, but an individual agent; but it cannot successfully observe itself as a determinate physiognomy of Reason. So in its last throw, it seeks to observe itself as the result of the whole process of Reason in nature. The operation of nature as a whole has made it what it is. So its logical hypothesis is that maturation in the environment of the living earth has inscribed its universal potential upon its skull.

When we speak like this, the evident absurdity of the position consists only in the assumption that what Nature has done in producing the rational self can be read by the rational observer. Even the empirical self-observer knows that she is free (and responsible

for what she makes of herself); and she also knows that she is finite. The idea that the program of this finitude is given by Nature (as a rational instinct) must give way now to the active rational instinct that has all of the knowledge rational observation can supply, within the conceptual context of the certainty that "every man is the smith of his own fortune."¹ The result that becomes the subject of the new experience is simply the object as it showed itself to the phrenologist. But this active subject knows that there can be no reading of her individuality until her skull is in the graveyard.

This result produces a total inversion of Observation. The active self goes out to make its fortune in the world. It knows (just as we do) that it has come to birth in the order of living nature, and that it has been educated, and supplied with observational knowledge, by its ethical community. Its Reason is the capacity for free self-expression that it has. In its use of its rational freedom it is a law unto itself. But it has long ago learned that both Nature and the ethical community which enabled it to develop its Reason, are governed by laws of their own. So Reason as "the Category" is now at odds with itself. It is a divided Category, a universal that is self-opposed.

The rest of Hegel's book is the story of this self-opposition within Reason. The principal ground for dividing his book (and my commentary) at this point, is the fact that Hegel himself recurs to this moment as the starting point for his circular presentation of Absolute Knowing. Absolute Knowing is the function of the rationally free self that escapes from the phrenologist with the certain knowledge that it is indeed a thing. As Observing Reason it was "all reality," i.e., all thinghood. But as the result of Observation it is this skull of which Hamlet says with grim humour "Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come. Make her laugh at that."²

At the end of Hegel's book we are not provoked to laugh, but we are invited to rejoice. For it is from this "skull-place" that the infinitude of the Spirit foams forth. It is the circle of the "skull places" that I want to make clear in my commentary. The individual Reason has not yet completed its "experience." It must learn to harmonize itself as subjective freedom with the universal "category" of the rational community's ethical life; and then it must discover that it cannot generate the content of that category, indeed that it cannot even generate the form of it. The pure form that it does generate is logically empty, and will accept contradictory contents as its filling. The actual form and content must come to the individual intuitively, as an immediate knowledge of what appears to be a "law of nature."

The moment at which the "unwritten eternal law" is proclaimed is one of two places where Hegel marks an important dividing point in his book. This is where the final syllogism of Spirit (Finite, Infinite and Absolute) begins. At this point "God as Substance" appears, and the story of his evolution into Subject begins to unfold. And since Spirit is an objective social phenomenon, there are grounds for arguing that this God is a transcendent being of some kind, which supervenes in human experience from above. This does not seem to me to be the correct interpretation of Hegel; I am certain, at least, that it is not logically necessary. Hegel was educated to believe that "In God, we live and move and have our being." So it is possible that he did hold that the advent of Spirit was the appearing of a being that is both supernatural and superhuman. This is

*possible, because the Romantic age experienced the world differently than we do; and it is logically allowable in a formal sense. The belief had to be possible, because orthodoxy required everyone to hold it; but it is not necessary. Indeed, there is a logical difficulty about it, because this God is a Ding an sich. By definition, his being is beyond our experience.*³

There was a powerful party among the intellectuals of Hegel's time who did not believe that the absolute Being was a self at all. Hegel was out to convince them that they needed to reconsider their "rational" position. He wanted to show that, according to the prevailing view of natural necessity, human freedom is supernatural. The divine in his lexicon is what is both truly free and absolutely necessary. The Science of Experience is the science of those beliefs that are "absolutely necessary" for the comprehension of human experience in its freedom.

The beginning of Hegel's sixth chapter is not in fact the most important point of division in the structure of the book as he finally envisaged it. The Preface tells us that the Absolute must be comprehended "not as Substance, but just as much as Subject"; and the "appearing of Spirit" is announced at the dawn of Self-Consciousness, as the "desire for another self" (in the early pages of chapter IV). But the Table of Contents indicates that the beginning of chapter V is actually the most important structural division in the book. For chapters V to VIII are all subordinated together under the letter "C."

My own decision to break the commentary in the middle of Hegel's chapter V is guided by my understanding of this division in the Table of Contents. Chapter V (as I understand it) is about Subjective Spirit. The introduction of the Concept of Spirit in chapter IV is meant to alert us to the fact that human self-consciousness is always spiritual. But the finite self is not aware of its spiritual structure until we reach the Unhappy Consciousness; and rational Observation identifies with God (rather than with its own finite embodiment) until we reach this present juncture in chapter V. Both we, and the consciousness that we are observing, are aware of Spirit as the objective totality from the observation of Psychology onwards. But it is only now (in Self-Actualizing Reason) that Spirit becomes the actual subject; and even now it is interacting with itself instinctively, in the dialectic of the divided category of "Reality."

So the remainder of chapter V is transitional. It forms the subjective prelude to the phenomenology of Spirit as a self-conscious unity. The "Necessity" upon which the instinct of finite Reason comes to grief is the totality of "Life" not as a natural, but as an ethical order; and what follows is the evolution of ethical selfhood. Thus, Hegel is obliged to introduce and discuss das Volk at this point, because it is not just the singular object of the phrenologist that appears as a subject now. The universal object of Psychology becomes implicitly a subject too. The Ethical Substance is the necessary context in which "self-making" occurs. At first it is not recognized as "another self," but only as a blind fate; and after that it is an alienated self (the conventional law of those who need to be enlightened). But it is there from the first; so we must see it plainly without any disguises. Antigone's "unwritten law" is one side of the law with which "Virtue" is reconciled. "Law-testing Reason" can only be brought to recognize its futility, because what it wants to validate is already self-validated as it stands. This self-validating reality arrives on the scene now, as the truly universal thinghood of Reason.

2. The Balance Sheet

Having arrived at the point where the two essential moments (of social substance and individual self-conscious agency) are plainly visible, let us recall briefly (and “conversationally”) how we got here. It will be helpful to make a sort of balance sheet of the argument, because—quite apart from any estimate of its methodical success—the recollection of experience is meant to be cumulative. The rational self takes itself to be immediately given—coming straight from the hand of God into the Garden of Eden, so to speak. This self is the rational animal, Reason is its “nature,” and everyone in Reason’s world knows that they are in “the daylight of the present” (par. 177). But actually, Reason came, most recently, through a curtain behind which there is universal guilt and universal contrition. Reason is the Unhappy Consciousness that has cast off its unhappiness, and drowned the memory of it in the joyful awareness of union with God as the universal light; and behind that nearest curtain there are other experiences of which the tensions are still alive in Reason, driving it forward to repeat them at higher levels of complexity. What differentiates us from Reason as we now observe it, is precisely that we do remember what is there in the darkness that the dawn of the present day banished; and we know how the tensions are logically interlocked and interwoven. It is fitting for us to rehearse our lessons briefly, before we go forward to discover where, and how, our daylight first dawned.⁴

We began with the experiences that are essential to scientific consciousness as such. The pattern of the movement from Sense-Certainty, through Perception, to Understanding, is one that we have just repeated (so Hegel will tell us in par. 348) at the level of Rational Observation. Rational Self-Actualization will repeat the “double movement of Self-Consciousness, and pass over out of independence into its freedom.” We shall see that both in its naive shape, and in its rational repetition, this movement of Self-Consciousness is properly a historical achievement, rather than a personal one.

The movement of Consciousness we must all go through personally (if we are to be intelligent readers of this book); and (since not many of us already want to be philosophers while we are still children in school) we philosophers generally go through it in a fairly mature way. But we do not go through it systematically, because in ordinary consciousness, the stages remain all mixed up. We begin identifying things as types as soon as we have any working control of language (perhaps sooner); and we are aware of the world as a system of forces and laws not much later. I have identified the resolve to do philosophy (or it might be the determination to be a “scientist” of some sort) as the moment of necessary transition from Sense-Certainty to Perception. The decision to study any fundamental science is a commitment to pursue Understanding, and to establish consciously (or to absorb and improve) the universal conceptual structure into which all of our practical commerce with the natural order fits.⁵

Since few of us comprehend the “leading of language” logically, these life decisions and choices generally do not remove us consciously from the domain of Sense-Certainty. We acquired some of our vocabulary through ostensive definition, and in our practical life we are pointing at things all the time (often by purely linguistic means). So we form and maintain the natural assumption that that sort of experience and usage is what language and thought are founded on. This is the “philosophy of common sense”; someone

like Eddington, who is conscious of the theoretical character of the Understanding, may well become puzzled about how the writing table can be two things, only one of which can be pointed at. But she never doubts that the second one is somehow there, behind the phenomenal "curtain" that we do point at.

*We all know, all the time, that we are denizens of this world of scientific common sense. Hegel's "Idealism" aims to change our view of where the phenomenal curtain is, and what is behind it. So the one crucial step to be mindful of in the phenomenology of "Consciousness" is the last one. The comprehensive inversion of the perceptual and the theoretical standpoints, takes us from the sphere of understandable natural necessity, to the sphere of natural life as the spontaneous self-maintenance of a balance of opposites. The natural self who knows "This is my world," has a history that Reason forgets very easily, because Reason is the recovery of the primitive confidence. We have to go through the experience of Self-Consciousness, in order to discover what pure thinking (thinking as and for the universal self) is. Then, at the level of Observing Reason, we can recognize the human organism as the instinctive shape of rational freedom. Our own bodies are our "Reason" as a sense-certain object; and the empirical observation that organizes the world of this rational living thing imaginatively, is the self-conscious expansion of that same organic activity. Critical Reason (which we shall arrive at only in the final phase of Hegel's chapter, when "the Category" comes to self-consciousness), is the transitional self-negation of this instinctive organization of *Vorstellungen*. When this Critical Reason arrives at the admission of its own practical helplessness, the real evolution of speculative Reason as the purely intellectual self-conception of the rational community can be comprehended.⁶ In the first stage of this higher process, the rational imagination becomes creative. We shall watch it project the image of the community's self-consciousness in the Olympian council of its Gods. This is the first stage of the "homecoming" of the abstractly intellectual (and hence inhuman) Author of Nature, which instinctive Reason, with its practical utilitarian understanding of the concept of purpose, is obliged to postulate.*

Rational Life, as an instinctive mode of being, takes shape as the family. We can see already how the concept of Life provided in Hegel's fourth chapter, is what becomes the object of biological observation generally. But it is only in the human body that Reason can properly be said to behold itself as an "object"; and the emergence of Desire (as the immediate shape of Self-Consciousness) from Life, requires us to concentrate our attention on the process of human organic development. In the normal course of human organic life—the pattern intended by "Nature" as Kant would have said—an ideal family relationship is established, such that "the Genus" can stably maintain itself, and realize itself to the full. In this pattern, all natural desires are satisfied.⁷

In the self-conscious organism, the spontaneity of Life becomes a conscious will to be "independent." This is the instinctive desire for "another self." In the context of social evolution, this desire is stimulated and maintained by the need of the community to defend itself. But a peaceable community that lives in natural harmony with nature and with its neighbors is quite conceivable, and the cultural record suggests that it has sometimes existed. Since the breaching of the harmony of natural desire would not happen without aggression, the tendency to aggression must be founded in the logic of human

development; and Hegel regards it as the necessary “middle” for the concept of freedom. Without warfare, and the recognition of independence, or the willing acceptance of dependence and subjection, we could never reach the philosophical freedom that is the goal of Reason.

Philosophical “freedom of thought” is the sublation of natural aggression that begins in Stoicism. Communities do not “think” in the proper sense. They can be “self-conscious” only in the mode of free (i.e. aesthetic) imagination. Athena’s children are free in and with her freedom. They cannot be free if she is not. It is the philosopher who thinks freely for the universal human community. So we have the formal birth of “freedom of thought” before us, when Democritus proclaims that “for the wise man the whole Earth is open.”⁸ But this does not become a universal option until all of the free communities have been reduced to dependent subjection. For although it is only the individual who can be thoughtfully free, it is only the community that can be really independent (or forcefully subjected).

As a singular Gestalt, the life and death struggle is a boundary phenomenon. We see it properly only in those individuals who are the singular voice of their community. When there are two claimants for the “kingship,” the struggle can occur in its pure shape. We all experience the need for recognition, and up to a point, we struggle for it. But in the common experience of our education as individuals it is submission that is rational. We learn to desire the other self that is imposed upon us as the price of universal recognition. The general grasp of this fact has frequently distorted the interpretation of the life-and-death struggle in a Hobbesian direction. The Stoic doctrine of freedom gives the lie to Hobbes, and to all of his bourgeois and Marxist disciples. Willingness to accept death is the condition of rational existence. In the world in which there are no independent communities, and consequently no free citizens, but only many shapes of servitude, it is irrational to enter upon a life and death struggle, because only one result is possible. But at that point the universal freedom of individual choice that is implicit in this rational conclusion becomes apparent. We can no longer risk our lives—there is no risk, for the outcome of any open struggle is a certainty. But we can all choose our deaths; and the ethical ground for our choice is no longer the independence of our community, but the integrity of our own freedom as rational individuals.

This integrity of Reason is still only an empty formal ideal. The very fact that a freely chosen death is the true certificate of freedom, shows us that enjoyment can only be a perpetual retreat from life. The freedom of the Stoic is a continual surrendering of any and every thing by which she could be bound. When the Sceptic shows that no knowledge of the Universal Reason is possible, that the freedom secured is a freedom without positive Reason, then the rational inadequacy of life within a community of unequal recognition becomes evident. Emperor and slave can both enjoy the freedom of the Stoic sage; but that is precisely because this lordship of self, is a lordship of nothing objective. It is only a Satanic pride that should be voluntarily surrendered to God, the absolute Lord who graciously gives us his Truth because he is our Father who loves us.

When we make ourselves “equal in the sight of God” because we are his children rather than his servants, the natural community based upon the dependence-independence relation of unequal recognition is implicitly sublated. This spiritual community of

equals is the community of Reason; but it is still self-alienated. God himself is our brother; but he has passed over to his own kingdom of pure thought, and we can only be assured of our reconciliation with him, through a miraculous communication mediated by his divinely authorized "minister." Our communication with him is only a picture of Reason. None of it is the work of our own Reason. Only when we become the subject of an experience that has this shape, does the autonomy of our Reason become recognized and explicit. There is no longer any need of a miraculous gift. We are the representatives of God, and there is nothing supernatural or incomprehensible in what we do or say.

*To begin with, this liberation is an instinctive one. We simply forget the Unhappy Consciousness of universal sinfulness and dependence upon Grace; the world of Reason is a restored Garden of Eden. But just as the advent of Stoic freedom as a universal option can only take place in the world of legal status, so the advent of Reason presupposes the world of Faith (see par. 232 and commentary). The faithful Christian has the divine voice of the Shaped Unchangeable within her. Faith is the other side of Reason; it will manifest itself only in Reason's world (the Enlightenment). Reason itself has no religion; yet like the Faith with which it keeps company, it needs a God in the Beyond, because it is still at the level of *Vorstellung*. Only the Reason of Fichte's Idealism really knows that it is "all reality." That is the climax of its development. The instinctive Reason that we have been observing is consciously God's "representative"; and we have just seen it come face to face with the finitude that that status implies.*

The Reason that accepts its finite body as the naturally given starting point for the expression of infinite selfhood, will now go on to make itself into the self-conscious infinite Category. It will sublimate all the differences of the spiritual kingdom of animals (another essentially instinctive shape of Reason); but it will then find that (like Stoicism) it has no control of its content. The difference between the two situations is that in Reason's world, the content is all there, and it is securely known to be rational. Reason exists in "the daylight of the present." So the task of raising its "certainty" to "Truth"—which still remains for us—is simply a recollective one. The positive achievement of chapter V is the establishment of the categorical certainty of "Idealism." This Fichtean concept was needed as the interpretive context for all the finite empirical observation that we have to comprehend. But it is only now, in the middle of Hegel's chapter, that its self-conscious career actually begins.

This new career is the "phenomenology of Spirit" in a properly self-conscious sense. Hegel introduced the concept of Spirit, as soon as we reached the "desire for another self," because it is logically present in all communication between rational selves. But now Spirit is explicitly objective. I have called this volume "The pilgrimage of Reason," because the conscious finite Reason has pursued its search logically to its own tomb. Gall cannot observe our essence on our skulls; but when we are skulls, our story can be written, and our essence can be learned from it. To look for a "law of individuality" in the living "representative" of Reason is absurd; but biography, however limited its success may be, is not an absurd undertaking. Logically, we have now come to the point of resurrection "in the Spirit." With Fichte's Ego we shall also have reached our focus point in the present. We shall find that our capacity for critical comprehension of the present world teaches us nothing. Then we shall embark self-consciously upon our odyssey of spiritual

recollection. But the Spirit that presented itself as an object in Psychology, is now with us as the Substance—the real object that is an active subject. The still-finite consciousness that we are observing does not yet recognize it properly. But only if we recognize it now, shall we be able to understand the formal transition to Spirit when we come to it; and Hegel clearly wants us to recognize “True Spirit” at this point, for he explains (at some length) that both the actual ground and the actual goal of Reason’s self-realization is das Volk (par. 350).

Notes

1. This was how the proverb ran in Hegel’s world—he uses it in his Logic lectures at Berlin.

2. *Hamlet*, Act V, scene 1 (lines 198–201 in the Yale Edition).

3. The most carefully *critical* statement of this view of “Spirit” is given by Charles Taylor. But the result of all his care is that I cannot understand what “the Spirit” is (and I don’t believe that anyone else can). Naturally I am loath to ascribe to Hegel a doctrine that passes my understanding, as long as I can find a consistent interpretation of what he says that I do seem to myself to understand.

4. For another brief survey of the movement of Hegel’s argument see H. S. Harris (1994).

5. We always need perceptual knowledge in order to talk about our sense-certain world. We move to Perception properly when the *typing* of things becomes our conscious cognitive concern. At that stage we need some Understanding as the conceptual context of our “thing-world.” We move to “Understanding” properly when the unifying *ground* of the perceptual world becomes our focal concern.

6. This “real evolution” *must*, of course, have already happened objectively in history, or there could not be a community of “instinctive reasoners” with an Understanding concept of their world.

7. What is natural is what appears to be so in the universal “light” of instinctive Reason.

8. D.-K. 68 B 247.

Index for Secondary Literature

This index contains all references to secondary discussions of Hegel from his biographer Karl Rosenkranz to the present. Post-Hegelian philosophers such as Bertrand Russell, and others who have not been cited for comments on Hegel, will be found in the Analytical Index that follows.

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The following abbreviations have been employed in this Index: H = Hegel, *Phen.* = *Phenomenology of Spirit*, I = individual, P = particular, S = singular, U = universal. The name G.W.F. Hegel is not indexed. His works will be found under their normal titles. Essays and fragments are listed in quotation marks.

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H. S. Harris

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To the members of
St. Edmund Hall
where it was my good fortune
to be taught;
and of
Glendon College
where it has been my good fortune
to teach.

Dentro al cristallo che 'l vocabol porta,
cerchiando il mondo, del suo caro duce
sotto cui giacque ogne malizia morta,
di color d'oro in che raggio traluce
vid'io uno scaleo eretto in suso
tanto, che nol seguiva la mia luce.
Vidi anche per li gradi scender giuso
tanti splendor, ch'io pensai ch'ogne lume
che par nel ciel, quindi fosse diffuso.

(*Paradiso*, Canto XXI, 25–33)

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Note on Conventions and Abbreviations

I have numbered the paragraphs of Hegel's text in two ways. For the convenience of those who use Miller's translation, I have adopted his running numbers (in spite of one or two mistakes that he made), but for the benefit of other readers, I have also numbered the paragraphs in each section. This should make it fairly easy to find the place in my commentary with any accurately printed text.

Bibliographical references in the Notes are given in abbreviated form: author's name, (publication date, page number or chapter). Translations of Hegel's works are similarly referred to by the translator's name with a page number. The full reference can be found by looking for the name and date in the Bibliography. Translations are listed in section 2 of the Bibliography specifically. Cross-references are provided in section 3 where confusion appeared likely.

The following abbreviations have been employed regularly:

<i>Akad.:</i>	Kant, Immanuel, <i>Gesammelte Schriften</i> , ed. Royal Prussian Academy, Berlin, Reimer, 1902–38.
<i>Anm.:</i>	Anmerkung (Remark)
<i>D.-K.:</i>	<i>Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , ed. H. Diels and W. Kranz, 7th ed., 3 vols., Berlin, Wiedmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1954.
<i>Dok.:</i>	<i>Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung</i> , ed. J. Hoffmeister, Stuttgart, Fromann, 1936, 1974.
<i>E.L.:</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Logic</i>
<i>Enz.:</i>	<i>Enzyklopädie (Encyclopedia)</i>
<i>G.S.A.:</i>	Hölderlin, J.C.F., <i>Sämtliche Werke</i> , ed. F. Beissner and A. Beck, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1943– (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe)
<i>G.W.:</i>	G.W.F. Hegel, <i>Gesammelte Werke</i> , ed. Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Hamburg, F. Meiner, 1968ff.
<i>H.S.A.:</i>	Hegel Society of America
<i>H.S.G.B.:</i>	Hegel Society of Great Britain
<i>I.J.P.:</i>	<i>Independent Journal of Philosophy</i>
<i>K.P.V.:</i>	Kant, Immanuel, <i>Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (Critique of Practical Reason)</i> , Riga, Hartknoch, 1788.

- K.R.V.*(A,B): Kant, Immanuel, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*), Riga, Hartknoch, 1781 [=A], second edition with occasional improvements, 1787 [=B].
- N.E.D.*: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933 (1971).
- L.C.L.*: Loeb Classical Library
- L.L.A.*: Library of Liberal Arts
- S.T.*: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*
- S.V.F.*: E. von Arnim (ed.), *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, 4 vols., Leipzig, Teubner, 1903–24; reprinted, Dubuque Iowa, W.C. Brown, n.d.
- S.W.*: *Sämtliche Werke*
- T.W.-A.*: G.W.F. Hegel: *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. E. Moldenhauer and K.M. Michel, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1970 [*Theorie Werkausgabe*].
- W.L.*: *Wissenschaft der Logik*

Prelude

The singular consciousness has reached its Calvary. "Reason" is its last and highest "shape." But its natural destiny in that shape is to experience its alienation from the universal rational order which it instinctively assumes to be its own true Substance. It is alive and free; but in that Substance it meets only its own death. Where then is the substantial reality of its own living selfhood to be found?

The movement from Observing Reason to Self-Actualization is one that involves both the whole experience of Reason and the last stage. On the one hand, the self that was observed in Phrenology becomes the subject of the new experience; but, on the other hand, because that self was a rationally comprehended whole of expressive capacities, its living expression is in the world of rational observation. So the freedom of self-expression is faced by the necessity of the world, and the first discovery of the self-expressive singular shape is that its own world is a Necessity that is not dead, but independently alive and free. With this the dialectical interaction of the singular and universal sides of Active Reason begins. First the singular rational agent takes itself to be the principle of a freedom that must replace the law of worldly necessity; then it becomes the true consciousness of the law as opposed to a false worldly consciousness of it; and when the two sides of this consciousness recognize one another as equally necessary, rational Individuality is achieved.

Even then the identity of singular desire with universal law is ambiguous and unstable. The rational individuals all have their own lives to lead; and when they claim to be exercising their Reason, by doing what is best for everyone, it is evident both that their view of the rational good is biased, and that there is a competition to be the one individual who does the rational Thing.

The immediate solution of this problem is a new kind of distinction between the singular and the universal sides. The universal Thing cannot be done individually; but surely it can be said by any rational individual? Alas, we discover that this is not the case. The singular rational consciousness cannot say what is right, universally, and without regard to the social situation and circumstances. It cannot even furnish an infallible criterion for deciding which universal formulas can be "laws of rational freedom." We only think that we can do this (and even that we can state universal laws of good behavior) because we already know (instinctively) what we must do, not rationally and universally, but within the definite community of which we are already members.

With this discovery, singular consciousness leaves the centre of the stage and withdraws to the wings. The subject of experience now is the Spirit. "Spirit" has been explicitly present (for us) as the universal side of the singular consciousness, ever since the active career of Reason began. But now this universal side emerges as an independent "shape of consciousness." From this point onwards the agent that we observe is the social Substance which the singular active Reason faced at the beginning of its career.

But how can there be any subject that is not a singular self-consciousness? How can there be an agency that is communal? The answer is simply "through the rational recognition of it as such." There is a speech, a language and a saying that is not singular because it is communally recognized as authoritative. This is the "voice of Reason" which the Real Individual tried but failed to be. She was obliged to admit that practical Reason can only be effectively voiced by and for an actual community; and as soon as that admission is made, it is evident beyond argument that the voice of Reason is heard, and recognized as such, in every actual community.

The Dasein of the Spirit is language. Wherever I hear (or read) a speech which I recognize to be not mine or yours, but equally mine, yours and "ours" (with reference to a community of others for whom it is equally authoritative, sacred, or valid) there the Spirit is. Indeed, it was already there in the Necessity that brought Faust and Gretchen to ruin; but it was not yet recognized under its proper identity as the communal voice. The dialectical development of this recognition is the theme of Active Reason and Real Individuality. When the Categorical Imperative gives way to the commanding voice of Antigone's natural feeling, Spirit is recognized in its "immediately true" shape.

As the voice of immemorial custom, however, that shape is doubled, as soon as particular groups within a wider community begin to make their own social arrangements. They are bound to do this by the same necessity that drove the Real Individuals into Lawgiving. Someone has to be designated to make executive decisions, and settle disputes. So Custom itself dictates that certain human voices must be obeyed; and from the inevitable conflict between the universal voice that speaks to all, and the particular voice that Custom designates as authoritative for our particular group, springs disaster for the immediate (or True) Shape of Spirit as a communal self.

From the breakdown of Spirit as customary unanimity, ordinary commonsense "selves" emerge. But this world of private individuals is not, and cannot be, a properly rational world. For them the Law of Reason is a formal ideal. Everyone is now recognized individually for what they already were (and did) in the customary world. But the execution of the law still requires a singular agent; and the authority of the law must be maintained by a power that is no longer "ours" but alien and arbitrary. So the formal ideal of universal legal recognition turns into tyranny and the primitive "law of the stronger"—but on a universal scale.¹

To escape from this breakdown, the voice of the universal Spirit must be alienated conceptually. The authority of the law must be seen to come from outside the world of finite experience altogether. But this discarnate voice still has to be incarnated in individual agents; and we have seen already why a plurality of incarnations is unsatisfactory. So what is achieved now is a nationally universal incarnation of Reason—a voice that speaks for that universal community of communities which the voice of custom spoke to.

This time there is no division between the voice of God and the voice of the King: they are one and the same.

This situation still contains the same absurdity that was present in the world of legal recognition. The King is now a constitutional monarch, so there is not anarchy whenever he dies; but the faith in a divine authorization of the constitution, is faced by the insight that every rational consciousness must be recognized as such, and hence as equal. The absolute authority of God, becomes the universal law of Reason—and the Revolution follows.

At this point, the Spirit must retreat into the inward voice of moral duty; and instead of a dialectic of private and public interest, we have a dialectic of moral good and evil. We arrive at the “situated conscience” (i.e., the moral conscience in harmony with the constitutional law and with its own social situation). Spirit finally reaches its subjective extreme in the religious language of the Beautiful Soul; and this time the opposition between speech and action leads to the explicit appearance of God—the Absolute Spirit—as the word of forgiveness.

Once God himself is on the scene, the whole evolution of consciousness has to be gone through again on its substantial side. We now know that the Spiritual Substance is the community, so we can observe the human community coming to the collective self-consciousness of its place in, and its relation to, the natural order of Necessity. This is what was still left out of the evolution of human society as the divine voice of custom that was finally incarnated properly as the individuated voice of conscience. The terminus of this evolution of Substance is the same community of mutually respecting and forgiving consciences; and the end of Spirit’s odyssey is reached in the community of logical “science,” and the subjectivity of the philosophical self-consciousness.

Thus the final reality of the Absolute Spirit—which makes its first appearance as the “Yes” of acceptance exchanged mutually between the judging consciousness and the agent—is the System of Science itself communicated between the singular thinking consciousness of the philosopher, and the universal thinking community. If it were not for the “Science of Experience” the communication would only be effective between the philosopher and us, the philosophically prepared audience. But through the demonstrated identity of the religious community with “us,” the communication becomes universal.²

We should note that in the “Yes” of comprehending acceptance exchanged between agent and judge (both of them metaphysically sinners, because the act must fail to be a truly universal good, and the universal judgment to that effect must fail to be an actual good) the impersonal voice of the universal good (which Antigone received from above) has become completely incarnate as a human relation. Thus, the movement of the Objective Spirit as a transcendent subject is first from above downwards; and when its immediate Truth is shattered it moves from outside inwards, becoming in this way an intellectual voice from the Beyond—i.e. an inner voice that is taken to have its own place and being somewhere else. At this stage it is like the Imperial Roman Law, except that it is known to have its authoritative seat in the eternal world of thought. Antigone’s divine voice was that of our life itself in this world; it could not have a mediator, and it did not need one. It was symbolized by the stone figures of the Gods. The new thoughtfully universal divine voice is mediated to us by human advisers on behalf of the

community. When it assumes the forms and powers of external authority, it is simply falling back into the Roman Imperial shape from which it emerged. The proper destiny of that Imperial shape is to be “constitutionalized”; and the final emergence of the socially situated Conscience presupposes the constitutionalization of political life and its public law.

When the voice reaches the shape of Conscience (including Forgiveness) the integration of community and individual is achieved. The Spirit is simply the mediating discourse that maintains the identity between them. Now a new movement of integration can begin—one that goes from inside outwards. The free community can now be observed as it advances toward the full comprehension of its absolute relation with the environing world of natural necessity. For this we must go back to a time when human freedom was not even thought of, and the individual had no concept of herself as a responsible agent (or a sinner). The community begins as an immediate shared consciousness of the Absolute. It is like Faust except that it is not self-consciously assertive. We can think of it as going through the stages of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and (Instinctive) Reason; or through the stages of Sense-Certainty, Perception and Understanding. But since it is necessarily a Spirit, the shapes in which Active Reason encounters Spirit without recognizing it are the most appropriate ones for the conceptual expression of the free Objective Spirit’s unrecognizing encounter with itself in the “absolute otherness” of Objective Necessity. We have here a further confirmation that the “odyssey of Spirit” can properly be said to begin with Self-Actualizing Reason. The necessary appearance of the self-conscious Volk at this point in the argument (as the contextual Concept for the phenomenology of the singular rational consciousness) reciprocally confirms this interpretation of the unselfconscious Absolute Spirit on its way to the immediately self-conscious identity of the Volk as “True Spirit.”

The self-consciously free objective (or communal) Spirit is reconciled with the absolute Necessity of things in the Art-Religion. Hegel tells us this explicitly, and thus provides us with the explanation of why the internal contradiction in the Concept of True Spirit was presented (both to it and to us, but with opposite intended “meanings”) through its literary art. True Spirit presents its relation with the Absolute to itself through the Olympian religion; but the relation between its own nature and its freedom is presented in the religion of the Underworld (to whose Justice Antigone appeals).

All religions must contain the two perspectives—backwards towards nature and forwards towards conceptual self-consciousness. But only what is necessary to our Science is dealt with explicitly in it. In its conceptual result, the Art-Religion shows the free community face to face with natural necessity (intuitively recognized). This stark opposition is the immediate Concept from which the syllogistic movement of the Manifest Religion begins. But its “phenomenology,” which is given first, shows us how both the appearing of the finite Spirit, and that of Objective Spirit, are taken up and integrated within it. From our own philosophical perspective we can finally understand why the phenomenology of Spirit required us to follow “the leading of language” from the very beginning. The free spirit is what is released in human thought; and as a substantial activity—an identity that is “not Substance, but just as much Subject [and Substance]”—thought must manifest itself to itself in discourse. It is not the (eternal) necessity of Platonic

truth, but a freedom that recognizes itself in the necessity of a conceptual motion. With that provisional (and still formal) comprehension we can begin.

Notes

1. M. H. Hoffheimer (1992, 1992b) has made two insightful surveys of Hegel's treatment of "Law" in the *Phenomenology*. His negative-sounding arguments can in general be seen as the opposite side of the dialectical continuity pointed out here. But I would say that it is the positive position that the dialectic returns to. Hegel does *not* mean to "reject law . . . as adequate foundation for freedom" (51). That is a *lawyer's* use of "adequate." (For another study of the concept of "law" in the *Phenomenology* see R. Bernasconi, 1989.)

Why norms and rules of all kinds contain a *dialectical* tendency is brought out with admirable clarity (and with examples at many levels) by F. L. Will (1993).

2. I suppose that when Habermas says "Hegel did not pursue any further the traces of communicative reason that are clearly to be found in his early writings" (1987, 31) he means to include the *Phenomenology* in the "early writings." But his comment still seems to me to be unjust to the great lecture-courses on Art, Religion and Philosophy. Hegel's work is all of it a theory of "communicative reason." (On Hegel and Habermas see R. B. Pippin [1991c] and A. K. Honneth [1991]).

Chapter 1

From Faust to Fichte (Almost!)

(B) *The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness through Itself*

The second part of Hegel's fifth chapter begins with this heading. Logically we have reached the self-consciousness that is naturally rational, i.e., the modern self that has Reason, and knows that every self must freely make its own destiny by the use of its Reason. This is the result that Phrenology has bequeathed to us as the subject of the new phase of experience. So we are now observing the rationally cultivated self as it finds itself in our modern world. The first Gestalt on our journey will be Faust (who deliberately turns his back on the "gray in gray" of scientific observation, and seeks to pluck the fruit of "life's golden tree"). Faust will find the structure of ethical life to be a harsh impersonal "Necessity"; and the result of his encounter with Necessity will be a conscious opposition between two universal laws (subjective and objective); this opposition will evolve until finally the rational subject who identifies with the objective law discovers that there is nothing left to struggle about. At that point we shall have reached the ordinary commonsensical awareness of the social world that we regard as the natural attitude now.

Hegel is very explicit that active Reason involves a self-conscious awareness of the need for communal recognition. Reason as the active Category, the active unity of the self with all reality, is the consciousness that everyone recognizes my rational freedom.¹ Thus active Reason—the consciousness that I am not a singular self, but the category of all selves—is already Spirit; but it does not know that. We could see this as soon as we began to observe Reason observing its own activity. But active Reason only knows it instinctively. This means that when it discovers that its instinctive assumption about the social world (of which it is fully aware in the "form of thinghood") does not correspond with empirical facts, its "certainty" assumes the form of a false "knowledge" of how things ought to be. The transformation of this practical certainty about what ought to be, into an adequate comprehension of how things actually are (i.e. an understanding that shows why they ought to be the way they are) is a process that remains instinctive in most "liberal" minds. On the surface of their consciousness liberal idealists tend to remain "bleeding hearts." This illustrates how the Gestalten are self-contained. As observers of experience we shall pass from one kind of "social improver" to another; and finally we shall come to rest with the instinctive conservatives who always knew that the world is just the way it should be.

In paragraph 348 Hegel tells us that “this Reason will run through the doubled motion of Self-Consciousness again, and pass over into its freedom out of independence.” From the poles that he gives there we can see that “this Reason” includes Individuality that is Real to Itself as well as Self-Actualizing Reason. The terminus of the parallel is the Happy Consciousness of the Ethical Substance. This is to be set beside the Unhappy Consciousness of the Unchangeable. So there is a mirror-inversion involved, because the Ethical Substance moves towards fragmented alienation, while the Unhappy Consciousness moves towards reconciliation and union. The beginning of the parallel is with an individual consciousness that “must demand and produce its actuality in the other.” This covers all the stages of Self-Actualization, so it is proper to assume that “Pleasure and Necessity” is the rational “desire for another self.” In that case we must see the conflict between the Law of the Heart and the Heartless Law as a life and death struggle; and it is Virtue that must acknowledge the Lordship of the Way of the World. Freedom of Thought becomes real freedom of action in the Spiritual Animal Kingdom; and it is reduced to Sceptical nullity in the universal Betrug. Finally the Unhappy Consciousness is inverted in Reason’s Law-Giving, Law-Testing and in True Substantiality.

(a) *The Clean Slate*

- 1./347. Observation finds the identity of self and thing. This identity is what it is as a mediated self-making process. As Spirit it relates to an object which is another self who recognizes it. *This* certainty is now to be raised to truth through *interaction* with selfhood *recognized* as free self-maker, but *experienced* as object.

The “result” of Rational Observation, was the embodied mortal self that knows it is *free*. As “subject” this living self exists in an ethical world (rather than a natural one). So the whole world of Observation (not just the object of the phrenologist) is inverted into a practical shape by the transformation of observation into action. It is logically necessary that the whole world of Observing Reason should change its character at this point. For although it is our last resulting shape that becomes the subject of the new phase, this subjectivity *entails* a new world, precisely because it has an active, not an observing attitude. So it is Observing Reason as a whole that is sublated in Self-Actualization. Reason is the “certainty of being all reality”; so when Reason develops, the whole world changes with it.

The new attitude is a mediated one. The observing self was immediately identical with its observed knowledge. Self-Actualizing Reason is a higher mode of Self-Consciousness; it knows that the objective world is there, but it is there to be transformed. Selfhood is not to be *found* in the world, but *expressed* there; Reason is not to be observed, but made. This making is an interaction, because the immediate object of this self-conscious activity is another self (and is soon to be recognized as a world of other selves).

The agent self is a rational self. So it does not need to struggle for recognition, because all rational selves *must* recognize one another as such. There is a world of embodied selves, and its “infinity” is the circularity of self-recognition, i.e. of Spirit. But this infinite self-recognition does not come into being automatically.

The active self has to *learn* how to recognize itself in the other. The other self whom it does spontaneously recognize will turn out not to be the total sum of the independent selfhood in the world.²

The object of the rational self-consciousness that has “found the thing as itself and itself as thing” is the self-conscious rational “thing” that is independent of it.³ This rational “thing” is what we shall be concerned with continuously from here onwards. It will be transformed, but it is not something that we can put behind us.

The primitively natural self-consciousness was concerned with another self-consciousness, and what it wanted to show was that it is free. But its singular freedom came into conflict with its own singular embodiment. Observing Reason has also had this disconcerting experience in its own way. It does not literally die in it, because its aim is different and its experience is different too; but it encounters death as the final frustration of its efforts; and it is sublated as a result, just as the natural freedom of Self-Consciousness was.

Observing Reason wanted to observe itself as universal in its own singular embodiment. It could universalize its knowledge of the inorganic into “laws”; but it found that the living spirit was indeed *free*. The skull (as the unmistakable record of death) bears witness only to the spirit’s liberation. The encounter of Hamlet with Yorick’s skull illustrates this point. Yorick is dead; but his spirit is still living in Hamlet’s memory.

Even when we were seeking to observe the spirit in its body language we found out where it really was; indeed, we knew where to look for it even as rational psychologists. The true expression of the rational self is in the world of human action. Every singular agent, being embodied, is a “thing”; and the philosophical message of Yorick’s skull is that spirit is not just singular freedom, but freedom realized in a universal thing. Yorick’s spirit is not dead, because it was not embodied in his skull, but in what he did in the world. It is the world which (as the real bearer of the spiritual record that Gall looked for in the skull) is the object of the rationally free self-consciousness; its universality consists precisely in my recognition that it is shared and made by every other rational agent with me. This is the independent object that has the “form of thinghood,” but is really a self-consciousness. Hegel says so explicitly. This objective Self-Consciousness is the ethical substance that Observation vainly sought for in the naturally given body of the singular subject.

The existence of this “universal thing,” this “independent object in the form of thinghood,” is very evident in all active experience, even though it is not sensibly singular, and hence not observable. What is not immediately evident is that it is “a self-consciousness.” The “active Reason” that we shall observe has only an instinctive awareness of that. But at every stage of our spiritual experience we must be aware of the *Volk* as our social substance. Thus Hegel thought of Württemberg as his *Volk* and spoke of himself as a Württemberger; but this *Volk* is only a potential self-consciousness. We have this civil consciousness as an inheritance from the Greeks. But we no longer have the Greek intuitive awareness of our community as a *self* (represented by our artists as Athena was for Athens). We have only the “certainty” that it is not “alien,” and the “knowledge” that we are “recognized” by it.⁴

“Observing Reason” itself (being an activity of essentially *universal* import) involves and presupposes this *real* Universal Self. It came before our observing eye as an object in “Psychology,” because we get our educational norms from it. But also it sustains our observing activity; indeed that is how it exists for Reason in its completely universal shape. Our scientific discoveries achieve the status of “knowledge,” only when they are published to the community of other interested observers. A rational observer cannot exist in isolation. It is of the essence of Reason that it belongs to everyone; so there have to be logically recognized ways of demanding and receiving recognition for a rational discovery, since otherwise it could not be that at all. A letter may be enough; but only if it goes to the right address. Writing to Mr. Henry Oldenburg as Secretary of the Royal Society established the status of a scientific claim clearly. This was illustrated even in the case of a scientific discovery as fundamental as the theory of natural selection.⁵

Even in the world of Observing Reason ethical conflicts could arise. The controversy about the discovery of the differential calculus illustrates this. So it is not surprising that the first experience of Practical Reason causes something analogous to the life-and-death struggle. The naïve agent self believes that it can make its own fortune in the world, and ignore whatever it does not perceive to be relevant. It knows that it needs a community, because it is aware of its own universal (i.e., shared or communal) character. But it does not yet have the awareness (which *we* have) that the community is its own thinghood. This consciousness is precisely what it has to “actualize completely through itself.” For Reason as Observation, “Spirit” was its own “meant” inwardness (not the customs and laws that are the substance of the community). Active Reason has the social world as its conscious object; but it does not have our memory of the experience of Observing Reason. In its primitive shape we shall see that its social world is reduced to the *natural* minimum where Reason’s “certainty” and “knowledge” can be *absolute*. But the “first experience” will teach the agent-self that it cannot take its pleasure in the social world just as it likes. The *real* objectivity of Reason has the necessary shape of universal custom or law. So, after that first experience, Active Reason ceases to be naïve; but even then it does not cease to be instinctive. It loses its instinctive character only after its second experience.

- 2./348. The pattern of development will repeat that of Self-Consciousness (just as Observation repeated the stages of Consciousness). As independent but singular, it will try to make the other over into its own image; learning what free universality is, it will identify with the community of mutual recognition and become the real substance of spirit (into which all singular shapes return).

Hegel points out here that the section on Reason as Observation was a recycling of Consciousness at the level of Rational Self-Consciousness. The correspondence is a strangely transmuted and ironic one, but it is there.⁶ Sense-Certainty becomes the certainty of Reason discovering and classifying everything in nature, and establishing the universal laws of the order. This certainty is secure at the foundations and runs away into abstraction as the observer reaches the organism.⁷

This moves us to the rational perception of the Self as a logical Thing (*Sache*) with psychological properties. Here the correspondence is more direct. There is no problem now about the identity of the thing with its properties, but it is a problem to determine what the real properties are.

This displacement of the problem from the identity of the thing to the identification of its properties is an inversion, because in Perception it is the properties (our “ideas”) that are immediately known. In the rational analogue of Understanding, the consequences are plainly visible. The Understanding itself constructs the purely intellectual infinite thing/Thing (*Ding an sich* for it, *Sache selbst* for us) which sustains all properties lawfully, Physiognomy teaches us that the logically active thing has *no* determinate properties except that of being able to assume any property it likes. Observed in the mode of Understanding, the active Thing is a divided infinite, an infinite judgment. Whereas the Understanding *resolves* the difficulties of Sense and Perception, Bodily Observation arrives at a contradiction; and the inversion of direction shows itself in the fact that Observing Reason *arrives* just where the Understanding started: at the radical separation of the sensible from the intelligible world.

Self-Actualization will repeat the dialectic of Self-Consciousness in a similarly transmuted and inverted way.⁸ I suggested a fairly detailed parallel in my preamble to this section. We shall have to examine it step by step as we go along. We must begin by seeing that the rational agent starts from the naturally given foundation with a clean slate. She is *not* in a “state of Nature” because she has a modern education, and lives in a modern rational community of equal recognition. But like the natural Self-Consciousness she has the awareness of her immediate being as sublated.

It is the embodied individual who acts. The free, living, individual was the result that Phrenology gave us. Active Reason is initially aware of itself only as an individual. It does not have to *prove* this to itself, because in its “Observation” process, Reason became clearly aware of itself as the universal category of all rational agents. But now (unlike Rational Observation) Active Reason begins with the Concept of itself as rationally individuated. It recognizes that it is one of *many* rational selves; but it does not care about the others. The immediate standpoint of Reason, as the observation of nature (which was reinstated in Physiognomy and Phrenology) entails that Active Reason must begin on the same level of spontaneous impulse as the natural Self-Consciousness. That was why I could make plausible use of Faust (who properly belongs *here*) as a paradigm of the primitive self-assertive Ego. Faust is quite aware that everyone recognizes his rational status; and he recognizes theirs, likewise. *He* is not in any danger of getting into a life and death struggle, and he does not keep serfs in fear of their lives. But the self-realization of others is not his concern; and the first lesson that life teaches him is that that is a mistake. This was the only lesson made fully explicit in Goethe’s “Faust-Fragment” (1790). The parallel with perfected Desire is a direct one. The rational Self must discover and experience what the other feels; but (as Reason) it must do so categorically or universally, since the *other* of rational consciousness is the human

Spirit as such. Reason is implicitly Spirit; so the object with which active Reason has the certainty of identity is Spirit. But because of its “form of thinghood” this active certainty is the certainty of identity with Spirit as Substance. We see first the figure of Rational Desire, and at the climax we shall reach the Happy Consciousness of the Ethical Substance. When the object is recognized as the spiritual substance, all of the forms of subjective consciousness flow back into it. This will be apparent to us as speculative observers; whereas the consciousness that we are observing, comes back simply to the complacent sense that it is the supreme judge by which everything rational is certified as such.

This paragraph identifies for us the poles of the movement: Faust and the Ethical Substance. It also reminds us that the intervening movement is “doubled.” When the natural Self-Consciousness met its *double* no equilibrium was possible, until one of the two accepted the dependent role. Then Self-Consciousness existed as *two* complementary half-selves. Unified again in the Stoic, the understanding self doubled itself as Stoic and Sceptic; and finally it achieved the infinite unity of an internalized contradiction as Unhappy Consciousness. The rational analogues of the beginning and end of this movement are Faust rejecting the Tree of Knowledge in favor of the Tree of Life, and Socrates conducting his internal dialogue with “the Laws.” What intervenes is a “doubled” movement analogous to that of lord and serf, and Stoic and Sceptic. The rest remains to be seen.

- 3./349. The spiritual substance is the concept that *we* are already conscious of as real. It is the realm of *Sittlichkeit*, i.e. a community of actual individuals whose spiritual essence is a unity. For them it is both another self-consciousness, and an existing thing; and precisely because they are at one with it, they are rationally self-conscious. *Law* is its abstract objectivity, but *custom* is their own self-conscious identity with it.

Nothing could demonstrate more graphically the fact that we have turned the crucial corner, and embarked on a new journey whose goal is positive, than the logical need to discuss the terminus of the movement at once. When Hegel says that this goal has “already arisen for us,” we should remember how he introduced the Concept of Spirit at the beginning of “Self-Consciousness” (par. 177). But that was only by anticipation. At that point he wanted to underline the fact that Self-Consciousness is “the realm where truth is at home” (par. 167); what logically arose was only the Concept of Spirit that we needed in order to interpret Desire properly. I took advantage of that to discuss how the *polis* satisfies Desire perfectly. I showed how it can be conceived to do that without a “struggle for recognition.”⁹ But it might plausibly be claimed that my commentary was going beyond what was unambiguously required and justified. “Truth is *at home*” (par. 167), and Desire is (or can be) satisfied without any radical conflict, in the Family. The defence for going beyond that, is that no nuclear family is a subsisting *realm*. In order to be a subsisting community the family becomes a tribe (which may hold a territory, and must have an authoritative head). Then, according to the young Hegel’s image of Theseus, a group of warring tribes may be reconciled by a charismatic leader into the community that calls itself a *polis*. This achievement will only be possible where

the tribes have a mass of customs in common, and in particular a mass of family pieties that are universally respected. In this sense—the sense of the *polis* as a community of families, for which Antigone will protest and die—Spirit as the “ethical substance” arises logically from (and for) natural desire; and for that reason natural Self-Consciousness can rightly be called “the realm where truth is at home.”

The *polis*, however, is not the Ethical Substance, but the ethical thing. The Substance is *das Volk*, the Hellenes who are a warring community of these “constitutions.” What arises “for the sake of life” is only the real Concept of the ethical *Ding*. Only now has the “ethical Substance” arisen logically as the objective of the instinct of Reason. Sophocles did right (in the *Oedipus at Colonus*) to make Theseus a contemporary of Creon’s. What Theseus created from the natural base of the Attic tribes was the political community, the rational authority of the “daylight” of Reason for which Creon stands. The Substance had to be there already; the ethical *thing* is secondary and derivative in the sight of natural self-consciousness. When it comes into conflict with natural piety it is nothing but arbitrary tyranny, the blind *hubris* of a man (or a council of men) which does not know itself, and respect its own limits. But natural Desire *needs* this community of rational recognition, and can never be harmoniously fulfilled without it; so, as Aristotle said, “the *polis* is natural, yet he who invented the *polis* was the greatest of benefactors.”¹⁰

This spiritual *Ding* is what arises now for Self-Actualizing Reason. It arose for us already when we were watching Reason (as Psychology) look for it *inside* the rational individual. We had to know, even then, that the real nature of the human spirit was what is expressed out in the world. The rational psychologist had to know it “instinctively” too (i.e. she had to be aware of it empirically). The problem for her was whether the rational self that she was observing was virtuous or criminal in *character*; and the criterion for that was the custom already incarnate in the observing self. But the naïve observer had not yet recognized that this custom was the real thinghood of the self.

The active rational self recognizes that the *thinghood* of Reason is its own self-expression; so, for it, that is still an objective to be realized. This self does not know that the objective is already real. Naïve Reason is unconscious of its identity with custom—the identity that Plato called “Justice.” But every citizen who has reached the “age of Reason,” must incarnate it, if her education has been successful. The active Reason we are observing has also been educated theoretically; but when it makes “self-realization” its goal, it forgets that education. It can do this, because (as we saw in our observation of Psychology) rational individuality has two sides. It will not forget the custom instinctively because it is the actual substance of rational self-consciousness. The custom can be violated, and rational individuals are bound to be aware of that; but they do not wilfully choose to break it. So far as they are substantively rational, they must feel they have brought shame on themselves if they cause it to break. Gretchen is only rational in an instinctive sense; but she feels the shame put upon her by the social Reason. Faust, on the other hand, is a perfect logical reasoner, who has consciously cast off all of his rationally imposed psychology. In Valentine he meets the instinctive response of one who knows that even to

allow another to breach the custom is a dishonorable submission to violence. The singular consciousness who is a “good character” has the “abstraction of universality” as part of her concrete working self-consciousness in this sense.¹¹

In the way in which the natural self-consciousness is aware of it, the ethical substance has a universal representative. Every member of the community is an “implicitly universal self-consciousness,” being aware of the *polis* not just as a “thing,” but as an embodied self-consciousness. This self-consciousness is the god or goddess of the city; and the city’s unbreakable laws and customs are the living body of this universal self (Athena at Athens, Hera at Argos, Zeus at Olympia and so on). This recognition-relation is the structure of Spirit (see pars. 25–26, 177); and this objectivity of Spirit is the “thinghood” of the rational self.¹²

- 4./350. The life of a *Volk* is the actualization of the concept of Spirit for intuition. Reason is a fluid Substance, stable, singular yet self-pluralizing, the soul and essence of its independent members, who are conscious that they are singular independent essences because they offer up their singularity, but also aware that the one essence is the *work* produced by their singular efforts.

The *polis* member can intuit her own perfect oneness with this other self. This is the complete actualization (*Verwirklichung*) of self-conscious Reason. It does not belong to the intermediate stage of Reason’s development, where we stand at present; it is the union of fulfilled Reason with fulfilled Self-Consciousness. Instead of the Unhappy Consciousness on one side, and the rational self as Pure Practical Reason on the other, we are here shown the Happy Rational Self-Consciousness (but at the level of *self-intuition*, not that of developed reasoning). Hegel’s chapter on Spirit begins with this self-intuitive community; so he is telling us here, how to conceive the transition from Law-testing Reason to True Spirit. Identification with the community gives me a substantial self which is the “negative [side] of my [natural] self”,¹³ and that identification means precisely that this substantial self is “*my* being for *myself*” (as Hegel puts it).

The metaphor of the *stars* here looks forward to the Light-Essence as the *real* concept of religious identity in its absolute simplicity (par. 685). The ethical substance “shatters [*zerspringt*] into many completely independent essences, just as light does into stars as countless points that give light on their own.” These *essences* are the singular community members; but, as we shall see, they cannot achieve “complete independence” without the preservative operation of family piety. Their destiny is to sacrifice their singular embodied being, because it is through this sacrifice that they shine forth like the stars as perpetual lights. By devoting their lives to the community they show that the substance is indeed their “soul and essence.” The effort of Psychology, Physiognomy and Phrenology to find a “soul” inside their living bodies was misdirected. The devoted sacrifice of their embodied lives in labor and service creates the body of the community that is their real “soul and essence.” They “bring forth the thinghood of spirit as their work (*Werk*)”; and in return the substance gives them “spiritual essences” of their very own.¹⁴

- 5./351. The satisfaction of life's most elementary needs depends on the might of the *Volk*. The *Volk* gives both form and content to the permanence of the individual's activity, i.e. he has a function, and his own advances become general possessions. Products become general goods, and needs are met by division of labor. Everyone becomes a thing, and the language of custom is the speech of the substance that all inherit and maintain. This substance also expresses the singular individuality of everyone; it is a Spirit in which they recognize themselves and each other. All are free because devoted to the maintenance of this general freedom.

As Aristotle says, "the *polis* comes into existence for the sake of life."¹⁵ "Life" (i.e., the Family) requires the maintenance of a self-sufficient community. The activity of individuals is directed towards their family-needs. It is the family that has "subsistent" (*seiend*) singularity; but it needs the *polis* for its defence. Military protection, however (the guarantee that living activity will persist safely as the form of the natural species), is not all that the *polis* provides; it provides the means of subsistence for all through the division of labor. Communal life is organized into the different crafts; everyone gets a family living by performing some recognized function to supply the general need. Family members aim to make a living, but what they produce is a general utility. In this "system of needs" everyone becomes an instrument; and our social function defines what we *are*.

The individual (always a male except in Plato's ideal Constitution) is directly conscious of the community as his object when he goes to the Assembly or the courts; and even more vividly, when he appears in armour with his field rations, ready for a military expedition or campaign. Then he is consciously making himself a thing (an expendable instrument); whereas his private existence can focus on the "enjoyment of life" which is its explicit goal. But this being-for-another (i.e., for the *polis*) is identical with his being-for-himself; what he says about it is that he is fighting for *his* hearth, his altars, his City, with its laws and its Gods that are equally his own. This is the "divine nature" of language (first mentioned in par. 110) revealing itself positively (or as wisdom). In this situation the individual says both that he *belongs* to the *polis*, and that the *polis* is *his*; his every expression reveals the identity of the self with its Substance. Those who march beside him are *his* fellow-citizens, devoted to the same laws and gods, because they are consciously part of the same Substance. The recognition of his own true Self in all these others is what Hegel called (in earlier essays such as *The System of Ethical Life* and *Natural Law*) "life in the *Volk*." Those who are destined to die in the battle will live on in the communal memory (and they know this because they have all participated in the public and the domestic cult of the dead).

This experience of *identity* is an experience of freedom. The opposition between "thinghood" (public service, or being for another) and "Self-Consciousness" (freedom, or being for self) is wiped out. There is no sense of a conflict, no subjection of the single life to an alien whole. The citizen who dies fighting expresses *himself*; he makes a voluntary sacrifice for the sake of the very Substance that makes the free enjoyment of life possible for himself and his family.¹⁶

- 6./352. The *Volk* is the realization of the Spirit as a thing. The individual finds her *Bestimmung* achieved. Wisdom and virtue are the following of the custom.

The phrenologist attempts to observe the human being as a perceptible thing with a secret “spirit” inside it. In paragraph 351 Hegel says explicitly that “the Laws” are the “universal objective thinghood” of the individual. We have to see the *polis* as a universal thing, with a completely public spirit that returns from it to the freely acknowledged, openly proclaimed, and completely demonstrated self-consciousness of the individual. In this perspective the *Volksgeist* is a perfect logical model of double inversion. The opposite poles that the educational psychologist observes (natural self-assertion and social custom) are brought together in a universal concept that has a higher level of comprehension.

We have to go back to the classical *polis* (which means remembering the citizen armies and their wars) because it is the battle and the campaign that actually resolves the difficulties of Hegel’s neo-Aristotelian psychologist. “True Spirit” does not need Physiognomy (still less Phrenology).¹⁷ The essentially ethical concern of the “Psychology” that enters into the “science of experience” is clearly visible at this point. It was a relatively little known Pythagorean named Xenophilus of whom it is reported that he said that a child would be best educated “if he were to belong to a city with good laws.”¹⁸ But Hegel no doubt took him to be recalling a tradition that went right back to the Master himself. The tradition that Plato himself received about Pythagoras confirms this interpretation; and Plato’s *Republic* is clearly inspired by it. But it is Socrates who is the paradigm case of “living” (i.e. in actual fact, *dying*) “according to the customs of one’s *Volk*”—even when they have *not* satisfied the Pythagorean standard of *eunomia*.¹⁹

(b) *Modern Morality*

- 7./353. But the self-consciousness that is only spirit in Concept has this realization either behind or ahead of it.

After writing for several paragraphs as if we were about to embark on the development of Spirit proper (instead of Active Reason) Hegel now does something even more paradoxical. He returns to the position we are actually in, but he calls it “Self-Consciousness,” not “Reason.” At this point he wants us to reach back to the beginning of Self-Consciousness (to par. 177 where the concept of “Spirit” was first introduced) as well as forward to the beginning of the chapter on Spirit. The actual emergence of Spirit is at the level of the immediate identification of the self-conscious individual with the body of social custom; and that has nothing to do with reflective rational thought. As the case of Socrates shows, rational thought need not alienate us from the truth of custom. But it can do so; and when practical Reason emerges as an immediate mode of Self-Consciousness it is bound to do so. Historically the singular self-consciousness comes into its “rights” (i.e. it ceases to be a criminal phenomenon) only after the decisive rupture and destruction of the

“true Spirit” (which has just been presented to us as the authentic “thinghood of Reason”). The “active Reason” that we are actually observing, on the other hand, is the Self-Consciousness that has emerged from the “night of the supersensible Beyond into the daylight of the present.”²⁰ Our modern, fully rational, Self-Consciousness necessarily has “True Spirit” *behind* it; and it has “Absolute Spirit”—the Spirit that is “not Substance, but just as much Subject” *ahead* of it. It is only in this intermediate situation that Reason can become fully individuated as self-consciousness. Before it can make itself as the subject, it has to have lost its substance.

Socrates is not alienated from his substance; but his trial is itself one of its death-throes. It occurs in the context of an “edict of oblivion” that the victorious Spartans compelled the restored Athenian democracy to pass; when Socrates was put on trial, Athena was no longer the source of her own wisdom, or the mistress of her own house. When he is put to death, free rational reflection, and the law as an alien power in the abstraction of thought, must arise willy-nilly (let Socrates preach identification with the Laws never so eloquently) because there is no longer a free Substance to identify with. That loss is our inherited condition.

- 8./354. The life of the *Volk* is the immediate reality of *Sittlichkeit*. Being immediate, universal *Sittlichkeit* exists determinately. This paradise must be left behind if its universal essence is to exist as knowledge.

As I have already said it is the thinking self-consciousness that must go forth from the happy state of ethical identification. Paragraphs 354 and 355 are devoted to the relation of *rational* self-consciousness to this singular communal Spirit (or determinate Substance). Then comes a paragraph on the problem of the rational self-consciousness seeking individual happiness when True Spirit is dead and gone. True Spirit is the starting point for the scientific comprehension of social experience. The point where we now stand is the turning point, because it is from the moment when the rationally active individual emerges that we can survey the whole evolution of the Spirit accurately. We ourselves are the *philosophical* shape of Observing Reason. But the objective reason why the individual active consciousness is bound to emerge is simply that the ethical life of a *Volk* is a contingent historical fact. When Socrates was put to death, the Substance with which he identified, the Spirit whose voice he heard speaking as “the Laws,” had just suffered an empirical defeat which was to prove fatal to it. That Substance was the “universe” of its citizens; but it was also just as “singular” as any family, and its “independence” was as fragile and uncertain as the continuance of a particular lifeline.

Rational reflection emerged within the Greek world, because the Greek cities were always fighting one another. They also traded with the barbarians, and existed under barbarian political suzerainty (specifically under the Medes, the Persians, and the Egyptians). The pluralism of cultural experience that this produced was an important contributory factor in the rise of the Sophists (who represent the principle of abstract thought in its alienation from ethical custom). But this presence of “critical” Reason was not fatal to the Ethical Substance; quite the contrary, in fact, if we think that the existence of the Sophists was essential to the appearance of

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Aristotle's pupil Alexander was another matter altogether, because the perfecting of the Macedonian army showed that the *polis*-system was not an independent substance capable of maintaining human virtue at its "best and most complete."

Already the hegemony of Athens had given way to that of Sparta, and Sparta to Thebes. But with the triumph of Macedon, the *polis* gave way as a *system*. Philosophy now had to become "the guide of life" with the radical awareness that (as Democritus put it already in the lifetime of Socrates) "to the wise man, all the earth is open to walk; for the native land of the good soul is the cosmos as a whole."²¹ This is the Self-Consciousness of the "realm where truth is at home." But in the "cosmos" to which Democritus looked with such confidence, the only universally prevailing law was the oldest and (as Plato might have said) worst of rights: the "law of the stronger." So it was not the open earth that the free philosopher actually walked, but the inner realm of thought that was eventually to become a dark night of unhappiness. Active Reason is the return to union of the natural and the rational self-consciousness which went apart when the ethical substance was smashed. For Active Reason "all the earth is walkable" indeed. But it does not yet have the concretely reflective awareness of its essence as "spirit." It is "abstract" reflection, with the natural life of the subject as a free self-consciousness to reflect upon. It does not know that it is on the way back to a reflective identity of itself (the universal subject of scientific knowledge), with the Substance (first of the *nation* whose many *Völker* speak the same language, and finally of that same "cosmos as a whole" to which Democritus referred). The "appearing of the Spirit" as a self-consciously universal community is only *now* beginning in the daylight of the present; it will not end until we have travelled all the way from the Athens of Sophocles and Socrates to the *rationality* universal Church.²² The first half of the journey (in which the universal Concept of Reason itself was generated) is just as essential as the modern journey that we are about to observe. That earlier pilgrimage will have to be repossessed when the self-conscious concept of Reason moves from its immediate subjective status into its "truth" as Spirit.

- 9./355. The singular consciousness that has its existence in the *Volk* is a solid trust. But once it is thoughtfully aware that it is independent, this trustful identity is lost. From being a vanishing moment in the social whole, individual Reason becomes living truth, and the whole becomes just a "thought."

The fate of Socrates illustrates the unreflective "solidity" of the self-consciousness that directly identifies with its ethical substance. He, who can articulate the spirit of the Laws so clearly as a reflective subject, appears to the solidary ethical consciousness of his fellow citizens as a dangerous subversive from several points of view. He does nothing, and he goes round like a beggar (though he does not beg); he talks to the young who (for quite proper customary reasons) have still nothing to do; and what he says is indistinguishable from what the Sophists—who are acknowledged subversives—say. But the Sophists are quite ready to answer the questions they raise if someone pays them to do it, whereas Socrates offers no

answers, and takes no money. His object, apparently, is to make everyone care for their own soul. But the soul is the human essence; and we Athenians have Athena as the soul of our city. We all have our household gods too, but this cult of the individual soul, this urge to know a self and achieve a virtue, which is either more comprehensive than that of the City or more aristocratic (or both) is obviously a dangerous rival to the wisdom that sprang from the head of Zeus without a mother.

Socrates, who certainly taught that "Virtue is knowledge" if he taught anything, and who presumably recommended the "care of the soul" on that basis,²³ was the incarnation of Active Reason as an "abstract moment within the Substance." All of the ways in which he was different, were ways in which he was self-isolated. The isolation was not part of his intention; and if the Peloponnesian War had not proved as fatal as moderates like Sophocles and Aristophanes always feared that it would, Socrates' trial would have been only one of the contingencies with which the political life of the Athenian democracy was always (and necessarily) filled.²⁴ What made the fate of Socrates emblematic was the fact that the City (with its substantial tradition from which Socrates was not inwardly alienated) had already condemned itself to death.

Socrates certainly had not come to the thought of "being a pure *singularity für sich*." He could not contemplate going off to Boeotia (as Democritus could). But the jurors decided that he *was* just "a pure singularity *für sich*"; and (as Socrates foresaw, and perhaps Democritus also) it was to Boeotia—the proverbial land without culture—that the whole ethical world went.

- 10./356. Or, this happiness is the paradise that is to be reached. At the stage we have reached, Spirit has not realized itself as a thinghood. The singular rational consciousness has self-realization as a *mission*; and it has the certainty that its happiness is there waiting to be found in the world. It sets out to make its fortune.

Socrates and Democritus have not yet "come forth against" (*gegenübergetreten*—par. 355) the laws and customs. Even Protagoras (whose theory is pictured by Aristophanes as a contest between the Just and the Unjust Logos) clearly holds that the "common logos" is the fount of right and justice. But it was Protagoras who expressed the social "substance" as a "relationship": or as what the Greeks called "the law of the stronger."

We have already seen how Hegel invokes this law as the "first experience" of Self-Consciousness. But the "first experience" of Active Reason is rather different. As Hegel turns to consider the problem and prospects of singular Reason in the world, we have a chance to estimate the difference. Neither the natural nor the rational self-consciousness has any memory of a "Paradise Lost" that is to become "Paradise Regained"; and the natural goal of both is *happiness* (meaning the satisfaction of natural desires). But the rational self lives in a world of *utilities*. It does not have to fight everyone else, because society exists for it as a system in which everyone helps everyone else to achieve happiness. The goal of active Reason is its own duplication. It seeks to make the world that faces it reasonable. Everywhere it wants to find only itself. But this self-realization is ambiguous in

meaning. As Virtue, Reason will have the goal of “universal enlightenment” quite explicitly. But in its primitive shape its goal is simply to see a fulfilled or happy self in the world instead of an unhappy observer facing an unsatisfying world; and at all stages of its evolution the goal of Active Reason will be individual happiness. Unlike the natural self, however, it seeks this goal universally. Its own initial selfishness is just an impulsive oversight.

- 11./357. Active Reason is at the beginning of its ethical experience of the world. Before it reaches the ethical substance, it has only natural impulses; after it has lost it, these natural impulses are bound up with the consciousness of its true vocation. The buildup to the ethical substance transforms the impulses, the breakdown transforms our attitude towards them: for the latter is concerned with *Moralität*, as the rational consciousness of the ethical substance, rather than with *Sittlichkeit*. The three shapes of Reason constitute only the subjective side of the genesis of *Moralität*, not the side of its emergence from the Substance. We have lost the ethical substance, so this is the aspect that belongs to our world.

Hegel now brings the two standpoints (ours and that of active Reason itself) together, in a paragraph that is extremely dense and confusing. We must expound it fully and carefully in order to show that there is no confusion in Hegel’s own mind.

The thinghood of Reason, the truth that active Reason is striving to “actualize,” is the self-knowing identity of substantial necessity with individual freedom which was realized in the *polis*. But the self-knowledge that we are observing has to begin from nothing. This singular consciousness is just the instinctive certainty that Reason is what it does. The natural self-consciousness of chapter IV (the self that is only implicitly rational) needs to create the ethical substance in order to actualize its own rationality. That is not what we are observing now. Our concern is with an Active Reason that exists in the world of rational Observation; it has *our* social world as its stage and repertory. All of the impulses of natural life, are now experienced in the context of a definition of self-fulfilment (or happiness) that is known. This is an inheritance of Greek wisdom; but it is inherited as theoretical knowledge, not as actual virtue. In the Greek experience all the forms of natural impulse were consciously subordinated to the public good of the City. Every family got its living for this year in order to go on to the new season and do the same again next year; and every generation prepared the way for the next generation to do the same. But everyone knew that this family happiness was not valid in isolation; they were citizens, and their singularity was sublated in the maintenance of the community. Now the City is gone, and only the rational ideal of individual happiness in this world remains.

The free rational individual in the modern world has nothing but these universal natural needs to fall back on as the content of the rational self she wants to create. Like the freedom of the Lord in the world of the natural self, the higher freedom of Reason now exists (paradoxically) only in order to organize the life of natural necessity.

Essentially, therefore, the active world of Reason is the world of Civil Society. In this world there is nothing “rational” about the wars of particular societies; the

values of patriotism are a snare and a delusion. The goal of life must be the creation of a world of peace and plenty in which the truth of Enlightenment (as we shall become familiar with it later on) can be spread. The gospel of rational Enlightenment—"the true vocation (*Bestimmung*) and essentiality of Reason"—is itself the gospel of peace and plenty, and the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey. The political organization of life is now seen only as the instrument of Reason for the achievement of this goal. Even in the sphere of public service the ideal of Reason is to establish the bourgeois system of free competition, and the career open to the talents. No one identifies with any of the social machinery as her ethical essence. The social substance is *selbstlos*; "selfhood" belongs only to the individuals who have their careers to make, and their family fortunes to maintain.

In this modern situation of emergent individual Reason, we become subjectively aware that there is a higher goal than the natural goal of happiness; but the higher goal is now a personal one. What Active Reason will discover is *Morality*, the ideal of free obedience to a law that one gives to oneself. This law is not given by Zeus or Athena; for that matter, it is not given by the "universally rational God" of Moses or of Kant either, though we shall have some trouble getting him out of the way.

Reason has no problems with divine lawgivers. It is certain of its immediate unity with God, so it does not need any religion at all. The religion of rational enlightenment—when we do get to it—will be called "the exhalation of a stale gas" (par. 586). That is another of Hegel's vulgar sallies (in polite language). Chapter V itself ends with the abstract formula of the Categorical Imperative. All of the "content" of our modern *Moralität* will come from the restored *Sittlichkeit* of the new "philosophical" age which is now dawning (par. 11). Our own Science is only the newborn *Concept* of that age (par. 12); so it is not surprising that we do not learn any more about modernity in this book except what we can pick up by inference from the advance of its "moments" as "purposes" against the lost *Sittlichkeit*. We shall witness this in "Absolute Freedom" and the "Moral World-View" later.

Our task at the moment is to watch the moments evolve in their proper character as stages of the singular rational consciousness. Each of them in turn will be championed by a hero of the moral life; and the climax of their procession is the concept of individual virtue. Eventually Hegel will offer us half a paragraph comparing this with the "virtue" of substantial *Sittlichkeit* (par. 390). He cannot legitimately present the "shapes" of subjective morality as moments of the morally ethical Substance, because the concrete morality of the new world does not yet exist; and on the other hand the stages in the evolution of ancient virtue could not lead us logically to "the *consciousness* of the Substance" or to Reason's actual world of "Civil Society." So although he speaks here as if there were a choice to be made, there is really no choice at all.²⁵

What is most important in this paragraph is the clear assertion that *Moralität* is a higher *Gestalt* than *Sittlichkeit*. Writers on Hegel's ethics often talk as if he was a simple partisan of *Sittlichkeit*. But that is a mistake. Modern *Sittlichkeit* embodies *Moralität*; it is a double inversion of classical *Sittlichkeit*. The developed *Gestalt* of Conscience (with its community of "forgiveness") is the comprehensive concept

into which all the content of Hegel's own political theory fits. The Kantian shape of this Concept is the guise in which Virtue comes forth against the "*Sittlichkeit* that is lost"; and in that guise its destiny is to be reduced to absurdity already in this chapter. But its ultimate fate is to be incarnated in a new shape of concrete social Virtue.

What happened in the original making of the ethical substance, was that the natural impulses became cultured. Hesiod's Boeotia became the Athens of Pericles' Funeral Oration. The Faust of the "Fragment," on the other hand, only learned not to identify happiness with the gratification of his desires. It is essential to see that, whereas the natural self-consciousness *must* secure material prosperity before there can be any cultivation of Reason for its own sake, the rational self (as we observe it here) has already achieved economic liberation. Faust is choosing a new path of self-cultivation. The University career that lies behind him is important because it shows us how he has come to be in a position to do that. Stoicism, Scepticism, and the Christian pilgrimage are all behind him; and the natural and humane sciences of observation are all at his disposal. He knows that Aristotle said that the life of enjoyment is fit for human pigs (those poor Boeotians whose life horizons are so narrow they can imagine nothing better); and the Necessity that Faust encounters is not the hangover that follows a drunken orgy (which a proper Boeotian accepts as the conclusive evidence that he really did have a "good time").

Faust's lesson is about human relations. He has to learn from actual experience that his own rational self is constituted by its relations with others. The experience that is already behind him because he has achieved a theoretical mastery of it as abstract thought, must now become flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone again; and this time he will have a reflective awareness of what is happening. He will know that he, and only he, is the architect and agent of what happens. Socrates recognized that "the Laws" had made him into the individual who gave quite a new meaning to Apollo's injunction "Know thyself." Faust has gone through a social education which had the single object of teaching him that he was *nothing*. Now therefore he knows that his imperative is "Make thyself." What was wiped out in the penitential discipline of accepting the Unchangeable as his real Self was the substance and authority of custom. Henceforth the rational self will be what it makes itself by its actions, and what it accepts responsibility for by reflective choice.

All of the experience of the natural consciousness must be there, scientifically observed and classified in order that the action and choices may be fully rational. The story that begins with Faust will end with the "Law-testing Reason" of the sage of Königsberg. Autonomous Reason must begin by knowing everything and sublimating it as Faust did. We need not do what Faust did—indeed, if we are rational, we shall not, because like Ulysses talking to the ghost of Achilles, we have learned where that path leads. But we must know that those things *can* be done, and that age old customs and pieties are not adequate ground for not doing them. Eventually we shall come round to the Unhappy Consciousness again, and the recognition of our active rationality as "the knowledge of good and evil." Then we shall know that this possibility, this freedom, is itself "evil." But Faust is Adam who has emerged from the Garden of Nature. He is the first father of all who are (or

aspire to be) rationally responsible for themselves. We can never disown him. It is *his* freedom that Reason is responsible *for*.

Our science has the shape it has, only because our world stands where it does. We can see this by comparing the *Phenomenology* with Plato's *Republic* (and with the first three books of the *Laws*). In the *Republic* Thrasymachus poses the problem of rational self-consciousness; and the exposition of the Ethical Substance is the answer. Plato's "phenomenology of Reason" then runs back downwards to Thrasymachus from there; and in the first books of the *Laws* he sketches a "phenomenology of spirit" that advances to the ethical substance from more elementary shapes of social relations.

But these examples of the phenomenological road *to* the immediate Substance show that Hegel's procedure is not just *historically* necessary. Our position as the Faustian rational consciousness that stands *in the middle* (with a lost Substance behind it) is the one from which the evolution of experience can be comprehended and organized as a Science. The Ethical Substance supplies the *beginning*. We have to have achieved it and lost it, if we are to appreciate the proper relation of rational individuality to it. Hegel's ethics is not the ethics of natural *Sittlichkeit*, but the concrete ethics needed by Kantian *Moralität*; and his book is not a "lament for Hellas," but a demonstration of how and why the Greek tragedy was a fortunate fall. His ethics is here in this book (far more completely than anywhere else, if only we can discover how to put the pieces together). But his political philosophy is not here.

The missing objective side of the goals that subjective Reason sets for itself in chapter V B, will be supplied by the discussion of "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" (VI B). For the moment we are studying only the evolution of the singular rational self-consciousness. The Ethical Substance has vanished completely from the actual world; so it is not upon that rock that these subjective goals are wrecked. The goals themselves are social; they are images of the rational community as defined by subjective Reason. That community is taken to have no objective "selfhood," so the internal contradictions arise *subjectively* as conflicts involved in the attempt at rational universalization. The subjective goals collide with the objective social order; and that enforces a development of consciousness. The ethical substance will appear only when we are logically obliged to recollect it in its immediacy because Reason cannot reconstitute it by the direct universalization of subjective goals.

- 12./358. As the initial concept of Spirit, Self-Consciousness takes itself to be the essence as singular. It aims to realize and enjoy itself as such.

All through Reason as Observation we were observing the self-conscious observer. That self-consciousness is inevitably singular because it is embodied. From the psychologist onwards it has been wrestling with its own embodiment as a problem. Action in the world is the only solution to that problem. So now the agent comes before us as Rational Desire. The rational self has observational experience at its command, so it knows that it does not need to look beyond itself. It can realize itself and enjoy itself just as it likes. It knows what all the possibilities are. But it is

seeking the happiness of Reason. Reason is that “other self” which natural self-consciousness recognized to be the goal of desire; the goal will be reached only in the universal Self of the Ethical Substance.

- 13./359. Active Reason assumes that it must negate the way things are in order to realize its goal. Its initial goal is *immediate* self-recognition in the other; discovering where this leads gives it *universal* self-expression as its goal; and it then finds that the sacrifice of its own individual happiness is necessary. But this Virtue discovers that its goal is already achieved, that action is happiness, and that the world does not need to be changed.

Being a shape of Desire, the Active Reason believes that it must transform the world into a new ideal shape. It repeats the movement of the natural Self-Consciousness; but the moments are now rationally universal. What this means is that all of them (even the first) are forms of community. Otherwise there would be no distinction between natural Self-Consciousness and Active Reason, at the moment of origin; and there is, in fact, a very important difference. The desire of naïve Self-Consciousness is to be a *free* self; but the rational self already knows that all rational selves are free; so it looks for another rational self in order that their identity may be immediately apparent to one another. Each is to see the other in itself and itself in the other spontaneously. This is the definition of “love” as a reflective relationship (whereas the natural demand for recognition produces “war”).

The second moment (the corresponding contrast to the life and death struggle) is the universalization of this immediate identity into the alienated form of a law that is heard in all rational hearts, a law that tells us that we must *all* “love one another.” The attempt to follow this law is an insane crusade to bring the false Heart into subjection; this leads to the return of the first moment, united with the second in the negative form of the recognition that rational action is the “sacrifice of self.” Instead of Stoic *logic*, we have Stoic *ethics*.

The rational agent must be selfless or *virtuous*. He is the Stoic hero going forth to liberate the world instead of being content with freedom in thought. But the knight of virtue discovers that the world does not need to be liberated from subjection. It already satisfies the project of the virtuous crusade; it is just the way that it ought to be, and it does not *need* to be transformed into a Stoic Paradise. The Way of the World is already doing the virtuous thing, and achieving happiness. This Sceptical reconciliation is an inversion of the whole basic position. The objective world is not just a means to rational ends; it is the achieved thinghood of the self already, the complete actualization in which rational individuality can express itself without any resistance. We are all reasonable already, and all of us are part of a social system of mutual support.²⁶

In the whole movement of this section, nothing objective is changed at all. Only the attitude of the rational agent changes, as active Reason discovers what happiness is: “activity of soul in accordance with virtue.” The world, we finally discover, is “the place of soul-making.” Therefore the actual realization of heaven on earth would not be better than the situation that already exists.

We must understand that “Virtue” is not defeated, but *justified*. The virtuous individual simply comes to understand how the world *has* to be, in order that everyone may have the *opportunity* to be freely virtuous. Reason always has to deal with the world as it actually now is; and when we pass on to it, we shall have learned why the world must go on as it does. We shall continue to come up against “necessity” when we try to live only for and with *one* other (or with some face to face group); and there will always be the Utopian idealists who appeal to our hearts; while the great majority of us will remain “liberals” or “conservatives” disputing whether some small amendment in the way of the world is an improvement or not. We shall have to pass on, because we already know how much is left out. But all that Reason itself will discover when it finally turns to observe the world of its active self-realization is how empty and unnecessary its “seal of approval” is.

V B(a): Pleasure and Necessity

The result of the Observation of the Embodied Self was the direction of our attention to its living activity of self-expression. Hence (as Hegel said in par. 358) Self-Actualizing Reason embarks upon its new life as the singular self that is essential in its own eyes. But it is implicitly the Concept of Spirit (i.e. “the I that is We, and We that is I”—par. 177). So its self-actualization is a social experience. It follows its “liking” (Lust) only to come to grief upon the “necessity” that is its own objective rational context.

- 14./360. The self-consciousness that is reality for itself, takes the world as another self that is to be seen to be identical with it. Custom and theoretical Observation are all behind it. Its spirit is the Earth-Spirit for which only the being that is the actuality of singular consciousness counts as true actuality.

We have now reached the Self-Consciousness that is certain of “being all reality” *für sich* (i.e., actively), as opposed to “being all reality *an sich*” or contemplatively (as Rational Observation was). This self has the actualization of its own singular happiness as its object. This goal is still only a project. It does not yet subsist finitely anywhere in the world. Active Reason wants to fulfil its own being (*Sein*) in such a way that it can intuit itself—i.e. behold itself both physically and intellectually as another independent *Wesen*, another physical and intellectual being.

Its primitive goal is to be conscious of itself as *this* singular rational being in the other rational self-consciousness, or to make this other *into itself*. The other is not to stand there recognizing it (still less submitting to it) but to identify with it.²⁷

Having given this outline definition, Hegel specifies unmistakably that the concrete *Gestalt* which answers to it is the Faust of Goethe’s “Faust-Fragment.” The Fragment (published in 1790) was all that he had to go on, though he may very probably have listened to Goethe talking about the Faust-project.²⁸

The Faust-Fragment presents us with the learned doctor of all the faculties (Philosophy, Law, Medicine, Theology) deciding that his studies are a prison, and adjuring himself to escape into the wide world of “living nature.” He has then to choose between the spheres of Heaven and Earth; and he chooses the Earth from

which his own human body was made. The body, with its sensible and emotional experience, is Hegel's "being that is the actuality of the singular consciousness." The Earth-Spirit disdains Faust, but he does not abandon his choice. When we next meet him he is declaring to Mephisto that he means to enjoy in his inner self whatever falls to the lot of mankind as a whole. This is where he becomes explicitly the universal figure of active Reason. Instead of the self that knows everything, he wants to be the self who has done everything.

Hegel's first explicit echo of the text comes from the interview between Mephisto and the young student which takes place while Faust is away packing for the adventure of his new life. Mephisto is wearing the learned Doctor's gown, and Hegel takes him to be Faust's new "Spirit"—the "Earth-Spirit" (who, as we know from Dante's journey to the centre of the earth, is none other than Lucifer the fallen angel). Mephisto runs through the University curriculum again; and this time, the medieval faculties are forgotten. We are treated now to a lengthy satirization of Logic, and a brief but unforgettable attack on Chemistry; then comes "classification" and finally "metaphysics" (which echoes Phrenology for us, because it won't "fit into the human brain"). When Mephisto begins to help the student choose among the faculties, we have come round in a circle having covered the whole range of human learning from the standpoint both of the Unhappy Consciousness and of Observing Reason. Now Mephisto tells the student, "Gray, my dear friend, is all of Theory/ And green Life's golden Tree."²⁹

When Hegel echoes this—with his "observational knowledge and theory as a grey shadow on the point of disappearance behind it"—he means us to see the analogy between the whole of Mephisto's discourse with the student, and Reason as Observation. He expects us to catch the echo, because the following reference to the "Earth-Spirit," and finally the quotation from Mephisto's soliloquy (when he first puts the Professor's gown on) tell us where to look.

Mephisto makes fun of "Reason as Observation." That is his part as the agent of the *Erdgeist*. He is Faust's "spirit," so he can express the whole of Faust's experience as a spiritual *Gestalt*. That is what he does in the quotation—and it is there that the true estimate of the human quest for knowledge comes out. The quotation was either mangled in Hegel's memory, or more probably deliberately adapted to make Hegel's doctrine—and Goethe's too?—quite clear when compared with the text.³⁰ Faust "despises Understanding and Science/ Man's highest gifts" (Goethe wrote "highest power [*Kraft*!"] so he "must go to the ground." This should send us back to the substance of the paragraph where there is another echo of Goethe's text: "the heavenly seeming Spirit of the universality of knowing and acting" is not only precisely the Spirit that is appearing progressively in the *Phenomenology*, but also the Spirit of the macrocosm in Faust's first magical vision.³¹

At present it remains a riddle, what Faust's choice of the Earth-Spirit has to do with the desire of one rational self-consciousness to see itself precisely as *this* one in another one. But then it is a puzzle in Goethe's Fragment why such an awful preamble (raising Lucifer himself under the strange title of "Earth-Spirit," and then receiving him as travelling companion under yet another, more traditional, name)

is necessary for the story of how an intellectually gifted, middle-aged man seduces and abandons a young girl of some beauty (probably) and no brains (certainly). That is all—except for the Tavern and the Witch’s Kitchen—that there is in Goethe’s “Fragment.” Yet if he published it, he thought it made sense as it stood. Clearly Hegel thought so too. Perhaps the two riddles will help one another to a single solution.

- 15./361. Thus Faust hurls himself into life, not as a destiny to be made, but as there to be taken.

The story of Faust’s new life begins in Auerbach’s Cellar in Leipzig—with which the historic Faustus, a “magician” of Luther’s time, was by long tradition associated. This then is where our *Gestalt* of active Reason “hurls itself into life.” The first ripe fruit that Faust plucks is that of the grape. Mephistopheles has already identified himself for us, unmistakably, by giving to the student in writing³² the promise that the serpent made to Eve. We are once more in Eden. This gives us the solution to the riddle of how Goethe’s Fragment makes a balanced whole; and that is what makes the Fragment appropriate for Hegel’s purpose too. Self-Actualizing Reason makes a new beginning with an absolutely clean slate.

In Faust’s new Garden the patterns of the old story are reversed. Here it is the man who is tempted; and he is tempted with the fruit, not of Knowledge, but of Life. In Hegel’s reading of Greek tragedy it is Bacchus who is the “Earth-Spirit” (par. 723). But Hegel’s doctrine that “Truth is the Bacchanalian revel” connects also with the symbolism of Faust’s new life which begins among the carousing students of Goethe’s own University of Leipzig. Faust does take his new life “the way a fruit is plucked” as Hegel says to remind us of the apple in Eden. But the fruit of the grape must be *made* into wine. The enjoyment of “identity” with the Earth-Spirit is itself a product of Reason.

Faust himself objects to going to the Witch’s Kitchen. The Witch’s Kitchen belongs to the rebellious underworld that did not accept the unhappiness of consciousness (whereas Faust’s own alchemical magic belonged to the scientific tradition). But the receiving of “counsel from an old woman” is a necessary part of “despising of understanding and science”; so when Hegel insists on the point that “the shadows of science, laws and principles . . . disappear” (which would not be a new point, unless the “laws and principles” meant are “ethical”) I think he is actually giving us his interpretation of this scene in the Fragment. The witch does actually make “science” vanish in her final spell³³—and Faust protests again (as he should!) at that point. The setting aside of “laws and [ethical] principles” that is involved is too patent to need elaborating upon.³⁴

- 16./362. Active Reason acts desirously according to one moment only. It sublates the *representation* of the other as naturally or ethically independent, whereas the natural enjoyment of desire sublates actual being. Reason is conscious of its own actualization in a consciousness that appears to be independent. This is the enjoyment of pleasure (*Lust*). But the truth of pleasure is a union of *two* selves; so the agent’s singularity is sublated.

“Only according to one moment,” says Hegel, “is the action an action of *Desire*.” He expects us to understand that Active Reason begins as Rational Desire; but the repetition concerns only one of the moments of natural Desire. The first moment of Desire was the *consumption* of one element of living Nature by another. The inversion of this in the second moment was directed towards *mating* with the other sex (par. 175). This is the moment that becomes the effective structure for the embodiment of Reason’s goal. Here it is only the “form of the object’s otherness” that is to be changed. This other, being the object of love, is now the objectified selfhood of the agent. Hegel takes Love as the primitive shape of practical Reason. Reason is all reality because it is the Category that is indifferently satisfied by each and every observer; and what is categorically known to one observer is known (in principle) to all. In rational self-realization this “abstract” identity becomes concrete. Physical love is the identity of two singular subjects in the same act.³⁵ As observable living bodies, they are separate; but the experience of Desire sublates this, and the identification of two free selves is properly “rational.”

For theoretical Observation of them as *selves*—for “the Category” in its application to the “representations” of the senses—the lover and the beloved are quite separate. At the level of natural Self-Consciousness there can be mutual recognition. This recognition may be either a natural recognition (which uses statuses like parent, husband, wife, brother, sister, slave, cousin, neighbor, stranger); or a conventionally and legally established one that gives defined rights and duties to every status on the basis of recognized “equality before the law.” But all of this falls away to the irrelevant level of simple factual consciousness for the rational self-consciousness who has recognized her own self in the other.

So, for instance, after Romeo and Juliet have once seen each other, both the long history of enmity between the families (at the level of natural recognition) and the complex legal system of Verona which allows Father Capulet to betrothe his daughter legally to her cousin “County Paris,” are equally and utterly irrelevant to them. But they do still care about the rites of the Church; and in that respect they belong to the Unhappy Consciousness. They are not like Paolo and Francesca, and they are not like Faust and Gretchen, because Heaven and Hell matter to them. These two couples find their “Heaven” in one another. Active Reason would not damn Francesca as Dante does; but Gretchen’s fate, being all in this world, is a logical lesson for it.

In the Fragment it is already clear that although Gretchen is a model case of Juliet’s romantic identification, Faust is not going to be Romeo,³⁶ and since Faust and Gretchen are in love, whatever happens to one of them, must happen to both. Faust suffers because he makes Gretchen suffer.

The fact that Necessity appears in the shape of *Gretchen’s* fate makes the total *Gestalt* more satisfactory in Hegel’s eyes, and for his purposes. The end of the story is not in the Fragment, but Hegel knows how it must end. The actual climax of the story, when her despair causes Gretchen to lose her reason, and kill the baby to whom she is naturally bonded by the closest of all loving identifications, is not essential to Hegel’s argument. The Fragment as published ended with Gretchen in

the Cathedral tormented by an “Evil Spirit” while a Requiem is being sung. That the service is for her mother is not definitely indicated. But that empirical question is not important.³⁷ Gretchen is in mourning for her mother, who died because the sleeping potion Gretchen gave her was an overdose; and she is alone with the problem of her pregnancy. When he gave the Fragment to the public, Goethe clearly regarded this as a sufficient image of “the truth of the *Zweck*”. Obviously Hegel saw the point, and agreed that the Fragment is a complete image of Necessity. Otherwise he would not have used and cited it specifically as he does.

The “truth of the *Zweck*” is properly that “these twain are one flesh.” This is the *Aufhebung* of simple selfhood. Faust’s meditation in “Forest and Cave” shows this *Aufhebung* clearly. He has made the absolute choice of self-realization; but the realization can never be complete, and it must always involve pain, because the other who suffers is his own immediately and intuitively recognized self. He suffers because he knows he is responsible for her suffering. The action was his; that is why the contrast between Faust’s fully competent rationality and Gretchen’s naïve trust is essential to the image.³⁸ But the truth of the achieved *Zweck* belongs to them both. In the natural harmony of Reason and Nature they ought now to become a family. For they are, willy-nilly, a community, i.e. a realized universal. Faust has actively sublated his own rational singularity.

(c) *The Triumph of Necessity*

- 17./363. Self-recognizing pleasure reduces the agent self to a moment in a greater whole. Its achieved actuality is destroyed by the power of its own Concept, which has no actuality for it. This circle of contradiction is Spirit as the abstraction of Reason. But it is a mediated identity of self and thing, not the observed fact of the skull. There is a real objectification of the contradiction; the pleasure is shared (unity); the happiness turns to disaster (distinction); the responsibility is felt (connection). The cycle is moved by a Necessity that is inscrutable. So the singular rational individual plunging into life, encounters only death. Abstract Reason and Necessity are an empty identity.

In the analysis, I have tried not to go beyond what is unequivocally asserted in the text. I have given an experiential reading of Unity, Distinction, and Connection; but otherwise I have avoided the Faust-Fragment, and expressed the inscrutability of Necessity, about which Hegel is so insistent in his own words.

All the same, it is not hard to show in detail that Faust’s fate fits the pattern. The whole tragedy is clearly “Faust’s fault,” as we would all agree. And this is essential to the image both mythically (since Goethe wanted to invert the story of Adam and Eve) and philosophically (since Hegel wants to show how the primitive act of rational self-identification produces social responsibility). But it is equally obvious that a “necessity” that is out of their control must inevitably bring love’s happiness to grief; and I shall now show that the story of the Faust-Fragment both involves the inscrutability of Necessity and joins the logically empty connection of “oneness” (in love) and “distinction” (of fortune) with the sublated content inherited by Active Reason in a way that could hardly be improved upon.

Faust and Gretchen have their pleasure together. She gives herself to him. But this mutual enjoyment sublates them both into the ethical structure of their society. Their happiness is destroyed by a power that has no embodied actuality for them; this negative essence (of the natural and social world) is the Concept of what the two of them (as Active Reason) implicitly are. What happens is certainly poor in Spirit; and it is only abstractly rational. It is the category of Freedom as “accident” (natural and ethical) that is the rational element. This is about the emptiest shape that it can have—but contingency and unintended consequences are moments in the category of Actuality as analysed in Hegel’s *Logic*.

It is artistically certain that in the scene “At the Well” Gretchen already knows (or has solid grounds to believe) that she is pregnant. Otherwise the chatter about Bärbelchen’s disappearance and impending social disgrace would lose its point; and the point is precisely that pregnancy is not expected by girls in Gretchen’s situation. It need not happen; on the contrary the folk literature of our culture is full of women who could not make it happen when they longed for it. In the world of natural self-consciousness it belongs strictly to “God” (i.e. to the inscrutable necessity of fate) to decide whether it happens or not. To Gretchen it has happened. But she comforts herself as she goes home with the memory of that union of “pleasure” (she is confident, no doubt, that it will now become a union of lives): “Still—everything that drove me to it [my sin]/ Oh God! it was so good! It was so lovely!”³⁹

In that night of pleasure, Gretchen’s mother “overslept herself into damnation through you” (as the evil spirit tells her in the Cathedral). In this disappearance of Gretchen’s only natural support, we can again see the operation of blind fate (or “Necessity”)—for we cannot suppose that Faust deliberately supplied an overdose. It is these two accidents (pregnancy an accident of nature, and mother’s death an accident of understanding) that create the moment of “distinction” in the Fragment. Mephisto’s last word (describing Faust’s state of mind) is *verzweifelt*; and Gretchen’s last act is to fall in a faint. This is the “distinction” by which the transformation of love as pleasure into love as disaster is expressed.

The operation of fate in the Gretchen tragedy certainly comes very near to being a predictable (i.e. rationally foreseeable) result of the principal agent’s own actions. Faust knows the risks (of life in the one case, and death in the other). Gretchen certainly knows the risk of pregnancy (see the scene “At the Well”). But the very word “risk” logically implies that they do not, and cannot, control the outcome; and the pregnancy, being the natural end of copulation, alerts us to the repetition of the cycle of Desire, at the level of Reason. Natural desire “becomes objective to itself” in the child. “In the child,” as Hegel wrote in his Frankfurt theory of Love, “the union has become unseparated.” This has the consequence of reducing Desire to a moment of the family (as the naturally self-conscious whole). Faust has no intention of subordinating the pleasing of his free Reason, to the cycle of natural life. But he cannot escape the great natural and ethical cycle that his actions set in motion.

The triumph of Death over Happiness is not just witnessed by Reason (as it was in Phrenology); here the immediate “thinghood of Reason” is brought about by the

mediating action and self-assertion of the active rational consciousness. But this immediate transition from life (being-for-self) to death (being-in-self) is the most abstract (empty) form of Reason as the Category that is possible. In Active Reason it is mediated into a circle of three abstract moments. First there is the Unity of Life. As a Category of Reason, that must embrace Distinction (Mortality); and the Connection that unites them is one that has no transparent rationality, only an abstract logical necessity. Unity cannot be separated from Distinction. Life and Death are moments of the same Concept.⁴⁰

- 18./364. The transition is from the One to the Universal as abstractions (i.e. from Being-for-Self to Being-in-Self). This unity of opposites is actually experienced by consciousness as the contradiction in its essence. It appears as the grinding down of singularity on the continuum of actuality.

The first inversion of Reason as Pleasure (identity of self-enjoyment) is as direct and straightforward as it should be. It is a simple transition from life to death, because the active rational self has not yet acquired any content. In most tragic love stories the fate encountered does have some contingent historical content. Thus Romeo and Juliet are “star-crossed” because of the long-standing feud between their families. But for the lovers, this does not count. The Gretchen tragedy is an ideal model, because we can see clearly that a “logical necessity” is at work. The catastrophe is directly implied by the mutual identification. In the achievement of their night of love, Faust and Gretchen accidentally put Gretchen’s mother to sleep forever; and at the same time, they conceive a child without meaning to. Because of these “accidents” Paradise turns to Hell (for Faust, the rational man, a Cave; for Gretchen, the religious girl, a Requiem in Church). The “world of actuality” is just the world of natural life and self-conscious relations which is necessarily sublated in (and hence necessarily presupposed by) the existence of embodied active Reason. The universal category of selfhood cannot “die.” But the singular self must die; so the world of private happiness and togetherness turns into a world of shared suffering and personal aloneness. The truth of all singular love is that we must die, and that we must face that by ourselves. The *Individuum* constituted by the two lovers has indeed “gone to the ground”; that ground is their mortality.

Unlike the naturally free self, the rationally free one does not die by the logic of its own act, but by the blind necessity of Nature. Hence the unity of Pleasure with Necessity subsists for the active rational consciousness. Faust experiences the fact that “his goal and its actualization” is “the contradiction between what was the essence for him, and what the essence is in itself.” The essence of present Life—“the being that is the actuality of the singular consciousness” (par. 360)—is to die. This is the “infinite grief,” the identity of abstract opposites in the concept, which must be experienced by all as an incomprehensible Necessity. Faust encounters it in the death of Gretchen, just as we all do in the death of those we love.

- 19./365. The transition can be understood, but its rationality cannot be felt. Life, which ought to be pleasure, becomes an enigma when our actions end in death instead of what we were aiming at.

Paragraph 365, like paragraph 364, is an expansion upon paragraph 363; and it is fairly easy to follow. The only difficulty is to shake ourselves free from the standpoint of Observing Reason (which is only just behind us here, and in any case hard for the reader to avoid). As an observer, Faust knows perfectly well what has happened, and how it happened. Contemplatively he even knows that the Earth-Spirit is the “mediating term in which both sides are one.” For he begins his communing with the Earth-Spirit (in “Forest and Cave”) in a very calm, rationally observational, way: “You gave me all I asked, and you showed me how far I am from being your equal. So now I can feel how nothing can be perfect for humans. You gave me this wondrous experience, but you also gave me the spirit that degrades me, and I cannot go on without him.” So far, Faust is an observer just like us, and he knows—as we do—precisely what Hegel says the lover does not know. But this is not Faust the lover; for him, the observational stance is a falling away. It is not Faust, but Gretchen who will make the step *forward* that we are about to make.

We have to study Faust’s reaction, because Hegel has chosen him as the primitive *Gestalt* of Active Reason. But what Hegel is talking about now is how the romantic mutual identification of two soul-mates maintains itself as a stable *Gestalt* against its own dialectic. Since Faust is only “faithful” to Gretchen in a very peculiar way, his case is not a normal example. He claims that although he must abandon her he will never forget her. It is a case of “half and half” as Mephisto says. But Faust cannot blame this ambiguous response upon his “unlucky star.” It is only Gretchen who can blame the stars.⁴¹

Blaming the stars is the poetic form of the “inversion [or perversion, *Verkehrung*] that is not mediated by anything at all.” Juliet cries “Oh Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?” and “What’s in a name?” And she has some right to complain of bad luck, because she is not active in the feud. But Romeo, having caused Mercutio’s death in trying to mediate the feud, kills Tybalt in the best feuding fashion. Yet he does not think the fault is in any way his. It is all just bad luck. To be with Juliet was all that he wanted. “Montague” and “Capulet,” however, are more than just the “names” that Juliet thinks they ought to be; and so the lovers are smashed against the harsh alien might of the laws of Verona, the “universality” that is not comprehended in their little world of perfect union.

20./366. Pleasure is lost in necessity. But Active Reason can recognize this alien necessity as its own essence. This second inversion gives us a new *Gestalt*.

Romeo and Juliet are no use to us here, because like the heroes of natural Self-Consciousness, they both die for their love. In their case the inversion of the earlier dialectic is plain, because they kill themselves not one another. Faust is no use to us for a different reason. He betrayed his love, and so he did not encounter the smashing of it as an “alien necessity.” It is Gretchen who illustrates the comprehensive inversion and the transition. She survives (rationally) just long enough to know she has been betrayed; and she is therefore forced to think about her faithfulness in a new way. We see her doing it on her way home from the conversation “At the Well.” Before she became involved in Faust’s “action,” her Reason was entirely made up

of the conventions that the educational psychologists taught her. She muses on how (after her experience) her own attitude towards girls “in trouble” has changed. Things are no longer “black and white” for her. The supposed sinner may be a true saint of love. She does not get so far as to say to herself that the harsh law of Necessity should be subjectified into a universal “law of love” so that these things cannot happen. But that is the path upon which she is moving. The Law of the Heart is the first appearance of the Spirit as “Charity.” For the present, it will suffer dialectical inversion into selfish megalomania in order to mediate the emergence of Virtue. But Gretchen’s path eventually leads us to the absolute truth of Spirit.

For us, of course, the transition is a simple matter of observation. The Fate that comes against Love must be comprehended as the same human nature that Love was selfishly trying to exclude. We might easily be tempted to make the resulting inversion too comprehensive, and so arrive immediately at the *Gestalt* of Jesus, the perfect “beautiful soul.” But it is the subjective attitude of an instinctively *active* Reason, that must be comprehensively inverted; also the inversion must sometimes occur logically in the experience of the consciousness that we are observing—because it is as much “Reason” as we are ourselves. This is one way in which the *Gestalten* of Reason are different from the shapes of “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness.” What happens to Reason need not be altogether “behind its back.”⁴² Active Reason cannot see all that we do; but what we can *see* to be necessary for it, it must be able to experience as logically necessary. We see this in Gretchen; and that is fortunate for us, because it helps us to avoid the error of jumping right to the end of our journey here.

V B(b): The Law of the Heart and the Frenzy of Self-Conceit

One of the worst difficulties posed by chapter V B is the fact that what confronts Active Reason is in every case the same thing. It is the social order with its universal structure of custom and law. But we have to see that subjectively the object is not the same. For the lovers it is simply an irrelevant system of “things” which breaks in and demonstrates its necessity. Now that the subject is itself a “universal law” it will be opposed by what it recognizes as a contrary law to which others are rationally committed. This therefore will be a conscious conflict of Reason with itself. The theoretical insanity of Phrenology, will now become practical madness—but this time it is a mad interpretation of the world to which we are all quite rationally prone.

(d) *The Savoyard Vicar*

- 21./367. The new *Gestalt* is a singular self that knows enjoyment to be the universal necessity. The conflict is reconciled and inverted into an inner *Law of the Heart*.

Romeo is sundered from Juliet by a decree of banishment. Similarly (when *Faust, Part I* appeared) Faust was cut off from Gretchen by his killing of her brother, Valentine. The Necessity that appears to lovers as arbitrary fate, is (in

general) either the order of nature, or that of social authority and custom. This is a constant, but it changes its aspect. Active Reason only changes *itself* (as a mode of consciousness). The objective reality of Spirit remains the same throughout the evolution of the present stage. The rational agent identifies with it only when we move on. But in our new *Gestalt* Active Reason has clearly identified it as an alien law. The encounter with it as an external necessity teaches Active Reason that it must have a subjective universality of its own. Death is inevitable; but we can think of all the other lives. So Active Reason becomes a better or higher form of law. The rational experience of Love only needs to be identified with the empty concept of Necessity that is its complement, and inverted into an *inner* law. The whole process remains internal to the active subject of self-consciousness, so what we have is the Law of the Heart.⁴³

Hegel writes “it is called the *law of the Heart*,” as if the phrase were already current. But I have not found it under this name elsewhere. Hyppolite directs us to Rousseau (and the “Creed of a Savoyard Vicar” in *Emile* is certainly relevant); also to *Werther* (whose attitude does not appear to me to be “lawlike” at all); and he follows Royce in suggesting Karl Moor—from Schiller’s *Robbers*—as the *Gestalt* for the “frenzy of self-conceit.”⁴⁴

Judith Shklar refers us to Jacobi and Schleiermacher.⁴⁵ Schleiermacher’s religion of feeling does not produce any “laws” that I am aware of; but Jacobi’s exaltation of “the heart” in an attack on the Kantian “law of Reason” comes as close as anything I have found to making the heart into a law.⁴⁶ Jacobi writes *To Fichte*: “So its [Reason’s] law can never become the *heart* of man either, and truly raise him above himself; it is only his heart then, that can truly raise man above himself—the heart which is the genuine faculty of those Ideas *that are not empty*.”⁴⁷

There is a serious problem about finding Jacobi and Schleiermacher here, because they are essentially “religious” thinkers. But Jacobi’s literary characters, Woldemar and Allwill (like Rousseau’s “Vicar”) can be accommodated within the world of “Reason.” “Reason” is “the certainty of being all reality”; and consistently with this fundamental characterization, Hegel will say later that Reason has no religion: “the immediate thereness of *Reason* . . . and the shapes that are proper to it have no Religion, because the self-consciousness of them knows or seeks *itself* in the *immediate* present [*Gegenwart*]” (par. 673).

We must, of course, be careful how we interpret this statement. There *was* something called by its proponents “the religion of Reason”; and Hegel deals with it as “the religion of the Enlightenment.” About that he says in the same review of his earlier argument: “In this religion, the supersensible beyond of the Understanding is reinstated, but in such a way that self-consciousness remains satisfied on this side; and there is neither cognition nor fear of the *empty* beyond, which it knows neither as a self nor as a power” (par. 675). Obviously, since the *Gestalten* of singular Reason must exist in a social world—a “spiritual” context—of some kind, they can avail themselves of this “religion” (and of its language, which is in fact all there is to it) at need. It is hard to see how a self-consciousness that wants to set its own law, the law which it possesses in the immediacy of its own feeling, against the

outer Necessity which has emerged for it as the law of this world, can avoid calling it the “law of God.”

For the feeling Heart to call its law the “law of Reason” would be to objectify it too much—that is the language proper to Virtue. Of course, I do not mean that that language is impossible either. But the fact that “Reason has no religion” does not mean that it cannot use religious language. The atheistic materialists were not the only representatives of Reason. The Unhappy Consciousness, with its “Beyond” full of imaginary pictures, is excluded on one side; and the spiritual religions, including even the Greek family cult of the shade in the Underworld, are excluded on the other. In the Science of Experience we are supposed to use the test of “experience,” to avoid being misled by the slippery ambiguities of the language that we all use for our very different “truths.”

The best way to see what the legitimate interpretation of the “Heart’s Law” can be, is to begin from the *Gestalt* of Faust. Faust has “gone over to the Earth-Spirit.” Hegel cites this specifically, so it is certainly proper to use it as a premiss. When we study what the Earth-Spirit says, and what Faust says to and about it, in the Fragment, it is clear that the Earth-Spirit is the immortal life-principle of nature as a whole. So it is not right to call Faust either a “materialist” or an “atheist” simply. If we are to use philosophical labels that are informative we must call him a “natural vitalist” or a “pantheist.” He explicitly identifies the necessity that he encounters, as the Earth-Spirit; and we have argued that the way he does this represents a falling back from the position of the lover, because he remains in possession of his own personal freedom of choice.

Faust says that he still loves Gretchen, and he suffers with her; but he wants to get over that. But “getting over” his love affair is not the logical mode of sublating it. Instead, the self-consciousness that has devoted itself to the Earth-Spirit in this way, and then finds its personal happiness wrecked incomprehensibly, must identify with the Earth-Spirit as the spirit of all natural life. The rational consciousness who has discovered that the external world is not just a placid kingdom of natural laws, which can be learned by observation and then used, but a system of social necessity that can bring all individual efforts at the “pursuit of happiness” to grief, must conclude that one can only “live happily according to Nature,” when *everyone* lives according to Nature. So instead of pursuing personal happiness, I must proclaim that law.

Once we identify the Earth-Spirit as the universal life of Nature, and follow the logical movement from there, with the clear understanding that we are now in the logical moment of “judgment” (so that as the Concept of the rational subject evolves consciously on one side, the concept of the real world as object evolves implicitly on the other) then it is clear that the embodied *Gestalt* of the “law of the heart” is Rousseau. Subjectively Faust is united with the spirit of Nature itself; objectively, the world-order of scientific Reason becomes the existing world of social relations.

The best formulation of the Law of the Heart that I have found in Rousseau is (as one might expect) in the “Creed of a Savoyard Vicar.” One must read the whole

of it; and one must accept as fundamental the propositions that “In my exposition you find nothing but natural religion” and that no revelation was necessary because “Had they listened only to what God says in the heart of man, there would have been but one religion upon earth.” Also one must set aside the orthodox interpretation of the good vicar’s talk of a future life “when *freed from the fetters of the body*, I shall be myself, at one with myself, no longer torn in two, when I myself shall suffice for my own happiness.”⁴⁸ The only “body” from whose fetters the Active Reason hopes to be freed, is the “body politic.” So we must stand firm by the earlier declaration: “Is the soul of man in its nature immortal? I know not . . . eternity eludes my grasp . . . how can I reason with regard to what I cannot conceive?” in order to keep the Vicar’s standpoint “within the bounds of Reason alone.”

When we confine it within the boundary of “this side” or “the immediate present,” the Vicar’s position fits the Law of the Heart quite neatly. He exalts “conscience” as the “divine instinct, immortal voice from heaven”; but what he means is a natural instinct, not something that already has Kant’s “law of Reason” sublated within it. “The decrees of conscience are not judgments but feelings”; and the rules of conduct are found “in the depths of my heart, traced by nature in characters which nothing can efface. I need only consult myself with regard to what I wish to do; what I feel to be right is right, and what I feel to be wrong is wrong.” We do wrong because “we listen to what she [nature] says to our senses, and we neglect what she says to our heart.”⁴⁹ Here, I think, is the genuine historical *Gestalt* of the Law of the Heart; and as I shall try to show in due course, Rousseau’s instinctive conscience is also the shape that inverts into the megalomania of “self-conceit.”

22./368. The law *of the heart* is a goal; we must see if it corresponds to its Concept when actualized.

23./368. Outside this ideal project, the real Concept is a world subject to a coercive law: suffering humanity accepts its subjection to this violence. This is the condition of “pleasure and necessity”; but the “law of the heart” does not know, as we do, that it has emerged from that.

The law of natural feeling is what the rational self-consciousness knows to be the truth. But it has only come to recognize this truth as a “law,” because it has already found itself faced by a world of Necessity. This necessity is actually the ordinary law and the substantial custom of society. The rational self-consciousness has not yet admitted that this substance has any ethical status. It has accepted it only as the empty concept of what is inevitable, i.e. as universally effective, but without any rationally justified content. From the objective world (the real Concept) it has accepted only the form of rational necessity for itself, i.e. the form of a universally valid law.

Paragraph 368 contains a typical form of the announcement that we are passing from the statement of the “Concept” to the “experience.” The Concept is a very simple one. It contains only the Pleasure of self-recognition universalized as a moral imperative. The operation of double negation is here almost formal. Pleasure is negated simply by Necessity; and the negation of “pleasure negated by necessity”

is “necessary (i.e. universal) pleasure,” i.e. the universal happiness of self-enjoyment in the other. In order to get this “result” Hegel has to keep the Necessity empty; it is only the inevitability of death. That is why he makes the transition to “experience” before mentioning what *we* have under our observation all the time: the actual world as the concept that Observing Reason has constructed.

The necessity upon which the singular pursuit of happiness comes to grief, is logically empty because it has only mortality as a necessary content. What is recognized and accepted by the rational agent is the abstract finitude of life. But the actuality that is already there, standing in the way of the Heart’s Law, is the actual Concept of Reason as achieved by Observing Reason. This Concept is the unity and wholeness of the natural and social world.

So “the Heart” is “something *other* than the Concept” in two senses; and when it clarifies the ambiguity by insisting on its own sense, and denying ours, we are faced by a Reason which has gone *mad*. Our concept of Reason is the standard of sanity. To insist in the name of a higher moral law that the actual Concept—the real social order—has no validity is *rational madness*. It sublates the possibility of law altogether.

The Law of the Heart confronts a world in which formal order is maintained by violence. There is the violence of the Montagues and the Capulets, restrained fitfully by the violence of the Duke and the City. Both of them together would have Juliet wedded to “County Paris”; so the world of Pleasure and Necessity *needs* the Heart and its Law. Like the Heart we can see that, but we can also see how the Heart’s Law was generated by that situation. For the Heart itself, its Law is its own immediate essence; it does not come from experience in the world, but from “within” (i.e. like Pleasure it comes from natural feeling). In order to distinguish it from Pleasure, we have to admit two kinds of natural feeling: the satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) of the “senses,” and that of the “Heart.”⁵⁰

- 24./370. The Heart-Law seeks to sublate the cruelty of necessity, being devoted to the “good of mankind.” Its pleasure is to love mankind, and that is its law for mankind. This is an immediate unity of individual and universal pleasure; and there is no mediation by individual action or by voluntary discipline.

The Heart brings with it the distinction between “carelessness” (*Leichtsinn*) and “serious concern” (*Ernsthaftigkeit*). The pleasure-seeking self is ready to let the rest of the world go to the devil, as long as it can get back to the Garden of Eden with that other self who is its happiness. But under the impact of necessity, the pursuit of pleasure only leads to pain and misery. To sublate that we must all devote ourselves to the happiness of mankind generally. This is the true “excellence” (*Vortrefflichkeit*) of human nature. For the “excellent” one (the Heart would call this excellence “virtue,” but we must not do that) it is this devotion to the general welfare (*Wohl*) that is true “pleasure,” i.e. true identity with self. There is an implicit problem here, since the joy of the agent is necessarily of a different kind from the enjoyment of welfare by those for whom it is sought. But this is ignored by the Heart. All natural impulses are regarded as immediately good in the same

way. One does not need to be disciplined (or to discipline oneself) in order to seek the general welfare; the feeling comes naturally.⁵¹ This is the “enlightened” view according to which humanity is naturally good. The long discipline of Christian self-culture is forgotten. That is why we must not call the excellence of the Heart “virtue” in Hegel’s own parlance. But the Heart’s *Law* is what is *excellent*, whereas the primary happiness of the natural self, the welfare that is produced by excellence, is only “good.”

Even the Heart is aware that the *excellent* impulse is natural in a different way from the primitively good ones. Rousseau speaks of “the senses” and “the heart.” Hegel avoids this language because all of the impulses of Reason are active initiatives of the self; and because the opposition of “senses” and “Reason” sets up an opposition of “wrong” and “right” (or “good” and “evil”) that does not exist for the Heart. The Heart takes all evil to be unnatural; it arises from the coercion of the still unconquered world of necessity.

Rousseau is aware that the impulses of the Heart (although they are just as spontaneous and natural as those of the senses) arise from reflection. The primitively “innate” feelings, he says,

are self-love, fear, pain, the dread of death, the desire for comfort. Again, if, as it is impossible to doubt, man is by nature sociable, or at least fitted to become sociable, he can only be so by means of other innate feelings, relative to his kind; for if only physical well-being were considered, men would certainly be scattered rather than brought together. But the motive power of conscience is derived from the moral system formed through this twofold relation to himself and to his fellow-men. To know good is not to love it; this knowledge is not innate in man; but as soon as his reason leads him to perceive it, his conscience impels him to love it; it is this feeling which is innate.⁵²

But Hegel cannot use the opposition between “nature” and “thought” either, since everything in the Heart is a natural feeling (as Rousseau is at pains to insist here). Hegel could have used his own distinction between Observing Reason and Active Reason to make the distinction that Rousseau means by “To know good is not to love it”; and since he does not bother to underline the fact that “excellence” is consciously distinguished from “pleasure” by the acquiring of the knowledge which stimulates the excellent feelings, we might even be tempted to think that he has some view even more “immediate” than that of the Savoyard Vicar in mind. But I shall show soon that the movement into moral madness cannot occur without the reflective awareness that “excellence” has of being superior. That superiority is what Hegel is insisting upon here. He is handicapped by the fact that he cannot use the resources of the natural language to the full (as the Heart, or specifically Rousseau, can). Hegel must not do that because at this birth-point of “morality” as feeling, none of the concepts of the moral life of Spirit is properly developed. In paragraph 365 he has made clear that the reversion to the standpoint of Observing Reason is possible. Probably he thinks we can safely be left to grasp the difference between Pleasure and Excellent Pleasure for ourselves. It is the identity that he sees

as needing to be underlined. In any case, the difference is there implicitly, and it will soon declare itself.

- 25./371. The people, by contrast, live under an alien positive law (divine and human), either crying out for the law of the heart like the Publican, or content in alienation like the Pharisee. But the law ought to be transgressed and abrogated. Sometimes it commands what is good, but only the heart in it makes it good. We must do our own will, not God's.

The World, meanwhile, is governed by a positive law (which although now recognized as *law* still has the irrational, external character of the fate that smashed love's happiness). For the Heart the world is a system of universal subjection to alien Lordship. The Heart understands the distinction between self-seeking and law-following; so it can make this distinction even about the world of oppression. There is both simple pleasure-seeking and law-abiding pleasure out there too. But the life of that world is really misery because it is unnatural. No simple pleasure seeker is happy; but on the other hand the pleasure of the lawabiding is not the true pleasure of rational self-enjoyment (or "excellence"), because the law that is obeyed is alien. The world's law is a *positive* law which must be overstepped by the Heart.⁵³

The alienated sense of goodness and loyalty that obeys the law automatically has to be destroyed, because the public law ought not to have the authority that it has. Deprived of its authority, it would lose its coercive power, and so its actual effectiveness. In part, it commands things that the Heart approves—murder, theft and false witness have to be forbidden as crimes against nature. But it is not so clear what the verdict of moral feeling is about adultery, as any reader of the autobiographies of Bertrand Russell and Dora Black can soon discover.⁵⁴ In any case, the Heart cannot be concerned about any accidental coincidences, any more than it can about the divergences. Only the sense of excellence—i.e. of its fulfilling *itself*—matters to it.

- 26./372. So the loving heart fulfils its law: Love and do what you will. But now whatever it proclaims is an imposition upon all hearts, a *command*; and therefore it is at war with the law that it has itself promulgated. Logically it is condemned out of its own mouth, for in proclaiming the law of the heart it alienates the law from the heart, and thus recognizes something above heart. The Heart contradicts itself.

In this paragraph it is the universality that logically belongs to law, which comes into contradiction with the singular uniqueness that belongs to spontaneous impulse (heart). The dialectic is internal to the Heart itself. Hegel is concerned only with the relation of the rational agent to her own law. "Excellence" consists in loving everyone, in desiring the happiness (or well-being) of all. But to act out of love is to act spontaneously, to do what *feels* right at each moment; so we cannot promulgate the "law of the Heart." Yet what distinguishes the Heart from Pleasure is its universal commitment, or the fact that everything it does is a proclamation of what everyone should always do. Following one's heart is to be the law, but it cannot be a law that is *made*.

As soon as one chooses a concrete form of the ideal, it becomes evident that one is promulgating a moral ideal that is actually felt by other hearts to be more oppressive than the existing state of things. Hegel's point here is that this could not happen, if I were not alienating my law from my own heart in principle, as soon as I commit myself to any objective ideal at all. I cannot logically commit myself to the "triumph of Communism" or to "the universal recognition of democratic human rights" without alienating myself from my "heart."⁵⁵ If I am sensitive to human suffering (and that sensitivity is what "the law of the heart" arises out of) my heart will "bleed" every day about the decisions I must make in pursuit of my ideal—just as much as it would if I was a feeling heart that had renounced its autonomy of decision in favor of alienated law-abidingness (or, for that matter, just as Faust's heart does bleed for Gretchen). The bleeding heart is part of the human lot.

There is no law that is not obeyed at a cost. The philanthropic soul is as much a prisoner of her ideal as the obedient citizen is of the actual order, or as Faust is of his own "resolution." What Faust does to Gretchen with bitter sorrow and regret, Ferdinand (in Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*) does to Luise Miller with righteous wrath. This case is not a perfect example, because there is a jealousy like Othello's in it (and that is the most *immediate* shape of "necessity" coming against "pleasure"). But inasmuch as Ferdinand can be seen as a disappointed social idealist, his fury—and his remorseful suicide—are the "Frenzy of Self-Conceit" raging within the "individuality" (as Hegel defines it).⁵⁶ All Hearts entangle themselves in the "actual order" just by acting at all; and all of them equally admit that there has to be an actual order. The only person who does not breach the "law of the heart" is the one who is ready to be a Communist in the morning, is converted to "free enterprise" by reading Ayn Rand in the afternoon; and decides before nightfall that the only salvation for true human feeling is to be found in Transcendental Meditation. This self becomes a Beautiful Soul without ever acting at all. It never comes near the Faustian resolution that is the portal of Active Reason. Dante leaves this soul waiting forever in Hell's Antechamber.

Anyone who acts with rational intent (or to embody a law) posits a universal order of some kind, and so is "set free" or "purified" from singularity. But to be set apart from its singularity is exactly what the Heart does not want. So its struggle to avoid contradiction leads to an ever greater contradiction; and finally to a descent into irrationality which makes the moral feeling of the singular agent absolute. Already we can anticipate how this Law becomes stable for the singular individual who can harden her own heart and insist that just this Utopia is the one where all hearts will beat in harmony. The discordant cacophony of the many Utopias is what Hegel now goes on to examine.⁵⁷

(e) *Rational Madness (Karl Moor)*

- 27./373. The community which the individual sees himself as belonging to, is turned against him thus: What he does is *his pleasure*, what he proclaims is supposed to be *the law of all hearts*. Thus he gives the others ground to harden their hearts against him. The heart itself is a traitor.

The Heart that accepts the contradiction of becoming a contributor to the actual order, has blinded itself to the significance of this commitment. It is not yet a Hard Heart; but it finds itself living in a world of hard hearts. Whatever humanitarian cause I choose, the complaints against my arbitrary "Lordship" will resound all round me: "Why should *that* have priority? Who says that poverty, the Bomb, security against missile attack, equality for women, free abortion, the protection of the unborn, is what must come first? Only you—how can you be so set on that one, and so unfeeling about the others? You say that it is really the welfare of humanity that you care about; but so do we. And we can see that you are actually on the *wrong* side." Quite apart from explicitly contentious issues such as disarmament and defence, or abortion and the right to life, support of almost any humane cause is deleterious in some way to almost any other one.

I have deliberately switched from visions of a radically different world, to radical improvements of this one, because Hegel claims that the acceptance of the necessity for *some* objective order is an implicit acceptance of the existing order. But also it is only in this "entangled" phase that the advocates of different reforms have a common ground that makes serious argument possible. The committed Trotskyite will not waste time trying to argue with the Zen Buddhist. To see this is to appreciate why Hegel begins with the inner dialectic of a Utopian dream, and discusses the cacophony of rational voices only afterwards. The voices only begin to sound rational to one another, after the necessity (and hence the partial moral validity) of the existing order is accepted. But the discovery that all the other hearts are so hard and that all of them are depending equally on the existing social order (which the Heart has not itself consciously accepted) leads to a more radical rejection of the world.

- 28./374. Because of the immediacy of feeling, what happens is experienced as simple alienation. The Heart is faced by the law of God and man; and it finds that this is the law that every other heart recognizes as necessary; in this alienation every heart finds itself. It has found that without alienation there can be no law at all. But it cannot recognize *itself* in this.

Before we come to the categorical rejection of the world, we have two more paragraphs that simply clarify what we already know. The Heart does not recognize its own compromise with the actual order. But it does recognize the compromised status of all other hearts. The immediacy of all feeling prevents it from recognizing its own reflective status. It does not recognize that any actualization has a universal effective force in which singular spontaneity "goes under." One can see how important the Utopian character of its commitment is in this connection. Precisely because the desired order does not yet actually exist, its necessarily objective universal character *as* "law and order" can be overlooked. But all the other idealists of feeling, and most of all the great majority who are content with the actual order, have quite obviously put their hearts into the way things already are. The thesis that they are obedient, only in a passively coerced fashion, to an order that is just an external positive authority will not wash. Their hearts are in it. They mean it when

they say that this or that is God's law or the law of man (i.e. not just the Prince's will, but the will of the community).

The abortion dispute is a good example to illustrate this. I have put both sides under the "law of the Heart," because neither of them is satisfied with the law as it stands, and what both set against it is a deep *feeling*, a practical commitment that makes rational discussion impossible, and the show of it that is attempted visibly useless. Whatever the state of the public law is, one side will be "committed" to it, and the other set against it; or, of course, they may both be radically dissatisfied with it. But they want to make the law of their own hearts part of it.

This is the experience that the crusading Heart has with the supposedly passive and alienated majority of its fellows; and in that conflict the admission of sincerity comes easier because there is a large measure of agreement in the content of the opposed laws. What the opposition is committed to is the "divine and human order." In speaking thus Hegel is both looking forward to the advent of "True Spirit" in his book, and referring to its sublated presence as the alienated heritage of Reason.⁵⁸ But the Heart does not remember Antigone, and it does not need to. The abortion example shows clearly how the heritage of Antigone's world is present in the conflicts of the Heart with itself. What the Heart encounters, it is forced to recognize as a living substance "enlivened by the consciousness of all." To admit this would offer the chance of reconciliation. But what sort of reconciliation is possible about abortion (for example) without a compromise that must feel like a betrayal to both parties? A direct collision of feelings such as this shows why the dialectic of feeling is bound to proceed to the stage of social paranoia.

- 29./375. Thus *self-consciousness* encounters its own contradictoriness. Only in its own law can it recognize itself. But the public law is made by the Heart too. What it *must have* and what it is *set against* are equally essential. It is therefore "distraught."

The important thing is that the Heart does not recognize its contradictory condition objectively. It *feels* it because, being rational, it feels the sincerity of its opponents, and recognizes that their hearts are committed to the objective order. This is what is absurd for it, since it cannot recognize itself in any objective order; but the universality of hearts that is essential to itself it does recognize in the objective order. Everything that it does itself makes a contribution to that order. But it does not recognize that this is all that it *can* do; for if it admits that, then the final refuge of "self-conceit" will be closed off.⁵⁹ The rational Heart is "distraught" (*zerrüttet*) because it *cannot* recognize itself in an objective order; but the universal heart to which (as the actual subject) it appeals *does* undeniably recognize itself in the actual order. The essential form and the essential actuality of universality (i.e. of Reason) are in contradiction with one another.

- 30./376. Thus *self-consciousness* is *essentially deranged*: it necessarily is (and knows itself to be) what it is necessarily opposed to (and knows itself not to be). (*Ordinary* derangement is knowing something to be true, and holding that it is nevertheless not valid *for me*.)

Having developed itself into the simple opposition of Heart and Law, the Heart must now recognize the unity of itself as “good” with itself as “evil.” This is “madness” (*Wahnsinn*). Paragraph 376 is concerned with the distinction between this logical madness and ordinary empirical madness. The Law of the Heart is not an *idée fixe*. It is not a matter of one person being “crazy” about abortion rights, and another about the rights of the foetus or nuclear disarmament. The solid citizen who does the daily round and votes for a moderate party of the centre (or perhaps does not vote at all) might well say that both of them are “crazy.” But since what they are all concerned about is “being human,” the language of the critic is not philosophically justified. Nor is the Heart’s Law a matter of *delusion*, which leads someone to pretend that some objective feature of the world is not really there when everyone else knows that it is (or that something is there when we all know that it is not).

Hegel intends both of these conditions (the *idée fixe* and the delusion) to count as typical forms of ordinary empirical madness, though he only says explicitly that the second one (delusion) is “madness in general.” This second form is the one that approximates more closely to “heart-sickness.” For when the solid citizen says that the heart-sick campaigner is ignoring the right to life, or the right to equal freedom, or the *Realpolitik* of unilateral disarmament, the criticism appears to be valid. But the madness that we have to deal with now is not this ordinary form of heartsickness. It arises precisely because the Heart is *not* ignoring anything essential in the objective situation, and is distraught about the contradictory tension that this open-eyed honesty creates. The true love of humanity is impossible to express in the world. Yet this love is all that counts, and the world is where it counts. So it must be expressed.

- 31./377. This inward derangement therefore projects itself into the conspiracy theory of the world. The world is mad, and the madness is induced and sustained by the selfish interests of its rulers. The fault lies not with individuality as such, but with certain bad apples. Against the way things are, the Heart sets a subjective vision. But the contradiction between subjective whim and objective law shows that self-consciousness is itself mad.

The Heart which is both completely committed and perfectly honest, must conclude that “the world is mad.” For what it is trying to express is the deepest feelings and impulses, not of an animal organism, but of a rational self-consciousness. If this cry from the heart does not reach the hearts of all of its rational fellows; and if the Heart is forced in honesty to recognize that they are not unwilling sufferers or utilitarian calculators making the best bargain they can within an authoritarian structure that is opposed to their own deepest feelings, but that their own hearts are genuinely devoted to its maintenance, then the truth must be that their reason has somehow become alienated.⁶⁰ They have been rationally imposed upon by certain selfish leaders who have never achieved *rational* self-consciousness at all, but have remained at the level of the natural lust for power, and have used their socially developed reason in the service of that uncultured impulse.⁶¹

In my analysis I have ignored the repetition of the logical contradiction involved in making a spontaneous impulse into a law. That is what the Heart is now trying to ignore. It projects its own madness onto the world, which is presumed to have an insane structure. I make my Reason into the arbitrary authority—the Lord—which declares that the whole social system is a covert imposition of arbitrary Lordship. Somehow the honest and rational majority have become the victims and the dupes of a dishonest and irrational minority. What emerges here, for inversion into the starting point of the next phase, is the recognition that the individual heart, and the devices of the heart, are essentially evil not good. The Heart, of course, deceives itself about this, by pretending that it is only some hearts that are evil.

Thus the simple honesty and sincerity of the Heart, its readiness to grant that its opponents are honest and sincere too, leads it into radical dishonesty. The *Gestalt* of this Frenzy of Self-Conceit is Schiller's Karl Moor, who leads his own *Robbers* against the officially authorized conspiracy. But it is not just some people—specifically the first two Estates of the *Ancien Régime*, or the bourgeois capitalists, or the party politicians of our variant types of “democracy”—who are evil-minded power-seekers. *Everyone* wants their own way. It is *ego* (and not just humanitarian commitment) that pushes the banning of the Bomb to the top of the agenda, and makes the campaigner say that those who cannot grasp this priority have been blinded by some authority or other. Each side is blinded by its own self-involution, and not by personal craziness on one side, or by a monstrous social conspiracy on the other.

The pure Heart is not purely Good; it is purely Bad as well. It cries out for a universal justice that comes naturally, without the violation of feeling, and as a reign of perfect love. That would indeed be “the Good.” But the natural, spontaneous, unviolated Heart is itself wilful, arbitrary, changeable and hence rationally perverse (*verkehrt*). It ought to recognize this at once, when it sees that the Garden of Eden is not what actually exists. If the intuitive knowledge of the rational Heart that the natural self is “good” were the absolute truth, then Paradise ought to exist already. There is not (cannot be) any rational *ought* that does not validly refer to the world as it actually is.

Hegel found the conspiracy theory of history principally in the writings of Baron D'Holbach.⁶² D'Holbach's attack (see pars. 542–543) was directed at religion generally, but especially at the Catholic faith. So in concrete terms, it is the Unhappy Consciousness that here appears to the rational mind as the source of the perversion of Reason; and in reality, it is the sense of sin, the sense of the self as “nothingness,” that must be restored to Reason in order to make the transition to “Virtue.”

D'Holbach and LaMettrie are certainly not voices of the Heart's Law, even though the “natural goodness” of man was a commonplace of the Enlightenment generally, which they accepted. So the fact that we encounter the “conspiracy theory” here as the inverse form of the Heart's Law requires some commentary. As a “world-shape” (of Spirit) the common sense of the Enlightenment must have *all* the “shapes” of Reason in it. On the one hand, the belief in “natural goodness” is

only a “feeling” whoever expresses it, and no matter how far removed they may be in other ways from Rousseau’s Vicar; and on the other hand, the “conspiracy theory” is a natural hypothesis for the alienated utilitarian Reason to accept as soon as it is suggested because the cause of the irrationality of things has to be sought in the emotional, non-rational “matter” of human nature.

It is really from “the Heart” that the conviction of the *natural goodness* of humanity springs. If we simply accept the materialist view of the world, then we can never understand how this conviction arose in the first place; and then we could not justify the optimism of thinkers like D’Holbach and LaMettrie at all. So if we want to comprehend the “Age of Reason” in a rational perspective we must begin as Hegel does, with the possibility of universalizing an emotional identification;⁶³ and we must insist that, although D’Holbach and LaMettrie (and many others) are not conscious sentimentalists, they can only argue as they do because they have the sentimental shapes of Reason available to their “common sense.”

The place of the Conspiracy Theory in the dialectic of moral feeling must therefore be considered first. The whole movement from the Heart to Virtue is complicated by the fact that the evolution of Active Reason is purely subjective. Thus one might think that a normal “first inversion” was complete when the law of the Heart develops into the explicit admission that the heart is expressed in the actual social order. But from there the transition would be directly to the solid citizen who is at peace with his world. If we could represent this as a second inversion (and I think this could be done) then we could pass directly to the Individuality that is Real in and for itself to itself (for that is what solid citizenship is). But, supposing this were logically possible, the solid citizen’s makeup would lack the Faustian element of self-definition. The Real Individuals would all be the same, instead of being different animals in the spiritual kingdom of the animals. In order to preserve selfhood—which becomes boringly self-satisfied in that world, but which is the ground of modern subjective rationality all the same—the Heart must develop inwardly, in step with, and by means of, its concept of the world. So the proper inversion of the Heart does not take place until, in its insane self-conceit, it becomes “evil” instead of “good” (as it takes itself to be primitively).

Of course, it does not ever recognize itself to be evil. The transitions that we are now observing are psychological movements within singular rational consciousness. So they *can* occur in individual lives. We have seen that Gretchen moves from Pleasure towards Heart under the impact of Necessity (though Faust does not). But the Heart’s whole purpose in adopting the “evil conspiracy” conception of the actual world, is to protect itself from the need to give up its deepest conviction—the view that humanity is really “good at heart.” The bleeding Heart may be as *virtuous* as any disciple of Aristotle (or of Thomas à Kempis) in its own personal life. Discipline of the senses may have become second nature to it through long and arduous devotion. But it still puts all its trust in “natural feeling.” It never thinks that harsh discipline is what everyone needs (still less that the actual social order *must* impose it from outside!).

The committed Heart, which can voluntarily impose discipline upon itself, will

not lightly surrender the conviction that everyone would do the same if only the right feelings could be awakened. One of the most astounding things about those who really follow the law of the Heart is that they have no perception of themselves as “heroic.” The insane idea that everyone else is the victim of a conspiracy is a defence against the admission that ordinary people will never do what the committed humanitarians feel rationally driven to do. But out of this combination of true heroism and true humility springs what Hegel is quite right to designate as madness and evil. For there is nothing more irrational or more dangerous than *Reason* can give birth to than the belief that the actual social order is controlled and directed by villains, and not by ordinary people, who mostly love and suffer and do their best like their supposed victims.⁶⁴

- 32./378. But just as the heart *is* upside down, so the universal law is upside down too. All hearts defend the public law against any *one* rebellious heart; and they cling to it even when they complain about it. It is their living essence, but it is still upside down.

Hegel offers us here an interesting piece of dialectical logic. If it is true (as we have seen) that the Heart is essentially self-interested and self-willed—so that it cannot make itself into a law without becoming a tyrannical imposition upon all other Hearts—then all of those other Hearts must be self-interested and self-willed likewise when they devote themselves to the existing order. The thesis that they have been misled by priests and despots is a mad fantasy; but the claim that they are “inverted” is quite correct. The Heart cannot make itself into a law without producing a result opposite to what it intends because in its immediacy it is already the inversion of any universal law. But when it recognizes that the other hearts are actually committed to the maintenance of the existing order, it is quite right to insist that there is something perverse about that commitment.

We respond to a radical challenge to our customary order, by rallying to its defence. We may feel alienated from it and protest against it in our own “hearts” sometimes. But when it is seriously threatened, we realize that it is our “essence” and that if we lost it we would lose everything. That is when our hearts are properly engaged and committed. The indignantly *loving* Heart is obliged to recognize this. But its desperate attempt to explain it by projecting the pattern of its own contradictory imperialism onto the existing order does reveal the contradictory character of our commitment. It is self-love, not the universal love of humanity, that motivates us. This is the “Way of the World.” We defend the universal living Substance; but we do so only for the sake of the private life and happiness that it secures for us.

Thus, for instance, there was a lot of feeling in the northern States of the U.S.A. against the Fugitive Slave Law; but it is questionable how many of the highminded Bostonians who passed William Lloyd Garrison’s resolution in 1843 that “The compact which exists between the North and the South is a covenant with death and an agreement with hell” really meant to apply the words of Isaiah to the Constitution of the United States.⁶⁵ At the most they were only advocating the enforced secession of the states that belonged to Hell’s kingdom; and perhaps not even anything as radical as that.⁶⁶

Garrison's language clearly exhibits what Hegel calls *Eigendünkel*; but it also shows the conceptual advance involved in the recognition that the existing order is *not* "an unconscious, empty and dead necessity." The "covenant with death" is a covenant with eternal damnation, an agreement with a living evil. But Garrison must have been vividly conscious that if this upside down order were taken from him he would "lose everything" when an anti-abolitionist mob dragged him through the streets (in 1848) with a rope round his waist, and some loud talking about putting it round his neck.⁶⁷

- 33./379. For in fact this universal defence of public law is universally *selfish*. Everyone wants the law on his side; and everyone finds the rest against him. Life under the law is a war of all against all. Public order is just the "way of the world" produced by this struggle. It is the play of chance only.

What is true in the inverted vision of the insane conceit which condemns the existing order as an evil conspiracy is that the public order is not simply good or righteous either. It *is* based on self-interest (not on the primitive power hunger of a ruling class, but on the universal desire for selfish happiness). The slaves who did not run away, and who refused to involve themselves with John Brown at Harper's Ferry, were partly guided by a perfectly correct impression that life in the Northern city ghettos would be worse for them than the slave-existence of most plantations.

The hearts that support the established order have their own happiness as their goal; they do *not* bleed for humanity, and the order they support is a compromise of selfishnesses. Behind the public order there is a Hobbesian struggle of all against all; and the order that all hearts maintain only sets bounds to that struggle so that it will not become a war to the knife. This is the way things really are in the world. It is the *Weltlauf* (the "rat race" as we call it), in which everyone is out for themselves, and no one's heart is really given to anything beyond. The raging Heart (which is "mad" because it is denying its own essence) is really right. There is no unified essence out there in the world either.

Hegel was not in the least sympathetic to a class-struggle theory of social progress. D'Holbach's attack on the unholy alliance of throne and altar was a class-war theory. Hegel's view points to the fact that having some "estate" is essential to singular rationality. He was aware of how the dialectic of the division of labor was depriving the workers in the new factory economy of any estate in the world, and obliging them to sell their labor-power in a "free" market. He called this group a *Klasse* not a *Stand*.⁶⁸ The Individuality towards which we are moving, requires its own *place to stand* in the world. That is why I have underlined the fact that even plantation slaves had (for the most part) a real "estate" to lose. They could lose the agricultural life (which they understood, and in many aspects loved) and the climate; the "free" disposal of their own bodies in the labor market of a cold Northern city was (in general) a poor exchange for that. The *Klasse* of the dispossessed is a powerful revolutionary force. But the Marxian proletariat is not properly rational.

Its members are not Individuals. They have nothing left but their *hearts*; and, as we have seen, the Heart is essentially volatile.

(f) *The Weltlauf and Virtue*

- 34./380. Thus the universal order has two sides: its actuality and its inward essence. Its actual side (the individual Heart) inverts all values. But inner essence can only become actual by sublating the principle of “pursuing happiness”: Reason is therefore the pursuit of *Virtue*.

In paragraph 377 Hegel showed that the Heart itself goes mad when it asserts that the actual order supported by other hearts is morally perverse. But it is only projecting the recognized evil of being a singular heart with its own devices and desires, upon the public order. So in paragraphs 378 and 379 he showed that the public order is in fact guilty as charged. For although the existing order is indeed the law of all hearts, and is defended as such, it is only so defended because every heart hopes to fulfil its own devices and desires through the adroit manipulation of the public order. Honesty is adopted as the best “policy.” The law of all hearts is only “the way of the world”; it is the justice of the marketplace, where everyone struggles to get ahead as well as they can. So the second inversion of the Heart (which now ensues) is the transformation of this universal selfishness into virtuous unselfishness. The principle of individuality or of spontaneous self-expression, which was the principle of goodness for the Heart, is now recognized in the Way of the World, which is the triumph of *evil*. Instead of being the convinced opponent of the harsh oppressive law of society, therefore, the rational soul must now sublimate its own individuality, and sacrifice its own private happiness in order to make the universal side of the social order actual. Active Reason must display itself as *Virtue*, or as devotion to the public good.

Reason now recognizes itself as the guardian and repository of the true essence and intent of the public order, which everyone else is ignoring. “Virtue” is the inside of the public order, the good side; it ought not to be made the prey of individuals in their battle of universal selfishness. Selfishness is their universal essence. But the essence of law is not this restless universality of struggle but the peaceful universal of pure rationality.

When we interpret Virtue in this way we can see how it is a repetition, at the rationally internalized, morally autonomous level, of the stage of Lordship and Service. The world of the Heart was a *struggle* between two laws. Now there is only one. But there is a noble and a servile attitude towards it.⁶⁹ In the Law of the Heart the singular heart was the inner aspect, and the aspect of law remained obstinately objective and external. Now law is taken as the inside of rationality, and the devices and desires of the heart all belong to the external Way of the World. Like the objectification of the Heart, this is an impossible position; Virtue’s noble cause is a lost cause from the beginning. Luckily it is also a cause that needs no one to fight for it, since we already know that those who are supposed to be degrading it, actually maintain it.

V B(c): Virtue and the Way of the World

Hegel has already prepared us for this transition (in par. 380). The progression by “determinate negation” (i.e. a comprehensive inversion which reconciles the previous opposition and carries forward the result) is easy to see. But the virtuous consciousness does not itself remember this logical experience. We can see it because the transformation is in the public world. It is the recognition of Necessity as the Way of the World that gives rise to the standpoint of “Virtue.” Hegel makes this clear in the logical review with which he begins.

- 35./381. In Pleasure and Necessity, Individuality and Universality were simply opposed. In the Heart’s Law the duality was within the opposed sides in an opposite way (united in the Heart, opposed in the world). Now the two moments are both united and opposed on both sides; and Individuality is to be sublated on both sides. This must come about by self-discipline and self-sacrifice, for then the self-seeking of the *Weltlauf* will be done away too. The *Weltlauf* has only to be shown that its view of the public law as merely instrumental is mistaken.

When Active Reason exists for itself as “pure Individuality” it is recognizing itself as the concretely individuated Universal. Reason must, by definition, be consciously universal in some sense. In Faust, Self-Consciousness is aware of its whole potential. It is not blundering about in the dark like the blind impulse of self-assertion; it realizes its own rational individuality by identifying with the other that is naturally necessary to it as an individuated life. The rest of the world stands over against it as an empty universality. But in the conflict of “rational freedom” with “rational life” this supposedly abstract Universal asserts its real necessity; and (as a result) the realized Heart of the fulfilled individual accepts the empty universality as its “form.”

It becomes a law for the Heart that every individuality should be fulfilled; but the Heart finds that all the other individuals already accept a law which is opposed to its own ideal of individuality. The resolution of this conflict is the Way of the World—the civil society in which every individuality employs the universally accepted law as the means for its own private fulfilment. But the Virtuous consciousness sees the truth of Reason to be the inversion of this utilitarian position. All private hearts should be surrendered to the fulfilment of the law. Reason gives us the law and shows us how to discipline our hearts into submission to it. When we all discipline ourselves rightly the Way of the World will be liquidated.

Virtue is in difficulty, however, about how to produce this moral change of heart. It can only set the example, and encourage others to follow it. The example must be one of total dedication and complete unselfishness. The Way of the World is the way of selfishness; everyone is concerned to get lawfully what the heart desires, and the virtuous consciousness knows that this way is essentially unhappy. All of us are seeking happiness; but (as Plato said) in this democratic world of lawfully regulated desires we do what we wish, but we do not get what we want.⁷⁰ The example set by Virtue will uncover what everyone really wants, and in that way dissolve the illusion of the Way of the World; it will be able to see what it truly wants.

The “inward essence,” the “in-itself,” of the way of the world is *happiness*. But Aristotle taught us that “activity in accordance with virtue” is the only true happiness; and self-sacrifice reveals that “virtue is its own reward” (as the Stoics already said). Modern virtue remembers classical wisdom; but like the Stoics it has lost the “ethical substance.” Our moral virtue shows that self-surrender in the service of universal Reason is the only path of salvation, the only road upon which really human happiness is experienced. It is Reason that is distinctively human; so the human good is achieved in and through the impersonal realization of Reason.

There are two stages in the realization of Virtue. First one must develop one’s Reason, and bring all other natural powers and impulses under its sway. This is a mode of personal self-realization; even in the Law of the Heart there is actually room for this sort of discipline. The impulse of the Heart must be attended to and nurtured; and we must learn not to violate the Heart by following the impulses of the senses. But true discipline is the devotion of this trained and organized self to the public good; only in the service of the public good can the “personal consciousness” be offered up.

The fact that the two stages are necessarily *distinct* is what distinguishes Virtue from the Heart, and makes it logically more advanced. The distinction between the stages is possible because the objectivity of the “public good” is now recognized. Virtue is conservative. It sees the existing order as deserving to be *served*, not *used*. (This is the logical origin of the cultural attitude of the Noble consciousness.) The ideal of the Heart is to be spontaneous, to lose sight and consciousness of discipline altogether in the spontaneous overflow of emotional commitment. The Heart is radical; it is conscious of moral struggle and rational discipline only as its own share in the universal suffering created by “necessity.” Virtue distinguishes clearly between its own decision to climb the rocky road, and the hurts that it occasionally suffers on the road by accident. The Heart cannot make this distinction because, properly speaking, it does not make choices. Its *feelings* are as “necessary” as the necessities of the lower nature that faces it. The two necessities are different, but it does not attend to that. For Virtue the “necessity” of Duty is equally categorical; but it knows that this is because it has looked squarely at the alternative, and has made a choice.⁷¹ “Individuality” and “Universality” have become clear options for it.

When we put it like this, we can see that Virtue has created a false option for itself, just as the Heart created a contradiction for itself. But we must be clear about what Virtue wants to do to the *Weltlauf*, because Virtue’s false option will contribute a necessary element to the consciousness of the *Weltlauf*. The *Weltlauf* is not objectively changed by Virtue. Nothing is *done* any differently than it was before. But the consciousness with which it is done is changed. Virtue sees the *Weltlauf* as wrong-headed. Everyone is pursuing their *own* interest. Everyone (even the bleeding Heart) is putting her private concern *first*. They are all using and manipulating the public system of law, utility and welfare for the advancement of their personal happiness. “But,” says the virtuous consciousness, “that whole view of things is upside down. This system of reciprocal support and helpfulness that we all depend on, and which you are all treating as the means to your happiness, is not an “instrument” at

all. It is the real substance of our selfhood, and we must all act, all the time, in the consciousness of serving and preserving it *first*. This is what should come first for all of us, all the time, not a better job, or a rich marriage, or the establishment or abolition of abortion clinics, or even banning the Bomb. You have to see that the “common good” is here with us, and you have to put that first. In everything, you must be “public-spirited,” not selfish or partisan.

- 36./382. The *Weltlauf* is just the forms of selfishness we have passed through. There is Pleasure doing what is “necessary,” and the Heart trying to make a revolution but making chaos. Against both, the public Law prevails. But in both its true existence is perverted.

For the virtuous agent, the way of the world presents the two aspects that we have previously considered. On the one hand, there is the naïve pursuit of happiness through identification with another self. Hegel now describes the “downfall” (*Untergang*) of Pleasure in a new way. The “downfall satisfies the Universal. But this satisfaction . . . is an inverted shape and movement of the Universal.” This is a description of the life that Gretchen *might* have had (and so of how Pleasure and Necessity can become a stabilized *Gestalt*). The “downfall” of Pleasure is in the “preparation of their own death” by the parents as they educate the children who will take their place. It is this reconciliation of Pleasure with Necessity that produces “the established order.”⁷²

In the ordinary course of life, the mistakes and bad luck (which were so extreme in the case of Faust and Gretchen) are digested and learned from. We “get over” things and carry on. The Way of the World endures, because it is *happy enough* for most of us; that is exactly what the brokenhearted idealist discovers. As I pointed out earlier, it is perfectly possible for the rebellious Heart, after its discovery that most other hearts are genuinely committed to the maintenance of the order that exists, to be reconciled with the world, and to pass directly into the society of realized individuals. Virtue sees this “animal kingdom of the spirit” only in the distorted perspective of a simple triumph of selfishness; hence it is deservedly and necessarily a realm of universal misery, whether open or secret. The bleeding heart may not go to the extreme of positing a conspiracy theory of the existing order; but some hearts do harden in this way when they break; and the virtuous soul that has emerged from the reconciliation of this “mad” consciousness with its world, can recognize the bleeding Hearts as mistaken in a different way from the great majority who have settled for a selfish pursuit of happiness that will only produce the inward sense of something lacking. These obstinate hearts are themselves the natural conspirators against the established order. The virtuous eye picks them out as the ones who want to be a law unto themselves, “and in this delusion [or conceit] disturb the established order.”

This clause confirms the identity of the *Gestalt* of Self-Conceit: Goethe’s Faust is here succeeded by Schiller’s Karl Moor.⁷³ I identified Rousseau earlier as the theorist of the Heart, and claimed the Savoyard Vicar in *Emile* as its true *Gestalt*.⁷⁴ But thus far I have only identified the *thinker* who produced the conspiracy theory

for the Reason that goes mad in its own conceit: Baron D'Holbach.⁷⁵ D'Holbach himself was not a bleeding Heart—indeed, he had the rational conspirator's awareness that the Heart can be made to bleed for anything at all. The life-model of the Heart's conspiracy is Schiller's hero.

What the conspiracy theory does for Active Reason is precisely to validate a conspiratorial response. The step from the Heart to Self-Conceit is the step from protests and demonstrations, to civil disobedience and outright terrorism. The practical *Gestalt* of Self-Conceit is the idealistic bandit in *The Robbers*, who forms a conspiracy against the great social conspiracy. But, like Gretchen in the Faust-Fragment, he is an example of the type in transition. In his death-scene he is converted to the ideal of Virtue. He gives us Virtue's verdict on the unreconciled Heart and its "disturbance" of the social order: "Oh, fool that I was, to suppose that I could make the world a fairer place through terror, and uphold the cause of justice through lawlessness . . . I see now with weeping and gnashing of teeth, that *two men such as I would destroy the whole moral order of creation*."⁷⁶ In Hegel's language this becomes: "the universal law maintains itself, of course, against this Conceit, and no longer comes on stage as a dead Necessity, something opposed to Consciousness, and empty, but as Necessity within consciousness itself."

Empirically, Karl Moor's verdict would seem to have been falsified by events, for we have seen many idealistic conspirators since Schiller's play was first staged in 1781. But logically, "two men such as I" means "my spirit"—and it is not yet certain what the final potential of that is. Virtue, certainly, is as much afraid of the Heart's rebellion as the Real Individuals who are at home in their comfortable world. The upholding of law is fundamental for both of these *Gestalten*. But the "justice" of which the repentantly virtuous Karl Moor speaks is ambiguous. For the Real Individuals it means market justice; for Virtue it means an equal opportunity for everyone to develop and exercise her talents in the public service. This ambiguity will develop gradually, and at the level of finite Spirit, the resolution remains ambiguous. The "virtuous" idealist does become a member of the "universal class"—but not a very comfortable one.

- 37./383. Can the principle of selfishness be superseded when the self is the agent of the supersession? Virtue is the *faith* that it can. But what happens must logically depend on what the weapons are with which the struggle is fought.

As Judith Shklar has pointed out, Schiller's plays are full of patterns of Virtue. He idealized the Greeks; and he was also vividly conscious that the "Greek ideal" of the whole man was unachievable in the fragmented situation of modern society. What made the heroic struggle meaningful in his eyes was the Kantian conviction that practical Reason has its own noumenal world. That sort of self-consciousness lies far ahead of us. But if we put his heroes into their dramatic context as Renaissance humanists, yearning for the "ethical substance" and finding the meaning of life in the Stoic devotion to the public good, and the Stoic doctrine that "Virtue is its own reward," they become models of the Virtue that Hegel is talking about. The real difficulty is that they have the Unhappy Consciousness only just below the

surface of their Reason. That is the bond between them and the post-Kantian Schiller. They have a *religion* to which Hegel's Reason is not entitled; and for this reason their self-sacrifice is far more real than the "mirror-fight" and mock-sacrifice which is all that Virtuous Reason can achieve, with its certainty of finding itself everywhere (and so of not needing any Beyond). They also assert and realize themselves in a way that pure Virtue finds illegitimate.⁷⁷

Even Hegel's purely rational image of Virtue comes as close to a religious mode of consciousness as Reason properly can. Virtue "knows" that those who follow the way of the world only have to look at it the other way up, in order to see what true happiness is, and how it is to be found right here and now in this world. That is why Virtue is a form of the "certainty" of Reason. But the conviction that this inversion can happen is a *faith*. This rational faith is one aspect of the great battle between Faith and Enlightenment that we shall come to later. Any Protestant who believes in "justification by works" can easily adopt the concept that rational Virtue has of its *Bestimmung*; and the "rational faith" that projects virtuous happiness into a future life is a stabilized form of Virtue. The faith of Virtue is something that can and must be turned into "sight" (*Schauen*); for otherwise it could not belong to Reason at all.

To see virtue realized is the rational reward of virtue. But as Hegel sarcastically forecasts, Virtue will never enjoy this reward. It cannot do so, for the happily virtuous world would be one in which Virtue becomes impossible. The *actual* inverting of the Way of the World *is* Virtue. If the world were to be successfully inverted, so that everybody could at last see what happiness really is, the possibility of Virtue would have vanished. This problem will haunt us all the way to the portals of Religion. It is the nemesis of "Morality" even in its most highly developed syllogistic form. That is why Hegel can make the same points about the optimism of Fichte.⁷⁸

At present, we can easily see that Reason, with its immediate certainty of finding itself in "what is," is bound to be inverted by its encounter with the world. For its whole substance is in the Way of the World. What must concern us is to see what the useless and hopeless effort of Virtue does to the Way of the World, and how the World's Way differs, after a double inversion involving the incorporation of Virtue, from the way it first appeared when the Heart collapsed into it.

- 38./384. The Universal of Virtue's faith is *abstract*. It is the inner potential of both world and self. The good is an *ought* which is to be realized by the virtuous will in its relation with the world.

The true good of Reason is present in the virtuous soul in one way, and in the world in another. In the world it exists as the inward potential of all the energies that are at present misdirected towards selfish happiness, with the resulting universal dissatisfaction. In the virtuous soul it is the conscious purpose of realizing this potential. But it is an *abstraction* in both perspectives. It is not a power that can actualize itself. The worldly folk can see that it is only a utopian project in the virtuous mind. To say that it is abstract, is the same as to say that it exists as the unre-

alized term in a relationship. It is an abstract goal both for the agent and for the world in which it is to be realized.

- 39./385. Thus the Universal is *gifts* that can be used well or badly: passive instruments for the individual agent.

A Stoic of the pure observance is logically obliged to say that everything except Reason is “indifferent.” This is the position of rational Virtue. What is called “the good” is a repertory of *gifts* that can be used either well, or so badly that they bring disaster (as they did upon Faust and Gretchen in the Fragment). As natural gifts, they are the passive means or instruments of an agent who is free, and can set her own purpose.

From the standpoint of the virtuous purpose, the gifts are *misused* by naïve individuality (in the selfish struggle of the world); and they are only rightly used by Virtue, the rational individuality which knows that it must sublate its own self and become the mere instrument of Reason. Virtue differs from the Unhappy Consciousness in that it knows that the choice between the options depends upon it alone, and not upon the action of the Unchangeable Reason in the Beyond. Virtue’s active agency does not depend upon Grace; it is *rational* faith.

(g) *The “Knight of Virtue”*

- 40./386. This Universal is equally at the disposal of both sides. Only the faith that the potential is essentially good is Virtue’s secret weapon. This makes the struggle into a sham-fight, since it means that the good is self-actualizing, not merely passive. The mere potential can go to waste equally on both sides; but it is actualized by the struggle itself. In the struggle Virtue is the self-actualizing Good, but whatever it attacks is good in itself too. So the *Weltlauf* is actually invulnerable; and what Virtue wants to sacrifice on its own side is sacred too. *Nothing* must be sacrificed. The struggle is only to keep the weapons bright.

Because of the elimination of all transcendence from the perspective of Reason, the hopelessness of the virtuous crusade is evident from the start. The Universal Good (Reason itself) is at the disposal of the individual will. Virtue has only its own knowledge that it has discovered the secret of true happiness to use as an allied force posted in ambush: the Way of the World will be taken by surprise when the battle starts; and Virtue hopes to win the day with this secret weapon. It knows that when truly appreciated, the universal Good is not an instrument to be used by the active consciousness as an “other.” It realizes itself, because it is “in and for itself.”

Actually, however, this knowledge is what reduces Virtue’s own fight to a fencing practice in front of a mirror (*Spiegelfechterei*). The knowledge that the Universal is “the purpose” is just as *abstract* as the knowledge that it is an instrument *for use as we please* (cf. par. 384). Virtue can only set an example; it can show the world how to live happily. Its victory depends on the world’s being able to recognize itself in the mirror. The virtuous agent can say “This is what Reason *is*,” and she can also show

it. But what is thus shown looks just like what everyone does. Reason is the impersonally “common” good. Whenever the “knight of virtue”⁷⁹ begins to fight for something concrete—even for the cause of free self-government, to take the most obvious of virtuous causes—he must be conscious that whatever he injures is a *real* good that is useful for all (which therefore ought to be preserved).

On the other hand, it is precisely the necessity to take sides, and to fight for something as a matter of principle, that provides the discipline through which the natural soul becomes virtuous in the first place. The perception that the common good is threatened is what makes us unselfishly conscious that it must be preserved. So what Virtue’s example does is just to make us all aware that there is an unselfish side in our rational commitment to the pursuit of our own interest. First the heart had to be shown that it is governed by a selfish head. Now the selfish head learns that its private happiness has an unselfish side.

There are cowards and schemers in the battle too. But without the general struggle of life we should never find out who is rationally committed, and who is not. Virtue, which takes itself to be the inversion of the World’s Way, needs every aspect of that Way (including the selfish ones) for its own existence. This is the first inversion of Virtue. The Way of the World is not as selfish as it at first took itself to be. Reason is not just the servant of the passions, the eyes of impulse, and the instrument of the desires. As Virtue rightly sees, says, and shows, it is the universal Good under which everything else must be subsumed; so it is the *virtuous* Way of the World that is the actual good.

The virtuous knight finds himself everywhere faced by other citizens doing things that are “good-in-themselves”; he has no quarrel with these activities, and he must not injure them because every aspect of the way of the world is, indeed, “good in itself.” Everything is a potential good, needing only to be altruistically done, or produced with a devotion that is truly virtuous. When the knight does something unselfishly he must be rational enough to recognize that even the selfish doing of it produces the same “common good.” He can only make this universal aspect of all action plain to the agents who are ignoring it. This is his “mirror fight.” The ideal of life is to “play the game” (for the game’s sake, not to win). So Hegel says that Virtue fights only to keep its sword bright, and that it views all of life as a struggle organized to keep the craft of sword-makers and fencing masters going.

41./387. The enemy, however, is selfish, and can sacrifice *anything* to win. It would win even if Virtue were not inhibited from striking. Virtue must sacrifice nothing.

The world, on its side, can sink to any level. In the person of some of the despots, whom D’Holbach attacked and whom Schiller’s heroes sometimes face, it can sink into the naked urge of natural self-consciousness to have its own way even if the heavens fall.⁸⁰ For that is where individuality starts, and that is what Virtue wants to discipline out of existence in the name of Reason. The knight of virtue is necessarily opposed to those who are anti-rational. But he can never abandon his ideal of Reason. He must always “play by the rules.” He always wants to play better

than ever before (for that is what his happiness consists in). But “winning”—since it involves a comparison with someone else and a sense of pleasure in one’s own achievement—is an irrational goal. To win the battle with the world the knight must convince everyone that “winning” is not what life is about. It is playing well for God’s sake that matters.

What chance does Virtue have, therefore? The *virtó* of Machiavelli’s Prince will always keep the way of the world alive. Machiavelli’s *virtó* is what Hegel is describing when he speaks of “the negative principle, for which there is nothing established and absolutely sacred, but which can risk and endure the loss of everything and anything.” Here we have the spirit of Faust returning as the World-Spirit. Machiavelli is the thinker of the World’s Way. Thanks to the curious myth that the Age of Reason generated about the imprisonment and death of Don Carlos, Schiller was able to portray Philip II of Spain as the active *Gestalt* of this “negative principle.” Simply to gratify his own hatred (says the myth) Philip sacrificed his only son.⁸¹ No virtuous knight can prevail against such a one, if political power is what he sets his heart on. For this *virtó* everything, including the “virtuous knight,” is a rationally manageable resource.

But there is an ambiguity here. The princely *virtó* is “free from every moment”; it can “as readily sublimate any moment, as let it stand.” But does that necessarily mean that every moment is for it equally a mere resource? This interpretation of Machiavelli is the only one that Virtue can produce, and it is the natural one for the ordinary reader who makes no pretence of playing the game of life purely for the game’s sake. But it makes the great *patriotic* appeal at the end of the *Prince* into an irrational commitment of the Heart on the part of Machiavelli himself. Machiavelli, however, was not the voice of a Hobbesian struggle for selfish power, but of *virtó* as something worth dying for. He was not the voice of self-conscious Life, but of Reason. As soon as we pass on the *Discourses* we can see that his *virtó* aims to become the embodiment, the reincarnation, of classical Roman *virtus*. So the virtuous knight’s ideal of living (and dying) for the sake of Reason (as the human virtue) is not just a “resource” for Machiavelli; it is not just a tool to be used like any other. To be sure, the Prince is free; so he will use the bond, the control, given by that kind of virtuous commitment in any way that he needs to. But he is always mindful that this bond is just what he wants to strengthen; it is only a *moment* in his calculations, but it is one which has a very special destiny. For the genuinely Machiavellian Prince (which Philip of Spain was not) it is the subjective aspect of the *Ansich* (i.e. this *virtó* is not just a means, but also the end).

42./388. As for the ambush of faith, the *Weltlauf* is too wide-awake to be caught in that. It faces every way since it knows that every potential is for its use. Embodied as Virtue, the Good is only a sham-fight. In itself it is only useful resources. Represented as *Dasein*, it is still asleep or in limbo.

Machiavelli is the wide-awake consciousness of the World on its Way. As we shall see a bit later (par. 392) the World is not quite as wide awake as Hegel claims it is. On the one hand, it is actually better than it takes itself to be in its complacent

pursuit of happiness; and on the other hand (as we shall see in the Spiritual Animal Kingdom) it is not as good as it takes itself to be—after its triumph—in its virtuousness. This moralistic complacency shows very clearly when the Virtuous World reads Machiavelli. Faced with its own wide-awake self-consciousness—which is also *our* consciousness of it—the habitual way of the World itself is precisely a return to a hypocritical division between “Virtue” and the “Rat-race.”

But even if it cannot quite face Machiavelli’s *virtó*, the World certainly has nothing to fear from those who tell it to “play the game.” It knows all the games there are, and it wants to win all of them. It knows all about “potential,” and it can make a profit out of the virtuous potential, as readily as out of anything. War time—even the battle for *freedom*, which is Virtue’s only fully justifiable war—is when the armourers get rich. In peace time, Virtue may happen to be an obstacle or a nuisance. That is how the “sham-fight” of Virtue appears, because it wants to get “resources” used in a way that appears to worldly eyes to be “useless” or “wasteful.” This is how the “good *Ansich*” is present “for its enemy.” “In itself” it is simply the “Matter” of Universal Utility; and if we represent it as a *Dasein*, then we have the God of the Deists: “a sleeping consciousness, and one that stays back behind, no one knows where.”⁸²

- 43./389. Victory therefore goes to the *Weltlauf*, because actuality *is* the individuality that virtue sought to supersede. The real potential is not an abstraction, but being itself; and individuality is the principle of conversion into actuality. It converts *nothing* into *being*.

“Virtue is therefore vanquished by the Way of the World.” The *Weltlauf* can absorb Virtue and satisfy it with no more than a modulation of the universal rhetoric. We read Adam Smith, and we learn that by enriching ourselves we are enriching the Nation. We need the government to watch over us, and see that we make no secret covenants for the restraint of trade; but the enlightened self-interest of everyone individually will take care of the “common wealth.”⁸³ Virtue is not really necessary except as a mode of conscious self-congratulation which we all adopt. We all go on doing what we were doing before, but we now insist that our activity does indeed serve the public interest first. The Heart-campaigners, paradoxically, learn to use the language of enlightened self-interest in support of their causes (since the “public good” is what is rationally advantageous for everyone privately). Virtue takes its place in the public order itself as the “universal class”: the “public servants” who are supposed to administer the system as evenhandedly as possible, and to prevent abuses.

This inversion, like those that went before, is not as simple as it sounds. The World’s Way is the direct inversion of Virtue. Its victory over Virtue is the second inversion. This means that the triumphant Way of the World incorporates the first opposition in an inverted form. “Virtue has the abstract, non-actual *Wesen* as its goal.” It appeals to us to play the game of life, for the game’s sake. This it says is the liberation of our rationality. We should compare the discovery of free self-realization by the serf, when his arbitrary freedom of choice is taken from him by violence, and he has to follow orders as well as only he knows how. Rational virtue

wants to take this a stage further, by turning it into a Stoic self-discipline of free rational individuals in the service of Reason, the “service that is perfect freedom.” But this is still only self-realization, let Virtue say what it will. It is achieved by everyone capable of Reason—by the serf through fear, and by the free bourgeois through the pursuit of happiness.

The active self realizes itself out there in the world, for the enjoyment of itself, and for the use of others. No longer does the serf see his beasts change their names, as they are butchered and carried into his lord’s kitchen. But every achievement of the free rational agent (whether virtuous or selfish) changes its real status in that way. That is what “being real” involves. The “realization” of the virtuous purpose involves its “consumption.” The knight of virtue is a consumer of goods, like everyone else; and whatever he brings into “being”—no matter how selflessly—is there *for use*. The “in-itself” of Reason is a purpose to be realized. That is to say it is the using of something actual. Whenever and wherever it is successfully realized, it exists for use. The Knight of Virtue can insist forever, that what matters is the inwardness of the purpose, the rationality that is made visible in the process of realization, and which can only be perceived and enjoyed in the process; but the fact remains that the “end” of his virtue is both a means (not the only one, of course) and the end of rational utility. The “end” of Virtue is to display Reason “for its own sake.” But the “truth” of this display is that Reason is revealed as the means-ends continuum of the free activity of rational individuality. In the eyes of grace God became man by his own eternally mysterious volition; in the eyes of Reason, man makes God (the Unchangeable, the abiding Substance) become Man (the changeable, the self-individuating motion). Far from being evil, individuality is what is good; far from being false, it is what is true. But this is a goodness that embraces evil, a truth that involves falsity.

- 44./390. The victory is only a triumph over empty abstractions and idle moralizing (which shows forth only the swelled head of the virtuous one). Ancient virtue was founded on the substantial life of the *Volk* and its welfare, not on edifying rhetoric and inner feeling. Everyone sees through this bombast nowadays.

For Virtue it is the “essenceless abstraction” of Reason that is essential. Therefore the triumph of the World is only a triumph over a great cloud of empty rhetoric. It makes no difference to us whether the producers of our goods are “virtuous” or “misusing their gifts,” as long as they do produce the real goods. This is not to say that it makes no difference to us whether we are virtuous or not; if we *are*, it makes a world of difference—there is no other word for it. If we are not, it seems to make no difference, but there is one. Hegel seems to be saying here that it really makes no difference, and that Active Reason gives place to Real Individuality by simply dissolving into a cloud of words. But we know, *a priori*, that every “experience of consciousness” makes a difference, or it would not belong in the Science. So we must look carefully at the comparison with “ancient virtue” to see if we can discover why Hegel exaggerates the emptiness of “modern virtue” (as he clearly does in this paragraph).

"Ancient virtue . . . had its *foundation, full of content*, in the *substance* of the *Volk*." The Good that it served, and denied itself for the sake of, was one that "*actually existed already*." In that world, "virtue" itself was "the way." The philosophers, from Pythagoras to Aristotle, set up an opposition, between the "life of pleasure," the "life of honor," and the "life of virtue." But this was partly an educational device to help in the maintenance of the established way and its values; and partly a reflection of the incipient birth of "free individuality" as membership in the universal community of Reason. Before the philosophers got at it at all, "virtue" (*andreia, virtus*) was the *manly* consciousness of what the active agent owed to his community. The aspiration of the Homeric hero "always to be the best and to be outstanding above the others" is irrational in the eye of modern Virtue, because Reason distinguishes strictly between "honor" and "virtue." But for a world in which rational individuality did not yet exist, and natural individuality desperately needed to be disciplined, the pursuit of "honor" was the natural path to that real sacrifice of natural individuality which is natural "virtue."

Rational virtue is in a different situation. The substantial life of the natural (or face to face) community lies already in the past. It is lost beyond recall. The Real Individual who is journeying towards the recovery of her ethical substance knows herself as a rational agent, i.e. as a member of a truly universal community, which does not already exist. What does exist (and this is true for Active Reason at every stage) is an "inverted" or perverted world. Hegel's own theoretical excess against the empty rhetoric of edification—which is all that he allows modern "virtue" to consist of in the end—is touched off by his consciousness that Virtue is actually a very hard *Gestalt* to break into, and to overthrow. It makes its impregnable circle or fortress against the World by returning to the Heart for the "inward" meaning of all its phrases, and for the sight of its essential purpose, the enjoyment of rational consciousness that is Virtue's own reward. It still has, in full measure, the Heart's Conceit, the conviction of its own "rightness"; and (in its finite bourgeois way) it has suffered and disciplined itself in order to achieve and to justify this righteous conviction.

We can see how strong Virtue's fortress is, by considering how the Knight of Virtue would answer the Cynic who will overthrow the happy home of the Real Individuals. Diderot's Philosopher is the "worthy" consciousness of that world. He is reduced to dumbfounded silence and helplessness by the nephew of Rameau who points out that all the values of his world are inwardly and essentially *verkehrt*. But the young Rameau would get nowhere with the Knight of Virtue; for that is just what the Knight says himself. The Knight stands at the entrance to the happy home of Real Individuality, and young Rameau stands at the exit. They have quite opposite reactions to the inverted image that they see. For the young Rameau, the Knight of Virtue is the most comical of all the fools; for the virtuous knight, Rameau is the unhappiest of all the knaves. But neither can reach the other. Yet Rameau's "language of pure culture" is the most powerful of dialectical solvents, the *aqua regia* of the spirit. One might perhaps think that the Terror is more powerful. But that will only tell us whether the Knight's Virtue really is just verbal.

In fact the “virtue” of the reconciled knight whom Hegel had in mind was real enough. Once we have identified Machiavelli as the voice of the World, and of its wide-awake, all-seeing, ever ready *virtú*, the identity of the author of the “pompous talk about what is best in [or for] humanity, and about the oppression of humanity, about [self] sacrifice for the Good, and the misuse of gifts” is easy to detect. The most celebrated treatise against Machiavelli produced during the Enlightenment was the *Anti Machiavel* of Frederick the Great. The effect of an appallingly rigorous education upon his very sturdy physical and mental constitution was to make Frederick in good sooth a “knight of virtue”; and the discipline that was so “good for him,” and made him think there could be no happiness except in service, was also a very convenient social philosophy for an enlightened despot to preach.

Frederick’s dedication to his duty was real enough. But *his* duty (as a mature self) was to give the orders; and the subject’s duty was to obey. Thus his Virtue is the rational resurrection of Lordship and Service. Hegel, himself, is probably thinking of all kinds of moral sentimentalism and edification (for he condemns the Heart, as well as Virtue here); and his attack on the highminded self-righteousness of all champions of the “Ought” reflects the conviction of his own Heart that he is here facing a form of rational insight that is “evil.” But we should confine ourselves to the logical transformation of the World’s Way; and the reduction of rational action to the duty of obedience does empty the concept of Reason of all content, so that it becomes “the Nothing of abstraction.”⁸⁴ As we shall see, there is an important point in the reduction of Virtue to emptiness.

- 45./391. The result therefore is that this good-in-itself is cast off like a cloak. The *Weltlauf* is recognized as the actuality of the Universal, and the movement of individuality is its agent of conversion from abstraction to actuality.

Only the empty form of “duty” is accepted by the World from Virtue. The dialectic in this third moment of Self-Actualizing Reason is the mirror image of the dialectic of the first, where it was Pleasure which accepted only the form of “universality” from the experience of Necessity. Virtue has to recognize itself in the World; it has to recognize that all the seemingly unhappy rats in the race have the steady rational consciousness of doing their duty while they pursue their own happiness; and that this is the foundation of a rational happiness which they can enjoy even when their empirical quest appears to be a failure. There is no need to live always in the light of an abstract ideal of duty. The self-satisfaction and self-interest which seemed like a betrayal of the Ideal, and an inversion (*Verkehrung*) of the character of the Good, is actually just the inversion of its status from an ideal potential into a real actuality. Individual action (no matter how selfish its motivation may be) is the only source of universal goods.

- 46./392. The Way of the World has vanished too—for it is not as selfish as it took itself to be in this antithesis. It produces the common good without knowing it, and its confident egoism is merely self-deceptive.

It is when Hegel says that the World's Way has vanished (and has been vanquished) too that we can see clearly that Virtue has made a difference. The opponents in the world of the Heart did not think of themselves as doing their "duty." They were simply committing themselves in the ways that they wanted to. Hegel is *still* not ready to speak of "duty" here, but I do not know how else to speak. What I am already calling "duty" will change its shape several times before it becomes the voice of "Conscience" which finally decides for me the "duty" that is uniquely mine; and by then it will have come full circle back to the Heart. Frederick wanted all his subjects to be aware of doing their civic duty in their lawabiding obedience. What the solid citizens have, that the racing rats on the way of the world do not have until they absorb the rhetoric of Virtue, is the clear consciousness of producing the "goods" of the world. Their prosperity is the prosperity "of the Nation." The rats think that they are acting just for themselves; what Virtue correctly understands is that no one can act simply for herself. The solid citizens do understand that. They are quite complacent about their own "worth."

As far as their public duty is concerned, the solid citizens are the obedient subjects that Frederick the Great wanted. As I said earlier, they do not recognize themselves in Machiavelli's Faustian *virtó*; and Hegel does not portray the "spiritual animals" as political animals (though "political economy" is the ground of his picture). So if Frederick's cult of "virtue" is "the Nothing of abstraction" it is, after all, a very forceful and effective Nothing. Frederick's cult of "duty" was not mere rhetoric in fact, but the Nothing of the Concept.

The altruism of completely unselfish service *is* mere rhetoric. But the real truth that good citizens are performing a public service makes the language of pure self-seeking egoism, the mythology of "economic man," into mere rhetoric likewise. The concepts of the Universal and the Individual with which Virtue began have both been exploded. In their place we have *real* (i.e. "virtuous") *individuality*. Both the virtue *and* the individuality are empty, but they are not "abstract." Like the living embryo the rational individual is now a real process in motion.

- 47./393. Thus the process of individual self-realization is what emerges as the real end-in-and-for-itself.

Hegel simply sums up the logical result of our observations here. But for us this is a good opportunity to review the whole movement of this stage in rather more detail, because Hegel's argument has been misinterpreted and misunderstood in a number of ways. Some things that Hegel himself says have been lifted out of their dialectical context and treated as absolute assertions, so that the unstated implications of the context in which the statements are made have been overlooked.

To begin with, it is not correct that "the actualization of rational self-consciousness" involves or deals with specific "forms of individualism." This thesis is repeated in many books—among which Hyppolite's is still the best⁸⁵—but it only obscures what Hegel is doing. For example, it leads to the identification of what Hegel calls *Lust* with "Hedonism," whereas careful attention to the text (and to

his quotation and echoes from the Faust-Fragment) soon teach us that he is concerned with “being in love” (which is altogether different). Since he tells us specifically that *Lust* does not involve the “consumption” aspect of Desire, the “Hedonism” thesis is quite untenable. We might perhaps describe the evolution of the World’s Way as a progress from “hedonistic” to “ideal” utilitarianism. But this does not help us to follow the argument (which is about “Law”); and the doctrines of the Heart and of Virtue (which involve self-identification first with Life and then with Reason *universally*) are completely obscured by being classified as “forms of individualism.”

The section is about the formation of the consciousness *in* the rational individual that she is the “concrete universal.” The argument will be more easily grasped if we concentrate our attention on the evolution of the “universal” moment. The “happy world” of the lovers is smashed on a meaningless social “necessity.” This gives rise to an ideal world of “universal sympathy,” which is smashed in turn on the real world of “universal self-seeking.” From this arises an ideal of “universal service” which finally disappears (it is not smashed) into the world of “universally reciprocal utility.” Here at last the conceptual motion comes to rest, because the individual ideal and the social reality match perfectly. This is what Rational (i.e. universal) Self- (i.e. individual) Consciousness *is*. This is the world where Reason is the monarch, the world of Frederick the Great, and of Fichte’s “Closed Action State.” Since all that Frederick contributes is language, any well disciplined and intelligent person can take his place. Every individual citizen can recognize herself in this Universal. Reason has come down to earth, so no channel of access to the Beyond is needed. Reason has no religion; and the true measure of what Active Reason achieves, is contained in Hegel’s reference to the “Unchangeable” (par. 389). Active Reason does not *change* the Unchangeable; but it recognizes where (and what) it is. It is *here* (not in the Beyond); and this life is *happy* (not unhappy).

This leads to two reflections about the relation of Real Individuality (or the Virtuous Way of the World) to the earlier history of virtuous consciousness. First, we must consider the difference between Virtue and Stoicism. The Stoic is *free* but he is not active, because his freedom is only in thought. He knows that the actual world is the domain of fate. Virtue, by contrast, is not Free Thought, but Active Reason. It starts with the certainty that the world belongs to *it*, not to Fate. It does in the end reduce to obedience, but its obedience is not to Fate, but to Active Reason in the shape of the “divine and human order” of Civil Society. Beginning as action, it ends as a thought; like the Sage bowing to Fate in the shape of the Emperor, the virtuous subject is only formally different—different in her own thinking consciousness—from the serf obeying his master’s orders. The serf discovers and enjoys the same free self-realization that is inseparable from all action. The Stoic cannot properly have this self-realization, because only her inner will really belongs to her. But the serf enjoys self-realization secretly; the virtuous subject can take her pleasure openly.⁸⁶

Secondly, the fact that, once the liberation of Reason from external (or transcendent) authority is achieved, Virtue can only maintain its objectivity through

rational obedience, is an interesting sidelight on the resemblance between natural and rational virtue. Natural virtue obeys the laws of the City; the virtuous citizen cares nothing for the laws of any other City, still less for the supposedly universal law of "Reason." But as soon as Aristotle wants to define "ethical virtue" in general, he has to bring in the standard of the "practically wise man." Ethical virtue is "a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean . . . determined by *logos*, and as the *phronimos* would determine it."⁸⁷ Of course, the most that the citizen of good character needs is "advice," because he lives in perfect solidarity with his community, and there is no opposition for him between the "universal" and his own individuality. But when that substance has perished, and the great antithesis between the Unchangeable and the Changeable is set up, the advent of Reason makes the real participation of a "lawgiver" essential. His separateness is what gives the universal rational principle its objectivity. We ought not to think that the necessary dependence of universal ethical virtue on a separate wisdom is simply the result of the loss of ethical substance, and the mark of "estrangement." That is one side of the truth; but it is hardly the most serious one, for the Real Individuals can embody their *given* law almost without stopping to think. The important point is that the necessary collaboration of two separate rational agencies (or sources) in any virtuous decision is the immediate shape of "Spirit." Reconciled Virtue with its edifying speeches, the philosophical monarch with his attack on Machiavelli, are the harbingers of the free conscience in which the two sides will be reunited without losing their recognized separateness.

Finally, we should notice that although Machiavelli is silenced for the present, the spirit of *virtó* is only *dormant* in the reconciled obedience of Virtue. Faust, as the individual incarnation of what is universally incarnate in the World's Way as *virtó*, is the *spirit* of Active Reason. That Spirit will not stir again until we have left the Real Individuals in their "animal kingdom" behind, and have achieved the consciousness of "pure culture." But then we shall see the modern philosopher-king cast out of his kingdom. Another one of the same type (Robespierre) will show us Reason as *virtó* in action. Only after boredom has been exorcised by terror, shall we find out what modern moral virtue really is.

It is a plausible hypothesis that the rhetorical Knight of Virtue is Fichte—but we have to impose some important limitations. Chapter V begins with Fichte and it will end with Kant. The attack on "edification" in the Preface is certainly aimed at contemporary "edifying discourses" like those of Jacobi and Schleiermacher; and there is an attack on Fichte's moralism in *Faith and Knowledge* which deserves to be compared with paragraph 390.⁸⁸

But all of this *odium philosophicum* is directed against the "Beautiful Soul"; and because there is a visible *circle* that begins with the Law of the Heart and closes with the Beautiful Soul (compare par. 662) we should pay special attention to the fact that Hegel avoids speaking of the "Heart" in that context. He insists on the return of the Unhappy Consciousness instead (par. 658). He certainly wants to regard the rhetoric of the Beautiful Soul as a further development of the moralism that begins with the Heart and Virtue. But there are two connected reasons why

writers like Fichte, Jacobi, Schleiermacher and Novalis cannot properly be taken as the Knight of Virtue.

First, Hegel himself tells us that “The immediate mode of being of *Reason* . . . and its proper shapes, have no religion” (par. 673); but he goes on at once to record the “religion of Morality” among the emergent shapes of Religion that we have encountered (par. 676). So “the Moral World-View” does not belong among the “proper shapes” of Reason, even though Fichte’s Ego and Kant’s Categorical Imperative are the boundary shapes of its “Category.”

Secondly, this exclusion is confirmed by Hegel’s refusal to use the word “duty” in this section. The rhetoric of “Virtue” has to be full of appeals to “duty”—and no commentary on Hegel’s text can avoid talking about it. But Hegel does not use or mention “duty.” This is clearly because Self-Actualizing Reason does not properly have the concept of *moral* duty; it has only the “Universal Utility” of the Enlightenment. The rational concept of Duty (which True Spirit had in its natural shape) is reborn on the guillotine. There will be an unmistakable “Knight of Virtue” involved in that transition: Maximilien Robespierre. In Robespierre’s career the tables are turned between Virtue and the World’s Way—and the “Nothing of Abstraction” becomes the active “Nothing” of the Concept.⁸⁹

Notes

1. For the evolution of the recognition-relation in Reason and Spirit see L. Siep (1979, 97–131). We should note that “rational recognition” has consequences for our understanding of Faust. If he is the “shape” of Rational Pleasure, we can ascribe moral indifference to him, but not malicious *intent*. He commits perjury, and he is criminally negligent about the sleeping-draught for Gretchen’s mother. But crime and wilful harm do not *please* him (as we can see from his reaction to the perjury).

2. Thus the movement of this phase goes from individual to universal self-recognition, whereas Observation went from universality to individuality.

3. M. Greene (1972) writes correctly of cognition as “liberation from thinghood.” That is the movement of “consciousness.” But the actualization of free self-consciousness is a “return to thinghood.”

4. Even the serf or the devoutly Unhappy Consciousness has this “certainty” and this “knowledge.” But she has it not as serf or as Christian but as “English” or “French” (for example). It is the consciousness that a (presumably) illiterate peasant girl named Joan could express and call forth so powerfully, that she seriously disturbed the universal social order based on the *personal* relation to “the Lord” (real and spiritual). Active “Reason” involves the certainty of being recognized in (and by) the *universally human* order.

5. A simple letter (which belongs to the world of Self-Consciousness not that of Reason) could not have this significance if it were not for the existence of the “things” called the “Royal Society” and the “Linnaean Society” (and others like them). The controversy about the invention of the differential calculus—in which many participants said and did rather disgraceful, or at least irrational, things in “publications” of a more formal (hence outwardly *rational*) kind—illustrates the same point on the negative side (no sufficiently “universal” society existed).

6. I have pushed the parallelism much further than Labarrière wanted to (1968, 99–101). It is basically a parallel between the macrocosm and the microcosm. Consciousness moves outward towards the comprehension of the world as the Concept of “self-repulsive attraction.” Observing Reason moves inwards from the order of Nature to the embodied self as a “rational individual.”

7. This pattern is an inversion of the movement of Sense-Certainty where the third moment achieves the only stability that the essentially uncertain certainty of sense is capable of.

8. Compare Labarrière (1968, 105–106). But George Kline has made a serious attempt at a more detailed parallel (1970). (His attempt to bring in Reason as Observation should be set aside as irrelevant and mistaken; and perhaps some of his detailed points are a bit strained. But this sort of “interlocking” is what we ought to be looking for.) Compare also W. Becker, 1971, 101–105.

9. The only “struggle for recognition” that goes *to the death* inside the *polis* is a factional one. The battle of Eteocles and Polyneices precipitates a constitutional crisis. The “resting Concept” of the primitively political situation only breaks down where there is a struggle for the kingship; and when one of the warring parties is declared a political traitor, then the two sides of the City’s law (the one that properly belongs to Self-Consciousness as natural Desire and the one that belongs to Reason) come into conflict.

10. *Politics* I, ii, 15 (1253a). (The influence of Montesquieu was crucial in Hegel’s transposition of Aristotle’s political theory for the modern national *Volk*. See further the comparison offered by G. Planty-Bonjour [1974].)

11. Unluckily for this example, the “Valentine scene” was not in the Fragment of 1790. Antigone is, of course, the ever present model of ethical protest; but she illustrates the ambiguity of identifying with the “abstraction of universality.”

12. At the level of the “abstract” religious consciousness, when we reach it, we shall find the skull replaced by a statue that is solid stone. In the world of “Reason” this intuitive form of “absolute otherness” (par. 26) is lacking.

13. Hegel wrote “das negative Meiner selbst” which the editors sensibly advise us to read as “das Negative meiner selbst.” But the English rendering “the negative Myself” (though not grammatically accurate) gives us an echo of the Unhappy Consciousness (which fulfilled Self-Consciousness by giving it to God alone). This is what Hegel wants us to remember.

14. The experience of Phrenology is preserved in a sublated way by this view of Greek citizenship. The natural self dies to itself in order to rise as the devoted citizen.

15. *Politics* I, 2 (1252 a 28–30). R. G. McRae (1985, 44, n. 48) remarks that there is no sign of alienation in the description of labor here. That is because only the labor of free citizens is being considered (not that of slaves). On the other hand, the *First Philosophy of Spirit* (to which McRae also refers) is concerned with modern “wage-slavery”—which has left “True Spirit” behind.

16. Possibly it is a mistake on my part to bring war and sacrifice in at all, because Hegel speaks only of the “thinghood” of Reason in economic life, and in universal obedience to the laws. Active Reason is a phenomenon of “civil society.” It does not have to deal with death except as a Hobbesian “schooling of experience.” But voluntary death is where the “certainty” of Reason is shown to be “truth.” “Life in the *Volk*” is just what modern Reason has lost; so I think it is right to emphasize it at this preliminary stage.

17. Our situation is not Aristotle’s; and our society is not the *polis*. We are only forced to recollect the *polis* here, because it was the actuality of the ideal of Reason. The Science of

Experience needs both Physiognomy and Phrenology as moments in the mature *return* of Reason.

18. Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 16; compare also Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, *Akad.* VIII, 366. (Xenophilus of Chalcidice is placed among the “last of the Pythagoreans, whom Aristoxenus in his time saw . . . who were pupils of Philolaus and Eurytus of Tarentum,” Diogenes Laertius VIII, 46. Aristoxenus was a direct pupil of Aristotle. It is reasonable to infer that Xenophilus was not much—if at all—older than Aristotle.

19. *Republic* X, 600ab; compare Letter VII, 339de, 328cd. (Socrates in the *Crito* is one of the clearest voices of the doctrine that the actual is rational. He distinguishes between the Laws, which are actually rational, and the disposition of his own case, which is not.)

20. When Hegel says at the beginning of chapter IV that Self-Consciousness is the “realm where truth is at home,” and that “In Self-Consciousness as the Concept of Spirit, Consciousness has for the first time its turning point . . . and steps forth from the empty night of the supersensible Beyond into the daylight of the present” (pars. 167, 177) he is not referring to the natural self, but to *our* rational Self-Consciousness. The turning-point that he speaks of is in 1806 at the point where his first readers are standing. The standpoint from which we comprehend “Self-Consciousness” is already beyond the whole “experience” of it. We are always in “the present.”

21. D.-K. 68, B 247. The quotation is found only in John of Stobi, and I suppose Hegel did not know it. But I do not think that the doubts of various scholars about its authenticity would have troubled him. What makes Diels say “die Form bei Dem. ist banal” I cannot imagine. I infer that he was himself so much a child of *his* time that he could not recognize the enormity of the revolution that had produced it. Of course, any Pythagorean refugee, or self-exiled Sophist, might have said it, but only in Aristotle’s world is it valid against the “wisdom” of Xenophilus.

22. According to my interpretation the evolution of the Universal Church begins even earlier (with Zarathustra). But the identification of that beginning is slightly problematic; and certainly it is not as decisively fixed as the first performance of the *Antigone* in Periclean Athens.

23. I have deliberately tried to restrict myself to assertions that *must* be true about the historical Socrates (and about the way that his solidly virtuous fellow citizens saw him). We need to accept this much if we are to account for the actual fate of Socrates, and for the record that has come down to us, without the hypothesis of deliberate and conscious fraud. Hegel—whose whole account of the “ethical substance” is couched in terms of literary images (for reasons which we shall have to discuss later)—would certainly not give a fig for historical accuracy at this level. But I have to take account of the fact that (thanks largely to Hegel) my time takes its history more seriously than Hegel’s did. Aristophanes and Xenophon are almost as important to me as Plato. Aristophanes was addressing the *solid* social consciousness, and Xenophon was expressing it. (In the *Philosophy of History* lectures Hegel called Socrates “the inventor of *Moralität*” (*T.W.-A.* 12, 328–329; Sibree 269).

24. If I may be permitted a Hegelian *jeu d’esprit* at this point, it seems plausible to suppose that something like the reflective conservatism of Socrates in the *Crito* lies behind all of the satires of Aristophanes against the war and the war-leaders. The *Crito* entitles us to reject indignantly the insinuation that for Socrates the “laws and customs” of his City were “just a thought without absolute essentiality, an abstract theory without actuality.” Yet that is exactly what *is* true about the “Socrates” of the *Clouds*. Hegel’s argument in this paragraph shows us how, because the City was involved in a war of which both Aristophanes and

Socrates saw the folly and the tragic import, the solid trust that both of them had in the substantiality of the “laws and customs” was betrayed, and they came into a conflict of reflection that forms a sort of involuntary analogue to the completely solid and wilful tragedy of Creon and Antigone. Unlike the two mythical agents they were not fighting for different versions of the City, but for the same one. The tragedy of their conflict arose precisely from the fact that they were fighting for a lost dream, and they were (although they did not know this) already beyond it.

25. The note of *apologia* cannot be sincere; for where would the “necessity” of the Science be if we had any *logical* choice about how to go forward; the fact that we can always stand still if we want to, has caused enough confusion about the “necessity” of the Science already.

The movement of *Sittlichkeit* into *Moralität* is well described by P. Rupli (1987). A good account of the moral aspect of modern *Sittlichkeit* is given by L. Siep (1983). Compare also A. T. Peperzak (1982) and R. B. Pippin (1991b). For an exhaustive discussion of Hegel’s theory of *Moralität* see A. Wildt (1982, part 1).

W. H. Walsh (1989, 150) asks “In what community does *Sittlichkeit* prevail?” and answers “Prussia.” But the question is a foolish one. He understands that Hegel’s concept of developed modern *Sittlichkeit* incorporates Kant’s rational formalism, but says it is “not obvious” (1989, 145) how this is legitimate. E. E. Harris, in his response (1989, 154), puts his finger on the driving principle of the answer. Kant’s principle of “respect for humanity” leads us to the contradictoriness of Conscience and so to “Religion.”

26. The achievement of individual happiness in Civil Society is not the goal of Reason; it is only the resolution of the unequal recognition in the Lordship/Bondage relation. So the cycle is repeated directly (not as a contrasting inversion) in chapter VI. Hence, in Absolute Freedom and Terror we shall see the Frenzy of Self-Conceit, the extreme from which we turn back to the path of Virtue, *realized*.

27. The parallel is with the immediate Concept of the Self as Desire—see paragraph 173. Not even with the aid of Aristotle or Spinoza (who do supply suitably rationalized definitions of *hedone* and *laetitia*) can the definition of the “object” of *Lust* be made to fit any traditional concept of “hedonism.” Kainz (1976, 120, 156) has the merit of recognizing something odd here; but he glosses over it, preferring (like most professional philosophers) to look for a verbal continuity of the traditional sort instead of using the experience as the guide to what the Concept means. That is what we ought to do. The *Phenomenology* must be interpreted from within. In order to understand *Lust* we should go first back to the stipulated aspect of *Begierde* (like Labarrière, 1968, 105) and then turn to the “Faust-Fragment” (because we are explicitly told that this *Gestalt* has done what Faust did).

Even Findlay (who finds this episode “sibylline”) has grasped the point that it is about interpersonal bonds (1958, 110). Flay (who prefers conceptual abstractions to concrete “experiences” in spite of his “praxical” concerns) castigates Findlay for this (1984, 332, n. 4). But if one thinks “generalization” is the proper business of the student interpreting a “system,” then Findlay’s way of generalizing “Pleasure and Necessity” is one of the best.

L. P. Hinchman (1991, 33) also adopts the mistaken view that this section is about “hedonistic utilitarianism.” But his article has the merit of referring us to others—A. S. Walton (1983b), A. T. Peperzak (1983)—which show clearly why that theory is incapable of any but a negative treatment in the context of Hegel’s “Science.” Every *simple* desire is equal, so no rational organization is possible. The “natural” desire of the *Genus* provides the first organizing principle for a rational life of the Spirit.

Solomon (1983, 498–505) deserves mention as the one who tries hard to make the “hedonism” interpretation work. But he begins by remarking that there is no intelligible context for it; and his results are a marvellous illustration of how Hegel’s dialectic can be made to mean *anything*, when the contextual sequence is ignored.

28. Goethe was working on *Faust: The Tragedy, Part I* during the years when Hegel was at Jena; and he published it in the year after Hegel’s own book appeared.

Kaufmann (1966, 122) wrote:

Now the question remains whether Hegel’s “sketch,” as Royce calls it, is intended as a portrait of Goethe’s Faust at all, and the answer is surely: No. What seems to have misled Royce is that on the first page of this section there are three allusions to *Faust*; but they do not establish that the next four pages are intended as a portrait of Faust.

This seems to me to be one of his most absurd pronouncements. I have tried to show that Royce is essentially right. (T. Pinkard [1994] recognizes the Faust reference but fails to distinguish between the Fragment and Part I.)

Of course, if one takes “Pleasure and Necessity” to be about a simple-minded “greedy hedonism” as Judith Shklar does (1976, 103), then it is right to insist that Faust’s greed for experience was something quite different. Shklar gives a vivid summary of the “sketch,” but she never seems to notice that Faust and Gretchen are not seeking “pleasure” in a completely general sense.

29. Lines 517–518; for my own earlier references see lines 61, 65, and 249–250.

30. Hegel quotes the first and last couplets of the soliloquy (lines 330–331 and 345–346). But where Goethe wrote “*And even if it had not given itself over to the devil . . .*” Hegel puts “It has surrendered itself to the devil . . .” Even if this is a fault of memory it makes an appropriate transition from the language of Unhappy Consciousness to that of Reason. For Reason, there is no *devil* to give oneself to. But the ceremonial bargain is superfluous. In the eyes of Reason, giving oneself over to the devil is simply doing what Faust does—despising the “universal heavenly spirit” and choosing the Spirit of the singular embodied existence on earth as one’s own.

31. Action is not excluded from this first vision: “How everything weaves itself into the whole! / Each in the other works and lives!” (lines 94–95). This is the vision of “Virtue”; and Faust is right that it is “Only a stage-play” (line 101), until the validity of the Earth-Spirit’s life and activity is recognized within it. Then it becomes the *Weltlauf*.

32. Writing is the reflectively permanent and universal “thinghood” of Reason, replacing the transient singularity of speech.

33. Lines 816–819 and 1030–1035: “The high *Kraft* / of *Wissenschaft* / Buried from the sight of all the world! / And he who takes no thought / To him it comes as a present / He has it without need to care.” (Or, in other words, the “science of life” is a matter of the old woman’s intuition, rather than of the disciplined study of the scholar.)

34. Hegel himself was interested in the witch-cult historically. So he would not be automatically inclined to pass over Goethe’s evocation of it as a mere literary frill. See the “Fragments of Historical Studies” (1798–1800?)—Rosenkranz, 521; *T.W.-A.* I, 437–438; *Clio* 7, 1977, 126.

35. Hyppolite (1946, 273; 1974, 283) rightly says that “Individuality knows itself here in the Biblical sense”; and Heinrichs (1974, 234) is right to recall Hegel’s pun on *Gattung* and *Begattung* in the *Encyclopedia* section 369.

36. The terms of his pact with Mephisto are not yet specified, but we do have the scene called “Forest and Cave” in which Faust first communes with himself about the immense range of natural life, and the inevitable imperfection of all human experience; and then he is tormented by his evil spirit, because he does not want to desert Gretchen, although the life that he has chosen with Mephisto requires it. (W. Becker [1971, 104] cheats by citing the Pact Scene to show that Hegel changes “the tragical character of the Faustian path.” I think he is mistaken *anyway*—even about the complete *Part I*. But, of course, the question of what *Goethe* intended will always be subject to dispute.)

37. In the *UrFaust* the service is for her mother’s funeral. But Goethe did *not* specify this in the “Fragment”; and he left us wondering still in the *Tragedy*, Part I.

38. This inequality is not essential to the *Gestalt* of Reason. It is only appropriate to the love-relation as a point of logical origin. In principle, the rational partners must remain equal; and there is no reason why they cannot be equal as rational observers (as in the “marriage” of G. H. Lewes and George Eliot which is the most completely successful *Gestalt* of Pleasure that I can think of). Schelling and Caroline, or Friedrich Schlegel and Dorothea, are models of the balance of Reason and Nature in their perfect harmony; and William and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin are a model of rational reciprocity, as well as of natural fulfillment. The alienation of “unequal recognition” simply cannot be introduced into the immediate identity of “*Lust*.” What makes Gretchen a perfect *Gestalt* (in spite of her intellectual inadequacy) is that she is *destroyed* by the conflict between her own conventional Reason and Faust’s Active Reason.

39. “Faust. Ein Fragment,” lines 1887–1888. The interpretation of *Lust* in Freudian terms (which we find in Kainz, 1976, 156, n. 12) has the advantage of a derivation from *Begierde* in its favor. Consequently it can pass over without strain to the *Gesetz des Herzens*. But there are two things to remember. First the Freudian concepts belong to the level of natural Self-Consciousness not Reason (only the “Superego” has a “rational” reference—and even that is of a decidedly alienated kind). Secondly, the Freudian concepts apply to a far wider range of experience than the formation of “rational individuality” with which Hegel is concerned.

Flay (1984, 138) makes a glancing reference to the “pleasure” and “reality” principle, but says he means only to notice “the functional parallel” (332, note 3). This is too trite to be interesting—but cf. 141–142 which are not so “innocent.” The reference of Kainz to the *id* as “Necessity” ignores the fact that *Lust* encounters *Notwendigkeit* in the *world*. It is only in the *Gesetz des Herzens*—and especially in the *Wahnsinn des Eigendünkels*—that we encounter anything truly reminiscent of Freud. At that stage the conflict between wilfulness and “necessity” has been internalized.

40. The essay of N. Chronis (1983) depends upon Hegel’s difficult assertion that “Necessity is empty”; but he does not explain it. (His title, and some of his discussion, are not *à propos*.)

41. “Faust. Ein Fragment,” line 2003. Faust will only come to the “true” half of his claim at the end of his long life, and through the symbolic agency of Gretchen—in his salvation scene at the end of *The Tragedy: Part II*.

42. In a conversion experience (like that of Augustine) the motion is not altogether “behind the back of consciousness.” But in any pre-rational situation, what happens has quite a different significance for the observed consciousness than it does for us.

43. A. Cutrofello (1993) presents the movement of this section as Hegel’s response by anticipation to Foucault’s accusation that he seeks to dissolve alterity away altogether.

44. Hyppolite (1946, 275, 278; 1974, 285, 288); Royce (1919, 194). Almost everyone agrees with Royce. Loewenberg (1965, 158) goes all the way with Hyppolite. Judith Shklar points to the Kingdom preached by the Jesus of the *Spirit of Christianity*. I have already commented that that is an unduly comprehensive “inversion.” An unpublished essay will not solve our problem in any case. (See also Fink [1977, 322]. Fink goes a bit too far here when he says that “it is not a matter of setting feelings against Reason.” It is precisely because its “feeling” must become a “law” that the Heart is inwardly torn and goes mad.)

45. J. N. Shklar (1976), 105–113. Jacobi’s “Allwill” is *named* perfectly; but it seems to me that there is nothing *active* enough in Jacobi and Schleiermacher to be dialectically transformed into the “Frenzy of Self-Conceit.” All the same, we should remember that Hegel accused Jacobi of “despising the *Sitten*” in *Faith and Knowledge* (and this provoked an indignant denial in the Postscript to Köppen’s tract against the Identity Philosophy). So in view of the coincidences of language cited in the text, we can safely assume that Hegel expected his readers to think of Jacobi. Cf. *G.W.* IV, 382 (Cerf and Harris, 145–146); Köppen (1803), 211ff; and K. R. Westphal (1989).

46. See the “Letter to Fichte” in *Werke* III, 37–38. It seems likely that the expression “Gesetz des Herzens” was current in the Pietist tradition; it would be used to refer to the Augustinian dictum: *Ama, et fac quod vis* (“Love, and do what you will”). That dictum is itself a misquotation. The nearest thing to it in Augustine’s works is: *Dilige, et quod vis fac* (*Treatise on the Epistle of John*, VII, 8: “Have charity, and do what you will”). The degeneration illustrates the difference between where we are *now* and the point that we have to reach.

47. *Werke* III, 41. (But if we think of Jacobi as having Kant *behind* him, he is the *Gestalt* of “Conscience” rather than of “the Heart.” “The Heart” is confronted by an alien law not by Reason.) Compare, however, the following passage from *Woldemar*—to which G. di Giovanni (1993, 793, n. 19) has drawn attention:

... “Absolutely not!” Woldemar replied. “Only doing away with the exercise of conscience is pernicious . . . The letter of reason, of religion, of civil and state law, are all alike; they are all equally capable of little. No man has ever obeyed a law simply as law, but always only the authority that flows from it and accompanies it, always only the vitality that drive, inclination, and habit give to it. Only man’s *heart* says directly to him what is *good*; only his heart, his drive, tell him directly that to love the good is his life . . . (*Woldemar*, *Werke* V, 114–115).

48. *Emile*, Everyman, 259 and 257. The “longing” for this future time comes after the Vicar has ceased to be “deceived by the senses” and by the illusion of “the empty show of happiness . . . where it is not.”

49. *Emile*, 246 and 249. The statement about the origin of wrongdoing fits Hegel’s conceptual analysis perfectly. The loving heart of “pleasure” unites with empty “Necessity”—instead of with the finite beloved—and so inverts it into the loving voice of *universal Nature* speaking in the heart.

50. This distinction is *not* made explicitly in Hegel’s text. But the *need* for some distinction becomes explicit in the next paragraph. So we will start with this one, which is made by the Savoyard Vicar, and consider whether any better one can be found later on.

51. W. Becker (1971, 107) rightly says that Hegel implies that “world-improvement projects are always the results of subjective idiosyncrasies.” He protests that “the Marxian Utopia” must not “be interpreted as the expression of Marx’ inwardness.” But we deceive

ourselves if we think that our grounds for joining a socialist party are purely “objective” (just as we are guilty of “humbug” if we pretend that our commitment to the maintenance of the status quo is purely public-spirited). Marx himself understood the appeal to “the Heart” very well; and he used it to the full. But more than “the Heart” is involved in any determinate project. Marx would have known that his “scientific” utopia is not directly attacked here. The attack on objective social ideals of that kind comes much later on (in the critique of “Enlightenment”). The “effort of distinction,” which Becker says Hegel does not make, is one that he must learn to make himself. The foundation stone of intelligent interpretation is to understand that *no* position is attacked except with respect to its pretention to absolute validity. Beyond that, it is precisely “the Law of the Heart” that *Becker* does not follow here. In order to understand Hegel one must read him with unfailing good will.

52. *Emile*, Everyman, 253.

53. In Jacobi it is the law of Kant’s and Fichte’s autonomous moral Reason that must be transgressed or breached by the Heart. This is the uniqueness of the rationally developed “Conscience”; so in spite of the close resemblance of language, this belongs much further on in the evolution of *Moralität*. There is a *circle* here; for we shall see that Hegel uses the “law of the Heart” in his analysis of the Beautiful Soul. But here at the beginning of the circle, we should assume as little as possible. Hegel’s own recognition about 1798 that the analogy between Kant and Moses holds, because Kantian morality is an *internalized* form of “positivity,” should not blind us to the difference between natural and rational “positivity,” to which he gives so much importance in 1807.

54. See B.A.W. Russell, *Autobiography*, volume II, New York, Atlantic Little-Brown, 1968; and Dora Russell, *The Tamarisk Tree*, New York, Putnam, 1975. As far as my memory serves Bertrand Russell and Dora Black began by sharing the ethics of the Heart completely in their personal relations—though perhaps their position is partially that of “Conscience” because of the inescapable presence of Kant. Certainly the complete absence of “God” gives their brilliant and incisive presentations of the view the authentic ring of the Enlightenment. The Bloomsbury Group, and all who were influenced by Moore’s *Principia Ethica* provide many other excellent examples. But all of them have advanced beyond the primitive antithesis of “nature” and “convention” because of the influence of Kant and Hegel. Russell and Black offer an especially good case for our purposes, because both of them broke out of highly conventional social backgrounds, in pursuit of self-affirmation through “Pleasure” (i.e. the freedom of loving self-recognition). This was what took them back closer to “the law of the Heart” than moderns can usually come. Also both of them were outstandingly rational; and their rational humanism is what makes the conflict of their “hearts” so evidently *tragic*.

55. James Marsh (1974) examines several “shapes” of “radicalism” in the *Phenomenology* (including Virtue which is not properly radical at all—except about national freedom, where it is *ethical* in Hegel’s sense to be extreme). He finds a common characteristic in “the necessary indeterminacy of radical freedom.” But as far as the Law of the Heart is concerned it is misleading to say “The radical is unwilling to incarnate his ideals in a definite, rational, concrete, structure.” Hegel’s point is that the Heart logically *cannot* “incarnate its ideal in a definite structure” although that is what it does indeed *will* to do. The Heart can will a determinate negation—that is how the “Frenzy” arises. Thus both the wholehearted “abortion rights,” and the wholehearted “right to life” campaigners, know *exactly* what concrete “law” they want. But for those of us who are not wholehearted “radicals” on this issue, it is a blessing that the Heart is cloven about it.

56. The example was found by Judith Shklar (1976, 113).

57. The right response to W. Becker's claim that Hegel argues in this section that "proposals to make the world better are always the result of subjective idiosyncrasies" (1971, 107) is complex. On the one hand, when Hegel says (in the *Philosophy of World History*, Rauch 26) that "nothing great has been accomplished without passion," he is certainly saying that no great social reform can occur without an "appeal to the Heart"; but it must be one that is *heard*—i.e. it necessarily transcends the level of "subjective idiosyncrasy." On the other hand, in the immediate context of the formation of *individual* Reason we are heading towards the (bourgeois) community of "civil society," which is by definition "satisfied with itself." This community regards "heartsickness" as an essentially *adolescent* disease, an "idiosyncrasy" of youth. My own examples (abortion, the Bomb, etc.) are designed to show that "the Heart" makes more social difference than the "kingdom of spiritual animals" wants to believe. (The American Civil War is the best case I can think of, because it arose from a *conflict* of "appeals to the heart" which gradually overwhelmed the good sense of all the "solid citizens." Lincoln counts *now* as a hero of the Heart. But he *abominated* it.)

58. This much is obvious; it is less obvious that "the universal individuality" here is meant to remind us of the Earth (cf. par. 294). But when we consider that the spirit of Pleasure gives itself to the Earth-Spirit (which is thus logically the "object" again for the Law of the Heart) this becomes plausible; and the essentially economic character of the world of the Real Individuals confirms our hypothesis. The social order from which Active Reason is alienated is the system of the needs of Life. (That is why everyone is bound to have their heart in it, and why Virtue cannot prevail against the Way of the World.)

59. At least Conceit cannot then present itself as a "rational" option; it would only be a reversion to the simple self-assertion of the natural self-consciousness. Campaigners for some finite cause, such as "abortion reform," are not usually "pure Hearts" who cannot recognize themselves in *any* social order. So their commitments do not usually drive them into paranoid interpretations of the existing order. It is only when the cause is "infinite" (or when action is seriously impeded, so that the cause appears to be "lost") that paranoia takes over. Of course, the paranoid interpretation of opposition is always apt to be rhetorically effective. That is one good ground for recognizing it as a mode of "Reason."

60. There can be no doubt that the social background of "Reason" is the world of "Spirit in Self-Estrangement"—as Heinrichs (1974, 235), for instance, has argued. The "Frenzy of Self-Conceit" becomes a moment of "Spirit" in the Terror. That is the element of truth in E. Fink's insistence that Hegel's critique is aimed at Rousseau's theory of the *volonté générale* (1977, 326). Unfortunately, Fink's commentary did not go far enough for us to see what he would say about the fact that Hegel treats the "*volonté générale*" as a "*volonté de tous*."

61. Since the conspiracy theory of history is a logically necessary form of madness, I ought to analyse the state of mind of the supposed conspirators in the terms that the mad consciousness would use. But it is difficult to do that without misusing the language of philosophy. As we have already seen, it is difficult to express accurately the distinctions that the "law of the Heart" needs. The Heart will not use the concepts of "culture" and "discipline." But it will speak of *virtue* and *vice* (which properly speaking presuppose culture and discipline). For the Heart we must say that the villains of its "conspiracy" are leaders whose hearts have somehow atrophied, so that they have become prisoners of "the passions" or of "the impulses of sense." I have preferred to give what I take to be the proper Hegelian analysis of a tyrannical or conspiratorial self-consciousness. My analysis of power-hunger here is Hobbesian, not Faustian; and I am claiming that upon the Hobbesian path one cannot arrive at Reason at all. The culture of self-conscious Reason properly begins with the experience of

loving identification with another self. (The fundamental weakness of Kojève's interpretation of Hegel is that his conception of active Reason is founded upon Hobbes and not upon Faust.)

62. The Critical Editors supply the following references for the discussion below in paragraph 542: *Le Christianisme dévoilé* (London, 1767), 4–5, 56–57, 156–163, 188–190; *System der Natur* (German translation, Frankfurt/Leipzig, 1791, 269–287; and *Système social*, vol. I (London, 1773), IV–V, 198 with vol. II (London, 1773), 102. (I have found to my surprise that there are no conveniently available English translations of D'Holbach *in extenso*.)

63. When Lauer says “to speak of a ‘law of the heart’ is equivalent to speaking of a square circle” (1976, 158) only such rationalists as D'Holbach and LaMettrie will agree with him. It is not enough for him to concede that “the kind of universal law the heart seeks to establish” is “a moment along the path to adequate rationality.” “Reason” in Hegel is always at least as close to the Heart as it is to Law (which belongs properly to Understanding). We shall see, eventually, that the only absolute law of practical Reason is a “law of the heart”; and even the *theoretical* “law of Reason” has a lot to do with the transition from squares to circles.

64. We have now seen, however, that believers in a “conspiracy theory” can get control of the social order and reduce it to a “conspiracy” in the fulfilment of their supposed vengeance. The “Frenzy of Self-Conceit” is in many ways the most terrifying of the “shapes” of experience, because it is precisely the “Conceit of Reason.”

65. Resolution adopted by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, 27 Jan. 1843. The text in Isaiah 28:15 (“We have made a covenant with death, and with Hell are we at agreement”) expresses the prophet's view of the rulers of Israel. The principal sin condemned in that context is drunkenness. But the “covenant with death” has come about through the breaking of the word of the Lord into separate precepts: “precept upon precept; line upon line . . . here a little and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken” (verse 13). Isaiah speaks, of course, in the name of a *positive* divine law; and he threatens a special vengeance. But he is much closer to the rational Law of the Heart than the founder of the Shakers (Mother Ann Lee) who applied his text to the consummation of *marriage* many years before Garrison made it famous in the slavery context. *Hers* was the authentic voice of the Unhappy Consciousness.

66. The negotiation of an *agreed* separation was openly advocated in public bodies of this sort ten years later (and in the secessionist societies which by then existed on the other side).

67. See J. C. Furnas, *The Americans*, New York, Putnam, 1969, 521.

68. See especially *G.W.* VIII, 270, line 8; Rauch, 166. What Hegel looks forward to as the only post-Revolutionary social order that can possibly be stable is a community of independent proprietors—see further H. S. Harris (1983e).

69. The noble and servile attitudes are an inversion of their natural analogues. (Virtue is “ethically obedient” to the Common Good, and the Worldling is “Lord” of it.) Perhaps the worst difficulty in making a parallel with the evolution of the natural Self-Consciousness is caused by the anticipatory effect of rational internalization. The “knight of virtue” looks (and is) more like a Stoic than a natural Serf. (It is quite probable that he will consciously think of himself as a Stoic). But the *logical repetition* of the Stoic stage begins only when Virtue is completely reconciled with the Way of the World. The developed repetition does not (and should not) directly look like the original. So the fact that Virtue has a “Stoic look” is actually an argument against there being an intended parallel between them as dialectical stages.

70. *Gorgias* 466d, ff. (Hegel shares the classical debts of “modern” Virtue, but he seeks to interpret them in a more “ancient” way—see the commentary on par. 390.)

71. Hegel does not use the word “duty” yet, because “moral duty” involves far more than the upholding of law for its own sake—which is all that Virtue has to guide it. But there is no other language which Virtue itself can use. So I use it too (with this warning: that it is still only an abstraction).

Virtue is not a religious attitude. Hence R. C. Solomon (1983, 511) is mistaken in following MacIntyre’s suggestion that this *Gestalt* represents Port Royal Jansenism (we may notice that it is neither gloomy nor pessimistic). Solomon’s own suggestion of a connection with Lutheran Pietism is similarly misguided.

72. The way that Hegel continues after the passage quoted indicates that he only intends to sum up the movement described in his text; but it is helpful to regard Faust and Gretchen as a revelation of the *unhappiness* of the “pursuit of happiness.” It is the pursuit of happiness generally, that is the “universal content” of the way of the world. But it is not easy to recognize a genuine *Untergang* or an “action without content” in the normal course of married life in which contented acceptance of the world takes the place of “Paradise.” (See *G.W.* VI, 303, lines 12–13; Harris and Knox, 233.)

73. The first to point this out was Royce (1919, 194); but it was Hyppolite who persuaded most of us to accept it (1946, 275, 277–278; 1974, 285, 287–288). He did not explain his thesis very carefully, however, and he wrote as if the positions of the Heart and of Conceit were the same, whereas in fact they are only a dialectical identity. Most bleeding Hearts do not become bomb-throwing nihilists.

74. That identification is appropriate because the Vicar is not just a thinker; he lives the philosophy that he speaks. He is visibly very different from Jean-Jacques, that notable citizen of Geneva, whose personal life verified the worst suspicions of Virtue about the Heart and the Way of the World. (T. Pinkard [1994, 102–108] offers several interesting but not convincing identifications for these two sections.)

75. No doubt there were others, for the attack on the unholy alliance of throne and altar was a favorite hobby horse of the “enlighteners” in their attempt to raise the “Unhappy Consciousness” to “Reason.” But D’Holbach was certainly the most articulate of them and the one who was most widely read.

76. Schiller, *The Robbers* and *Wallenstein* (trans. by F. J. Lomport, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979), 159. The reconciliation with his father symbolizes Karl’s return to God (i.e. Reason) as the source of *justice*; and the enforced killing of his beloved, Amalia, symbolizes the nihilistic result of his rebellion. The plot as a whole, and especially the character and fate of Karl’s brother Franz, shows that the conversion to “justice” does not signify simple acceptance and support of the “existing order,” but rather the adoption of a “virtuous” attitude and standards in the struggle for its salvation.

77. Shklar, 1976, 114–119. But I do not agree with Flay’s view that Shklar must be wrong because “the virtuous individual is not here such a positive moment of the dialectic” (1984, 334 note 12). The Virtue that collapses into the Way of the World is neither positive nor political. But that is the self-*inversion* of the primitive position of Virtue. Virtue certainly aims to be *positive* at the beginning; and since I agree with Shklar that the implicit contrast is with Machiavelli’s *virtó* (cf. 1976, 115), I think we must take the initial position to be political also. Hegel would be pleased, I think, by the attribution to him of the view “that the liberation of the Netherlands could not be achieved by men such as the fine-phrased Posa, but only by the notoriously silent William of Orange” (Shklar, 1976, 118). “Liberation” appears to me to be the only cause to which Virtue can spontaneously devote itself

without any egoistic scruples. So Marquis Posa (in *Don Carlos*) is probably the best *Gestalt* of Virtue's primary position.

Royce's example of Byron's lines "To Augusta" for the transition from "Pleasure" to "the Heart" (1919, 192–193) is actually a transition directly from Pleasure to Virtue. (Or perhaps we should say that it goes from Pleasure and the Heart in union to Virtue—because Byron's relation with Augusta certainly involves setting the Heart's Law against the Law of the World.) Royce's view of Byron's transition here was first advanced by Goethe (in the image of Euphorion, *Faust* Part II, Act III). Royce may perhaps have been mindful of that when he looked to Byron for his poetic example.

78. See especially *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 406–407; Cerf and Harris, 179–180. Fichte's own moral doctrine is at the level of Conscience, but his critical attitude is the very one that is adopted by Virtue in refusing to move to the level of Real Individuality. The implicit presence of Fichte here should be compared with his presence at the portal of Self-Consciousness, and again at the portal of Reason's Certainty. He belongs at the *beginning* of all aspects of the development of idealism, because although his idealism is *formally* perfect (or "speculative") it is *materially* quite undeveloped (or "immediate"). Formally he is far beyond the naïve stance of Virtue. But materially his ethics is close to Virtue's final position. This is because his ideal of society is *mechanical*. Virtue collapses into the Way of the World, because it has to be *mechanical* in order not to be self-assertive.

79. R. T. Eldridge (1989, 38) cites this passage and claims that Hegel is saying that specific personality and its living bonds must have primacy over moral principles. It cannot be said too often, or too emphatically, that the Knight of Virtue is *not* Don Quixote. The title *Ritter der Tugend* caused Royce to lose his balance momentarily, and to say in an early lecture that the figure of "Virtue" is "a sort of Don Quixote seeking in adventurous contest with the world his self-possession" (1919, 163). When he came to expound "Virtue" more fully, his lively literary imagination must have alerted him to the fact that that is not what Cervantes' hero was seeking at all, for he now said:

Here, as is obvious, Hegel is dealing with that type whose dialectic Cervantes had long since rendered classic. It is necessary for Hegel, however, to incorporate a representative of this type into his own series; and he does so very briefly, but effectively. The hero of knightly virtues here depicted is no longer a medieval figure, and the portrait is not directly that of Don Quixote. The illusions in question take only such forms as belong to Hegel's own age. In essence, the attitude depicted is that of the ideally minded youthful altruist whose knightly quest is directed against the lawless selfishness which, in his opinion, infests the social order, while the knightly character itself takes pride, not indeed like the foregoing type, in mere chance enthusiasms, but in its steadily loyal attitude of self-sacrifice for its chivalrous purpose. It defines its ideal as virtue in the abstract, as nobility of character. All of its natural powers are to be disciplined, not for the sake of enforcing the law of the heart, but for the sake of overcoming the wicked ways of the world where selfishness reigns (1919, 195).

But the damage was done. Hyppolite (1946, 279; 1974, 290), followed by a host of others, has canonized Don Quixote as the "knight of virtue" (for instance, Lauer, 1976, 162; Taylor, 1975, 167; Marsh, 1974, 192; Labarrière, 1968, 106; Pinkard, 1994, 109). R. C. Solomon (1983, 506) is to be applauded for declaring that the parallel is "wholly fanciful."

Actually Cervantes' hero is a fascinating portrait of "faith"; and as such he is an enemy of "Reason" in all its "shapes." All that he shares with "Reason" is the confidence that God's

Will *can* be done here on earth. All of his values come from the aristocratic/peasant world of the Unhappy Consciousness, not from the bourgeois world of Reason. As an *individual* the Don fits “the Heart” better than “Virtue.” Compare what Hegel says in his *Aesthetics* (Knox, 591–592 etc.—the index is good, and almost all references are relevant).

80. The right answer to Judith Shklar’s complaint that Hegel does not discuss figures like Schiller’s Philip II (1976, 118) is *first* that this sort of character contributes to the *science* of the “experience of consciousness” only at the primitive level of the self-assertion of Freedom against Life; and secondly, that the completed Science shows why these figures are *not* proper and necessary figures of Reason. The Revolution does away with them. If they nevertheless persist as a fact of experience there is nothing further that *philosophic* reason can do about them. *Preaching* against them (however rationally, like D’Holbach) is virtuous edification not philosophy (supposing that they are themselves irrationally rational enough to tolerate it). Both Marquis Posa and Machiavelli’s Prince *belong* to “the way of the world” and we shall not ever see the end of them, until we reach the end of all things. Someone like the *real* Philip II (who was fanatically religious, and whose truly monstrous son was a grave trial for his faith) might yet bring the end of all things upon us. But it is rational to think that (as an effective authority) we can put him behind us. We shall not ever put tyranny as such behind us, because the root of it is in “Self-Consciousness,” i.e. in the “nature” of Reason. There is “ambiguity” in life itself; but there is no “ambiguity in Hegel’s silence.”

81. The myth itself is an interesting aspect of the way Virtue sees things. Virtue recognizes *only* implicitly rational individuals. The monarch who wilfully causes the death of his one and only son, cannot therefore be *anything* but a limit case of vice and insanity. Only the Machiavellian model of a Prince can be applied to him. Virtue cannot even think in terms of conspiracies. That Don Carlos himself was insane (hatred of his father being part of that); and that Philip was motivated both by fear of how more rational conspirators could play upon his son’s hatred, and by a deeply pious conviction that Carlos could never become “His most Catholic Majesty,” is a hypothesis that would not satisfy Reason. But it is a more plausible account of Philip’s unhappy consciousness. (For Hegel’s own image of Machiavelli see O. Pöggeler, 1978).

82. The second half of Hegel’s chapter VI (from VI B II, “The Enlightenment,” onwards) can be regarded as the dialectical development of this paragraph. It is the echo of the divided shape of the “Truth of Enlightenment” that provides the essential clue for my interpretation of the final very obscure clause.

83. The best study of the influence of Adam Smith on Hegel is N. Waszek (1988).

84. One might object that if Hegel himself had either Machiavelli or Frederick in mind, he would have given us some unmistakable hint. I am willing to grant the force of this criticism. The sceptic should regard my commentary as a consistent development and illustration of Hegel’s argument. As the title of my chapter indicates, it is Fichte’s bourgeois moralism that is a cloud of superfluous rhetoric. But that rhetoric has a *religious* aspect that is just beyond the boundary of Reason proper.

85. Hyppolite, 1946, 270; 1974, 280. It is much to his credit that Hyppolite (*ibid.*, 272 [282]) does say that in Pleasure “what Hegel has in mind is primarily sensuous love.” Contrast Flay, 1984, 137–139. Lauer (1976, 156–157) prefers the words “pleasure-seeking” and “selfishness,” but his treatment is interesting because he cites one of the very texts that proves him wrong, as a building block for his own thesis. When the text is contradicting *him*, he thinks that Pleasure is contradicting, or sublating, *itself*. Instead it is only defining itself as *rational*—but the idea that just two rational beings can be a *universe* does not occur to Lauer.

86. When we get to True Spirit I shall not be able to use my generic “her.” Hegel himself makes the point that it is the *male* citizen who takes his “pleasure” in his private life (par. 461). (Stoicism logically ought to be sex-blind. But I am not sure how far actual Stoics were so.)

87. *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 6 (1106b 36–1007a 2).

88. *G.W.* IV, 402–407; Cerf and Harris, 173–180. F. Andolfi (1991, 220) has also noticed the similarity to *Kantian* virtue.

89. This modern “Virtue” can be very effective negatively. It is the Jacobin principle that cleans the social slate in the Terror. Cf. *Philosophy of World History* (Lasson IV, 929; Sibree, 450–451).

Chapter 2

The Way We Live Now

C. Individuality That is Real in and for Itself unto Itself

When Virtue recognizes its own abstractness, and becomes the conscious rational justification of the Way of the World, we arrive at Real Individuality. Reason actualizes itself by recognizing itself in its own Thinghood—its embodied activity in the World. This is the beginning of the final movement of Reason as an individual shape of consciousness. As we might expect, Real Individuality is the last singular shape of Consciousness. We are already observing the shape of a world; but it is the world of Civil Society which has lost its substantial identity as a spiritual community.

What we have before us now is the “living category” of Reason: the self-conscious biological individual who knows that she belongs to, and must always think and work to make a contribution to, the universal community of Life on earth. This is the community upon which her humanity depends; so the rational being must not simply be concerned with the natural preservation of self and family.

*We knew this about Reason in the first pages of Hegel’s fifth chapter. The *Vorstellung* of it was presented to us by the self-consciousness that came forth from the confessional shriven and at peace with God. Now that self “has the Category as its object”; but we have moved on too. We know that before there can be individuated rational “categories,” which are singularly embodied and self-consciously engaged in defining what is rational “for themselves,” there must be a substantial living community that is immediately rational—i.e. it rests on an intuitive consensus about what is rational, and it is unified by a felt identity of Life. We shall see that a community of “singular rational categories” cannot define their substantial community into existence; and that they cannot freely define themselves or anything else without it. In this third phase of chapter V, Reason as Category will come to have our consciousness of itself as Substance; and when we come to observe the evolution of the Substance our advantage over it will consist in the knowledge that we have of what rational Subjectivity is.*

(a) Self-Conscious Idealism

- 1./394. Self-Conscious Reason is now *conscious* idealism [cf. par. 233]. Ideal goals [such as “love” and “virtue”] have vanished and the category [unity of universal and particular in singular consciousness—cf. par. 236] is now the object of consciousness.

Thinking and actuality are no longer opposed. Certainty [of existence] and Truth [of essence] are now interchangeable [cf. par. 84].

The first three paragraphs of this third part of Hegel's fifth chapter offer us a bird's eye view of where we have been and where we are now. Hegel recapitulates briefly the logic of the movement by which we have arrived at this point. Chapter V began with a statement of the standpoint of "Idealism," which was recognizably a Hegelian reconstruction of Fichte's interpretation of Kant. Neither Observing Reason nor Self-Actualizing Reason was in conscious possession of that standpoint. Observing Reason was discovering why it could not simply be theoretically assumed. We saw there that the rational self is a free self-positing activity (just as Fichte claimed). Having ourselves acquired an adequate concept of the free self that can posit itself as the "Category," we then watched individual Reason "posit itself" through three successive identity-stages. First came the Faustian identification of individual Reason with the "Earth-Spirit," i.e. with the universality of natural Life; then came the direct identification of Reason with Love; and finally the identification with Virtue, i.e. with a disciplined rational struggle *against* the Earth-Spirit. That struggle collapsed into self-recognition. So what has happened overall is that the immediate impulse of naturally self-preserving singular life has been mediated into the universal identity of Reason with Life; but this life is only natural. It is not yet "life in the *Volk*."

Hegel's announcement at the outset that the Self-Consciousness we are now observing *has now grasped* the Concept we had of it as the rational certainty of being all reality, tells us that we are now in the world of Fichte's "individuals." For "Reason as Idealism" was unmistakably Fichte's conception of the Ego as the actual Category. Fichte's Ego is the concrete individuality of Kant's formal "I think" (or of the "transcendental unity of apperception"). Hegel is now claiming that this rational individuality is identical with the virtuous individual who knows she is realizing (or serving) "the Universal" by following the "Way of the World," and filling a place in the world properly. In doing what expresses and realizes *this* self, the individual does what realizes and expresses every self. The Universal (as we know from its evolution all through the previous section) means the *Law*. In Active Reason it first emerged as a Necessity opposed to the individual's pursuit of happiness, and then returned into a developed identity with it. We have not reached Fichte's concept of the Moral Law.

It is with the principle of Rational Utility that we are beginning now. So instead of "Law" we must speak of the "common good" and "the good of the individual." These have coincided in such a way that the individual can be virtuous, and think only of what she is doing for the common good, while following the way of the world. There is certainly a kind of hypocrisy in this position; but we must be careful not to overlook its genuineness. Every one of us is the "real individual" here (except when we are in love, or campaigning for some cause that makes us despise everyone who "does not care"); and we know that it does make a difference that we want to do our jobs properly (whatever they are). The world we are in, is the world

in which we are all doing what we are supposed to do, and are proud of doing it well. We are using our talents and capacities to produce some “general good.”

This sort of individuality is actually more widespread in our world than it was in Hegel's. A public employee could have this sense of self in Hegel's world; and so could the solid citizens who ran their own businesses. But most people employed by those solid citizens, were subject to summary dismissal. Hence they stood in a *personal* relationship, and were not properly part of the universal (or rational structure) of the society that creates and shares the “common good.” It is the sense of having a legally defined and legally defensible place in the social whole which constitutes the grasp that rational self-consciousness now has upon our concept of it. This is the difference between the virtuous consciousness of the free individual and the fearful consciousness of the serf. The individual who has this virtuous consciousness may still campaign for “causes”; but she will not be tempted by conspiracies, and will agree with Rosalind's verdict that “men have died from time to time,/ and worms have eaten them,/ but not for love.”¹

The actualization of Reason (End) and the potential of the world (Being-in-Itself) have the *same* purpose—to satisfy the needs of the community (Being-for-Other). This is true whether we identify the End with the subjective moment of self-actualization (my project) or with the objective moment (the social system). “Truth” and “Certainty” coincide no matter which is taken as project and which as actuality. This is a very stable world indeed; and the self-satisfaction of the individuals in it will not easily be disturbed. Hegel can indulge his irony freely at the expense of a Virtue that risks very little (par. 390). But the solid citizen who has been virtuously educated is just as righteously secure in the world where others are paid to do the fighting, as she ever was in the world where fighting was a primary duty of every male citizen (and the best philosophical consciousness wanted to lay it upon females equally). What is gone is the substantial identity involved in that absolute duty of self-sacrifice. That is why devotion to the “common good” in this modern world is, in the end, a “humbug” (*Betrug*).

- 2./395. Because Self-Consciousness is now the self-conscious Category, its world has here a new beginning. All of its prior shapes return into it. They separate only as the moments of a moving process.

In the first phase of Reason, the scientific observer was the universal Category. Reason as universal sought to find itself in its theoretical comprehension of all the singular data. But the more important the data were, and the closer Observing Reason came to itself as a concrete phenomenon, the less did it comprehend; until finally it came face to face with the unintelligibility of its own singular (and mortal) existence as a brain inside a skull. This is the singular being that somehow *is* all science; but there is no science of it as singular.

Then in the second phase this concrete singularity of Reason as the Category unfolded actively out of its unobservable singularity back to the concrete universality of Reason as the common good. As a result, the Category is now realized as the Individual—the identity of abstract universal and concrete singular agent. The

community of Real Individuals is a concrete universal that knows itself to be that. It does not have to make itself; it is real “in itself” as the common good, and “for itself” as the agent that creates and consumes that good. The system of individual self-realization is all there. I know that it makes me, and I make it, reciprocally—each statement is inseparable from the other, and neither is true in isolation.

What Hegel says about the relation of the world of Real Individuals to the previous shapes of consciousness, is not as “transparent” for us as he says the shapes themselves are: “Its account with its former shapes is closed; they lie behind it in oblivion, they do not confront it as the world it finds, but are developed only within the sphere of Reason as transparent moments.” Every *Gestalt* is *forgetful*; so what the “closing of accounts” means is that Rational Individuality is justified in its forgetfulness; there is nothing that its concept does not take care of, nothing from the past to stumble over, so that one is forced to think again. It is the world of “daylight everywhere,” as Hegel will say in the next paragraph.

We need not be concerned about the shapes of simple Consciousness, because they are never really forgotten in any actually self-conscious *Gestalt*. Even Hegel’s peasant wife has her “understanding” of the world (as we saw). But Hegel’s remark about “daylight everywhere” takes us back to the “daylight of the present” at the dawn of self-conscious Spirit (par. 177). This is the “general daylight” of Reason; and we must ask how all the shapes of natural Self-Consciousness, though forgotten, are “developed as transparent moments” within Reason. We have the answer as soon as we consider the very first of them: the life and death struggle. Reason has its fighting men; but the only thing men will fight for in a rational world is free and equal recognition. Reason does not fight wars of dynastic interest or even of national imperialism. It is the people’s war of the French Republic that is the “life and death” struggle of Reason. Bastille Day is the boundary between the night of memory and the “daylight of the present.”

In the world of Reason there are still masters and servants; but everyone is a *citizen*. Frau Bauer’s husband is not a serf. He votes, and (in principle at any rate) his children can go to school. The independence of Reason, which the Stoics recognized formally, is a *secure* constitutional reality for the whole community of equal citizens. Scepticism looms over this world of abstract “freedom and equality” in the shape of the Terror. It teaches us that the acceptance of our empirically certain sensible and perceptible differences is necessary. Even the Church, to which Frau Bauer and the children still go faithfully (receiving there the only education that is truly universal) has been rationally incorporated into Reason’s world of universal utility and civil happiness. As far as natural Self-Consciousness is concerned, Napoleon is the *Gestalt* of Reason in which everything *has become* transparent.²

Knowing this, I do not need to know all about natural and social science, or about personal loves, universal causes or altruistic service. It is right for me to see the Heart’s Law only in a literary model of death-bed repentance; and to have moralizing windbags as my images of the virtuous heroes of the struggle for national freedom. I am consciously part of a closed system that is complete, self-maintaining, and self-satisfying. I may be a pure scientist of some sort, I may love man,

woman or the baby seals more than anything else, but I have my job to do in the world, and I do that first. Scientific research or the seals may even be my job, but the virtuousness of it is different from the selfishness of it (including the selfishness of partisan commitment). So this is a new beginning in which everything can be forgotten. The abstract moments of Universality and Singularity are still present; they can still “move,” and they will. But the identity of the world and the self is the “genus,” within which every movement of those moments is embraced.

The moments will fall apart in the unmasking of the “deceit” upon which this stable world depends; and we shall see how the subjective Category is unable to put them together into an effective whole. That will bring us to the comprehension that the communal Substance of Reason is a necessary presupposition of the world of Real Individuals. But even when it is shown that the certainty of Reason is not identical with its truth, consciousness will still have the identity of the rational self with its world as a certainty to carry it forward.

- 3./396. Individuality expressing itself in action is what the world of experience is. Action changes nothing and opposes nothing. It simply makes the real self visible.

It was only in the Revolution that “the Category” really engulfed the whole world, so that nothing confronted Reason as a world of “tradition,” a world that was just “found there.” But of course the bourgeois society whose values were universalized in the upheaval of 1789 evolved in the world of the *Ancien Régime*. Reason came to be the universal Category by applying itself initially (and with a fair amount of consciously hypocritical pretence) to a world of traditional structures and values. It was born in the Reform of Luther, the utilitarian scientific vision of Bacon, and above all in the rational theology of Descartes. The cycle of rational existence: birth, being cared for, education, working, marrying, caring for and educating children, then dying as the new individuals take over—all this is what is embraced under the word *Tun* (action, or doing) in Hegel’s vocabulary. Sometimes I am the active agent, sometimes the other. But we all do what our place in the whole requires. Later on we shall see how this cycle of natural action gives birth to moral choice, in the world where substantial identity requires individual sacrifice of life. But for the moment we comprehend this cooperative cycle of action and reaction as all there is. There is no substance here to be smashed. The circle—both of individual lives and of the community’s activity—expands and contracts.³ There is no darkness, no hidden private world. Everything is out in the open, because “action” is precisely the movement of bringing a rational purpose out into the open. I realize objectively as an “achievement,” what I have formulated in my thought as a “project”; and my projects and achievements are, by definition, rational. I am not a brigand, I cannot even be the idealist Karl Moor.

The reconciliation of Virtue with the World’s Way, eliminates the distinctness and potential opposition of politics and economics. We are in a world of universal utilities; administrators and soldiers are part of our general economy, part of our “civil society.” “Liberty” and “the pursuit of happiness” coincide. There is no opposition between private and public life, so the family world is not a “darkness”

over which the women preside—though it is true enough that the domestic sphere is where they actually are in this world order. Hegel's Napoleonic world is one in which woman's destiny is kirk, kitchen and kids; and he has no expectation that this will change. But he does think that the meaning of the kirk has already changed in a way that logically implies equality of educational opportunity.⁴ "Enlightenment" does not properly admit of sexual discrimination; so the "transparency" of the moments of the Category is a logical admission that in the world of real individuals there is no conceptual reason why the action of anyone should be restricted by anything natural, except the process of childbearing itself. Sex is not relevant in the animal kingdom of the spirit.

V C(a): *The Spiritual Animal Kingdom and Deceit, or the Thing Itself*

Rational Individuality comes in many varieties. Indeed every Real Individual is a unique species (like the angels of Aquinas). So Hegel needs now to present us with the Gestalt of a Genus that is indefinitely multipliable in its species.⁵ The intellectual model is provided by the Monadology of Leibniz. But for the embodiment of the Gestalt Hegel uses the metaphor of the "animal kingdom."⁶ Therefore, we should study how he conceived that (see especially pars. 284–286, but also 245–247). In my attempt to translate the metaphor, I have tried to keep as close as possible to a "common sense" reading—so the strictly monadic implications of "Real Individuality" will only emerge gradually. This has the advantage of highlighting what Hegel did not accept from Leibniz—far from being "windowless" his monadic "individuals" are essentially processes of communication.

(b) *The Monadology of Reason*

- 4./397. This self-consciously real individuality is an *abstract*, empty Category. We shall see what this means.

The rational self-consciousness that has recognized itself as universal reality is singular and determinate. So its knowledge of being "all reality"—which is identically the same for all the differently determined selves—is an abstract one (like the theoretical knowledge of the Baconian observer or the Cartesian rational self). The Real Individual is not substantially identical with her world, so whereas the movement of "self-actualization" was a movement back towards concreteness, the movement of actualized Reason (like that of theoretical Reason) is a movement towards abstraction again.

The destiny of Real Individuality is to know itself as the concretely autonomous principle of Kant's Practical Reason. It does not come to defeat or destructive self-contradiction (like theoretical observation when it seeks to observe itself). Nor does it go beyond this world. It is not the autonomous principle of moral Reason as envisaged by Kant; for it does not involve any postulates, or any "faith." It is the actuality of which Stoicism offered a formal concept. Unlike Stoic freedom of

thought it is actual in the world; it is not withdrawn from the world, like the Stoic free will (which is “free” because it logically admits that it controls nothing except itself). It is the *abstract* universal, but it is a practical reality, not a Concept of external reflection like the God of Stoicism (who is only the Fate which, as a rational spark of his Fire, I am supposed to love).

This rational freedom is freedom of action. Instead of facing an external positive authority, it embodies the actually effective legal system of its world. *How* it does this is the problem that it cannot solve. How does the universal category of self-determination determine the rationality of anything specific? It seems to do it by the spontaneous motion of desire. But as soon as desires conflict an insoluble problem emerges.

- 5./398. Initially the concept is a *result* [the way of worldly virtue]. In the individual as free project, the negative aspect is its finite determinacy. This individual has a *certain range* of active capacities; but he requires perfect freedom of expression, just as living species are all expressions of one universal life.

We start with the result that we reached in the self-actualization of Reason; and we leave out the story of the actual formation of the individual because Real Individuality belongs to mature individuals for whom educational formation has become an object of their “Observing Reason” only. Virtue had to accept everything that was done and produced in the world according to its law-governed way, as a rational (or common) good; and the world had to accept that in its pursuit of singular happiness it was, in fact, producing the whole system of rational (i.e. common) goods. To say that something is a realized good is conversely to say that it is a potential for rational action (i.e. for rational self-actualization). So our result is the recognized cycle of individual rational existence. We have to recognize the whole cycle as what is real, because whatever we say about any moment of it, we shall find that we have to say the opposite as well.

“Goods” are what belong to the common stock of Reason; but what belongs to the common stock, is just what has to be consumed selfishly in order for its goodness to be actualized; and what is produced through this actualization by consumption is more goods for others to use (since they would not be “goods” if they were not used up by others likewise). The reconciled unity of this contradiction—the “concrete universal” within which this second inversion of Virtue and the World’s Way (taken together in their opposition) is comprehended—is the Real Individual. The Real Individual arises by determinate negation from the *simple* result of the conflict between Virtue and the World’s Way. The simple result was that Virtue’s rational good is necessarily enjoyed privately, while the World’s pursuit of happiness necessarily produces rational goods.

On her instrumental side, the Real Individual is a determinate potential to contribute to the universal system of good-production. As the proverb says, you cannot make a silk purse from a sow’s ear; but it might make a pigskin wallet, or go towards a range of other goods. The rational individuality that gives the production/consumption cycle of these material goods its rationality, is like that; but being actively

rational, it *shows* what it is good for. No external agent has to experiment with it, to find that out. The Individual is its own project for that; its activity is free. It is concerned with its own self-realization (or in Hegel's terminology it is a "perfected connecting of itself with itself"). This kind of rational freedom begins when the serf enjoys his own active control of the stock and crops he looks after; but it cannot be called *vollendetes* ("complete," i.e., self-sufficient), as long as there is the fear of losing one's livelihood—not to speak of an immediate threat to life, like that which the serf lives under.

The provision in Magna Carta that an artisan's tools may not be seized for debt is a foundation stone of the spiritual animal kingdom, because these tools *are* the "body" of the "spiritual animal" that we are now talking about. An apprentice, not yet licensed as a journeyman, is not a member of the world of "free individuals." The guilds of the free artisans constitute the first world of individuals who are aware of themselves as "real in and for themselves." The reality of this independence is precisely the property in which it is necessarily embodied. Even for a scholar (like Dr. Johnson making his *Dictionary* which was an obvious "common good" of the sort meant here) this is true. Deprived of his tools he becomes a Stoic, not a Real Individual. Personal servants are Real Individuals only when (like Figaro) they have a well-founded confidence that they could find other employment if they were suddenly sacked "without a character." All the same, the world of spiritual animals offers some surprising species. We can hardly question that the Blue Gown Beggar, Edie Ochiltree (in Scott's novel *The Antiquary*) belongs to it⁷—though the indigent and most of the laboring poor in Hegel's time do not.

This is an example that Hegel became familiar with some time later (for the novel was not published till 1816).⁸ Edie Ochiltree is certainly an idealized case, and we may well doubt whether professional begging—even with the King's license on the basis of military service—could actually be the foundation of a rationally independent and useful life of the kind that Hegel stipulates. But I hope that this limit case (even if it is imaginary, like Sherlock Holmes) illuminates the concept—at least for the audience that still reads Walter Scott. The norm is provided by the ordinary skilled artisan, especially in a world organized into guilds. A licensed craftsman fits Hegel's requirements perfectly. He is not obliged to do anything he does not want to do; but his range of activity is defined by his guild membership and status, like the fish in the sea or his cousin in the river, the birds of the air, and the animals on the mountains and plains or in the woods and the trees.

The conception of "spiritual individuality," as Hegel defines it, has an inwardly determined freedom, which cannot fail to remind us of the monad of Leibniz. But in the *Monadology* every individual is not only completely self-determining, but unique. This is the logical limit which the psychological observer faces and defines, and which the phrenologist tries to reach. Hegel's "spiritual animal" is a *species* of the "rational animal," and there is no difficulty in recognizing the "spiritual animal kingdom" as the classification system of the Real Individuals according to what they do, or the goods they produce.

Edie Ochiltree belongs to this world, partly because of what he *has* done, for the Blue Gowns were respected as ex-soldiers; but he is also valued for the “wisdom” that he produces (and he has his own very proper sense of this value). He is a good model of the Aristotelian *phronimos*, and hence of what Virtue contributes to the World’s Way; and it is clear that Scott, at least, did not believe he was *unique* among the Blue Gowns. Not all Blue Gowns had Edie’s securely balanced wisdom of experience certainly; but neither are all squirrels perfect examples of their species. Given that Reason is the “original nature” of all the animals in this kingdom (an assumption which has the status of immediate certainty here, but is still far from being comprehended in its “truth”) Scott’s beggar is a marvellous example of natural Reason fully developed and expressed in action.

- 6./399. Individuality seeks to express its *nature* self-consciously, as an animal does spontaneously. This nature is a limit which is no barrier, being only visible in what it does.

The assumption of the Real Individuals is that God (or Nature) made them as they are. They have been educated to develop God’s (or Nature’s) gifts; and as free adults they are continuing to work on this. But their Aristotelian “characters” are now formed; that is where the *virtue*, which is one of their most notable shared characteristics, comes from. Their individuality is their adult freedom of self-determination; and their activity is consciously aimed at self-realization (not just at keeping self and family alive, which would be a kind of servitude, even when there is no present human Lord in view).

Everyone has special talents; as psychological observers, we can speak of “aptitudes” and so on. We are bound to be interested in the bent and the natural limitations of a given individual. But if that individual is following her bent, and knows what she can do, then the psychological perspective of the Platonic educator is no longer hers. What she knows she can do is just her tinting of the very element of rational freedom.⁹ We are not yet concerned with the artist, striving infinitely for an ideal goal that is always beyond any actual achievement. Our model is the cabinetmaker who says: “A tallboy for that corner? Certainly, ma’am,” and goes happily to his workshop with his sheet of measurements. In this example, the consumer is present, but the freedom of the producer is untrammelled. As soon as Hegel distinguishes the moments of action (in the next paragraph) the implicit problems begin to emerge.

- 7./400. Action splits the simple nature of individuality into the act and the consciousness of it. It is the project that finds a “means” for realizing itself as an “end.” Initial project, action as means, and realized end are all to be conceived as *End in process*.

Action necessarily has two aspects: there is the doing, and the consciousness of what is being done. The agent is the singular source of the doing, but everyone shares the consciousness of what is done as soon as the action is in some measure complete. The agent, however, is the only one who is bound to have the consciousness of the end as a project. The distinction of the two aspects of action as

consciousness is primitively present for the active individual; she alone knows and can say what the relation is between what was intended and what is achieved. Everyone can see the act in progress and the end-result; but only the agent knows definitely what was aimed at. This self-containment of free activity—the fact that individuality is the comprehended unity of a cycle of contradictory aspects, which are universally visible only on one side—means that contradictions can arise in the interaction of one rational individual with the others.

Hegel does not speak of this yet. He says only that there is a distinction which *accrues* (*zukommt*) to the “consciousness” of action. I have deliberately made the distinction between the agent’s role and awareness, and the observer’s role and awareness explicit. This is obviously going to be important, because Hegel does list all the identities that must hold if the concept of Real Individuality is to maintain itself; and we shall soon learn what the cost of that is.

The Real Individual knows that it is the Category of real being.¹⁰ So there is nothing “real” outside it; it is a logical truth that if we want to speak truthfully about what *absolutely is* we cannot distinguish between “individuality” and “being in general.” There must not be any distinction, therefore, between the project and the rational nature expressed in the project (neither of which is accessible to the general observer).

Again, there must be no distinction between the project and the “means” in which the action embodies itself (this last is observable). No one is actually watching me as I write, but if someone were looking over my shoulder, they might catch my misspellings (or omitted words, dittographies and so on). That sort of correction would help me maintain my Real Individuality and would not be the sort of breach in my “identity” that Hegel means. The breach would only begin if the observer wanted me to rewrite my sentences completely. That happens sometimes (in an unwelcome way) to those who submit essays to instructors, or articles to journal editors and referees; and one must sometimes stand up for one’s own “reality.” But it is the “realized end” that matters, so a prudent author will often compromise at this level; and a freely accepted compromise preserves the identity that is here referred to.

It is the “realized end” that properly establishes the reality of the individual agent. So in sum the crucial requirement for free, rational action is that no distinction should be introduced between either the End, the means, or the individual’s potential, and what the agent actually achieves. We must not permit the positing of any absolute end that could generate any of these distinctions. The habit of distinguishing between the absolute end and the “means” was what the Jesuits were always taxed with. But since they were not (then) proper denizens of the rational world of the Real Individuals, we should perhaps use the censorship that must surely have existed in the Prussia of the anti-Machiavellian Frederick the Great as an example of illegitimate distinction.¹¹

8./401. This end in process is just the realization of my nature as rational, my *special* contribution. Action is just the actualizing of a potential. The rational monad does what it

does, in order to know what it is. But it must also know what it is doing—the End must be conscious. The seemingly insoluble problem is, in fact, a means-end continuum; in self-expression one knows what one wants to do, because one does it. All moments are resolved in this continuity.

So far we have been observing the process of Self-realization objectively as the *specification* of the World's Virtuous Way: the individual is a particular kind of rational activity. Now we have noticed that it is only the self-realizing Real Individual who is properly conscious of the whole that is "real." Action divides the "original nature" into what is there as real for general consciousness and what is there as real for the agent consciousness; and the latter's view is the comprehensive view. So obviously we must adopt the individual's standpoint ourselves. This is where the inversion of the World's Virtuous Way into Real Individuality properly occurs; and the logical consequence is that the moments of Universality and Individuality become consciously identical. The identity is the self-definition of the rational individual as a unique instantiation of Reason—a rational monad. When we adopt the standpoint of the Real Individual itself its "specific function" in society (as a *kind* of "spiritual animal") disappears into its self-experienced uniqueness. What I can rationally make out of my nature, the "peculiar tincture" of my rationality, is all there is to my Real Individuality.

Individuality is the inwardly (or concretely) comprehended unity of Reason and its world: Reason as the self-realizing End. The "individuality that is unto itself real in and for itself" is the "Concrete Universal." Plato's standpoint, when he defined the justice of the individual soul as "minding one's own business and not meddling," was the right one. But for Plato it was the community (as Substance) that was the Real End. For Real Individuality the community is not a substance, but only the reservoir of common goods or *means*. Once we have made this necessary inversion of the Platonic perspective, Plato's emphasis on self-realization, gives us just the thought context that we need.

Rational Individuality is the "end" of the whole social process. It exists first as an identifiable set of talents and capacities; but anyone who has come at the problem from Plato's side knows that the talents etc. are only identifiable because the community has a place for them. Reason takes itself to be the community of God (or Nature) without any limits; it pays no attention to the fact that the vocational structure of the actual community is a historically determined given with nothing absolutely rational about it. But it is a fact that this "original nature" of rational individuality does exist in its actual aspect as the vocational structure of society.

Before Reason comes on the scene, the problem of self-realization is a fairly easy one because there is an immediate or natural solution. One does what one is born to. The transformation of this immediate (or "natural") solution into the rational one of the "career open to the talents" began properly with the French Revolution, and we are still struggling to realize it. The actual problem for rational individuals is always to choose between the available social options; and in the operating system of the Real Individuals that problem is solved. We know what every "good" is good *for*; and

one has a certain social function, because one has shown that one can perform it.

Let us express this problem and its solution in the internal language of Individuality. I know what I want to do, so I can recognize my means and my raw material when I see it. I am my own project, which is always “self-expression”; and the realization of my “self” in some external material is the publication of what I am to others. Action (*Handeln*—even the wave of a hand, for example) “is precisely the coming to be of the spirit *as consciousness*” (i.e. as an external fact of some kind). The little girl, of whom I once heard in a philosophy class, who asked “How can I know what I think, until I see what I say?” had her feet set firmly on the path towards a Real Individuality that will not deceive itself at least. But, of course, we could ask her how she knew what she was saying if she did not formulate it to herself before she said it.

The circle of individuality refuses to collapse directly into the moment of the realized End (even if the joy of achievement frequently has an aspect of delighted *discovery* about it). It is only philosophers who get hung up about the paradox here; Real Individuals get right on with the job. Individuals in action may be either delighted or disappointed with the results they achieve, but if they get stuck anywhere, it is usually with the formulation of the project. As far as Hegel is concerned the phenomenological beginning is the sparking of “interest” by the observed circumstances and situation—as if, to use Aristotle’s favorite paradigm, the stone suggests the statue to the sculptor, or (to use my own earlier case) as if the sight of Edie Ochiltree’s blue gown prompts someone to give him the broken oatcake that was left at breakfast time.¹²

It is only at the opposite extremes of “virtue” and “art” that the question of a beginning arises; a cobbler knows where to begin, unless his economic situation is so bad that his real individuality is threatened. He has his talent and his tools and leather all ready. These are just the opposite aspects (inner and outer) of the “actual means.” I have to have the talent (and training); and the observable things have to have the “interesting” meaning for me of being the tools for the active expression of my skill. Then the movement can start in the external world; and this external movement is not something different from my known talent and interested observation. It is what “knowing” about the talent, and being “interested” by the observation means. It is the real self that is the object of the knowledge and the interest. Using his skill and his tools and leather to make (let us say) a pair of work boots for some neighbor is “being a cobbler.”

- 9./402. What is expressed exists as work done. But that only matters for the observing consciousness which can classify active consciousness into *types* according to its products. [403.] All expression, being positive, is good. Comparison is external, and individual expressions are really unique; the “good” and “bad” [of *Bildung*, 491ff] has no place here. Every monad is perfect on its own account.¹³

Once the boots are there finished on the table, however, the situation changes. The cobbler himself can say whether this pair is well or badly made. But, as Aristo-

tle remarked, it is the wearer who knows best whether they fit. Everyone can have an opinion about who makes the best boots. The spiritual animals now begin to be classified, and their capacities as members of their class begin to be compared.

This is where the Leibnizian implications of the concept of Real Individuality declare themselves. We can only make these comparisons by returning to the standpoint of external observation; and to do that is to abandon the standard of concrete individual self-realization. If our cobbler really was putting his rational self into the making of those boots, that is the end of the matter. The language of Real Individuality suggests that the animals are of different species; but if Real Individuality is the comprehensive end that gives meaning to the whole cycle, then the truth is that every rational individual, like the angels of Aquinas, is a species unto itself. This is the doctrine of the *Monadology*. The Real Individual knows herself according to our concept of the certainty of Reason, when she meets herself in the philosophy of the “best of all possible worlds.”

We do speak of cobblers as “good” or “bad”—or, at least, Socrates would have done. But this comparison of one cobbler with another has nothing to do with the expression of the rational self in its work.¹⁴ It seemed when we began as if the question of who is a Real Individual was a serious one; and I put some effort into arguing that Edie Ochiltree is one, even though most beggars are not. But it turns out that, according to the Concept, it is as easy to be a Real Individual as it is to be a Stoic (and the difference between them turns only on the way they talk). This will be the destructive lesson of experience with the concept of Real Individuality. We are all “expressing ourselves” as perfectly as possible all the time. Or at least we are doing so, if (and for as long as) we want to think so; if we stop thinking so it will simply be because we have fallen back out of this world. We can voluntarily fall back all the way to the Unhappy Consciousness; and, on the other hand, we can maintain the consciousness of Real Individuality even if we are forcibly reduced to serfdom. (We can also go forward; and that will be our actual concern.)

- 10./404. Thus even to be uplifted or depressed about one's own performance is out of place here. Every monad's expression is the simple unfolding of its nature. The difference of inner and outer is mere show. Individual existence is self-enjoyment.

The last nail in the coffin of Real Individuality as the standard of truth, is driven when we realize that the Real Individual cannot even consistently make comparative judgments upon herself. I said earlier that the cobbler would know whether the boots were well-made, but only the wearer would know whether they fitted. By insisting that the wearer's judgment is external and irrelevant, Hegel has already reduced the effective employment of the concept of rational self-expression to a context like that of the ideal art class in a universal education system. Here the object is to get everyone to express themselves freely, and hence not to compare their products either with those of others, or with some preappointed subject or model. But it is still essential to build the sense of confidence in oneself, and hence of pleasure in one's own performance; and this is impossible without the compari-

son of one's own performances with one another, and of one's performance with one's inward project in each case. One must be able to say "This time, it really came off!" or "Today was a complete flop compared with last week."

But now Hegel insists that the identity of project and performance, the identity of the Real End with what is actually done, is so fundamental, so essential, that even the most spontaneous feelings of success (*Erhebung*) or failure and regret (*Klage, Reue*) are illegitimate. Not even the agent is allowed to compare the project with the performance, because the certainty of Reason that it is all reality implies that the whole "inner consciousness" of the agent is an illusory fiction. It is not "true"; it is like a scaffolding (or a mathematical "construction") erected solely for the purpose of realizing what has actually been realized. What comes forth may surprise the agent in any of the directions mentioned (exaltation, complaint, repentance); but it is her real self nevertheless. By this criterion, Mrs. Langer's story of the little girl was exactly right: none of us can ever *really* know what we think, until we see what we say.¹⁵

It seems obvious now that this Concept has no effective application. No one has ever had this concept of herself; and however vain or mistaken our feelings of delight, dissatisfaction, or regret may sometimes be, we cannot dismiss them categorically as false or worthless by definition. We are bound to ask, therefore, what Hegel meant when he asserted at the outset that "Self-Consciousness has now grasped the Concept of itself which, to begin with, was only our Concept of it." That Concept has turned out to be the "monad" of Leibniz. No one except Leibniz (and disciples of Leibniz) ever had it before us. For them it followed necessarily from the Cartesian certainty that the rational self is a finite thinking substance created by an infinite Will that necessarily wills only what is "best." But why should this peculiarly academic consciousness—which logically invalidates all of our judgments of what is "good" or "bad," whether economically or morally—be ascribed to the World-Spirit in its climactic manifestation as Reason? One would have thought that the World-Spirit speaks rather with the voice of Voltaire's *Candide*. No one (not even Leibniz), we might protest, ever had this consciousness of her own action and career, in the public world. The little girl's insight is, indeed, philosophically interesting; but it is emphatically not absolute or comprehensive.

This time it is the "experience" that will prove *us* wrong. Usually we can calmly watch the object-consciousness discovering that its Concept will not work; in this case we are already so vividly aware of why it will not work, that our normal complacency during the "experience" is now disturbed by the sense that no active consciousness could stably maintain itself within this Concept. Yet every *Gestalt* does maintain itself; and this one looked viable enough until we went inside it—as our method obliged us to. Hegel's most important achievement, in the analysis of the "experience" that now ensues, is to show us how well the theological optimism of Leibniz and Wolff expressed the *self*-consciousness of the world whose Universities and journals promulgated it. We shall also see what empty pomp the doubly-inverted Virtue was, that coincided with the Way of the World.

(c) *The Dialectic of the Werk*

- 11./405. The reality is in the expression as *Werk*. This expresses what the individual is for everyone, not just for himself. But it does not express him forever; as soon as it is done, he is done with it, and as an observer himself he is beyond it. All observers perceive it thus negatively. It is just there for interpretation. Everyone is concerned with what it means to them. That is what interests them in it. Hence its proper meaning for the agent is turned into something else.

The translation of the word *Werk* is a problem. It is only in compounds like “master-work,” “life-work,” that the English “work” securely keeps the right sense and aura. Being a verb as well as a noun, and having an abstract scientific use (which the Shorter Oxford Dictionary defines as “the operation of a force in producing movement”) our word leads the mind down many mistaken paths. But if we keep “the works of God” in mind (to which the same dictionary gives proper precedence) we shall never go wrong, since God cannot labor or “work” in any misleading sense.¹⁶

According to the concept we are to test, we are known by our “works.” We ourselves find out what we are by seeing what we do. But our works do not remain ours; and we do not stand by them. I can rewrite the commentary on this paragraph next year if I want to—though I doubt if I shall, since the argument is so straightforward here. But the point is that once my sentences are written, I am as much a part of the “universal” consciousness that reads them as anyone else. The thing is done now. Projects, half-formed thoughts, means, etc., have all vanished, and the written words are what is there; and they are not irrevocably mine any longer. They can become as strange to me as to anyone, and I may find myself saying (at least about some other paragraph) “I do not know what I meant by that.”

In any case, what my words mean is a matter of interpretation, and I am not in a privileged position on that question. I have concentrated attention on the case of my own written work here, because Hegel defined the *Handeln* of Real Individuality as “the coming to be of the Spirit *as consciousness*.” The simplest possible object of consciousness in which “Spirit comes to be” is a spoken word. Words are the very stuff of all non-sensory—i.e. all properly “spiritual”—consciousness. The seemingly paradoxical insistence that action is “the pure translation of [the individual’s] *own self* out of the night of possibility into the daylight of the present” (par. 404, compare pars. 396 and 177) and that it only removes the *semblance* (*Schein*) of an antithesis between inner project and outer performance, loses its counter-intuitive aspect, if we remember that the primary act of “self-expression,” the basic spiritual *realization* of individuality, is the expression of one’s own thoughts in speech. This is the realization of Reason in which we all participate, giving it only our own “tincture.” The paradoxical aspect of the little girl’s question springs from the fact that (for the most part) we adults “think” by talking to ourselves. In this perspective the action of “self-expression” is only the raising of a curtain, or the abolition of a mere *Schein*, by saying aloud what we have already thought over.

But the spoken words have meaning for others only in their own interpretation of them (here is the “truth” of the most counter-intuitive of all Leibniz’ doctrines, the claim that “the monads have no windows”). In the ebb and flow of a conversational dispute, what someone actually said at a crucial point, is soon lost and forgotten forever. We need to consider something written down in order to have a *Wirklichkeit* that has “disappeared out of the Concept and is only an alien actuality *found out there*.” By the time we are alienated in this same way from a spoken expression, it cannot be securely “found,” and we typically find ourselves arguing not only about what was meant (“the Concept” or the “Real Individuality” that was expressed) but about what words were actually uttered.

With written expressions (especially if we let them get “stale” like the written formula “Now it is Night” with which Sense-Certainty began) the whole process that Hegel describes here can be clearly observed. Thus Hegel wrote this description of the “spiritual animal kingdom.” It has certainly “vanished from the Concept,” and we dispute endlessly about what he meant. Each of us has some “interest,” some nature, to express, which determines for us what the words mean. If my interpretation of this section is accepted, if most of the rational monads come to share a window onto this text that describes them, they will see that what this text says (among other things) is that the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as a whole, can never be universally accepted as the simple utterance of the project that the Real Individual called “Hegel” formulated. There will always be those who either cannot grasp the project formally at all, or having grasped it in some sense, decide that it is theoretically inconsistent or practically impossible. They may then become interested in the further questions of what was actually achieved in the Realized End, or what the “original nature” was that prompted the undertaking of an impossible project. Respect for the actual insight displayed in the Realized End has even prompted the hypothesis that the announced project is a consciously concocted *Schein*, a mere pretence.

Thus my interpretation of this paragraph leads me to anticipate that, regardless of anything that I (and others like me, who think the book has the proper transparency of “action” so that one can see the “original nature” in the Realized End perfectly clearly if one wishes) can do or say, other books will continue (successfully) to invite readers to “hitch the highway of despair”¹⁷ or to listen with a sympathetic ear to a “lament for Hellas.”¹⁸ What validates these radical displacements of Hegel’s end—for nothing could be further from his ideal of a scientific journey to science than hitchhiking with the consciousness that there is nowhere to go; and in spite of his morose countenance as a lecturer nothing was more alien to the “original nature” of this true child of the Enlightenment than lamenting for a lost past—is the conviction that “Dialectic and absoluteness are ultimately at loggerheads.”¹⁹ Hence the Realized End degenerates from a circle of concepts into an endless dialogue (which is how the life of Real Individuality is envisaged in this present paragraph); or “dialectic” is conceived not as a method but as an imaginative *technique*, and Hegel’s “science” becomes a poetic art.²⁰

To become indignant, or passionately polemical about any of these transforma-

tive reactions would only be to express my own real individuality. The lesson of the present section is that the Thing Itself can care for itself; so I shall borrow the great classical scholar Richard Bentley's defence of one of his adventurous emendations, and say "*Nobis et ratio et res ipsa centum codicibus potiores sunt.*"²¹ Reason and the Thing Itself are worth more than another hundred books, especially when the thing concerned is not just one line of Latin verse, but a great work of systematic thought constructed upon a non-argumentative method and prefaced by a memorable polemic against argumentation this way and that. That the book must always be part of the bad infinite life of argument, it demonstrates itself at this point in its course. But its own argument from here to the end can be relied on to demonstrate that it *also* has a destiny of its own far above this level. Unlike the spoken word, or the putative lost reading of the text that Bentley was emending, it is *not* "something transitory that is extinguished by the counter-play of other forces and interests."

- 12./406. Thus the pure activity which the individual is *universally*, conflicts with what it does to express what it *determinately* is. We can call either of them the concept, and the other the reality; the two poles remain in conflict. The *Werk* is the point of contradiction.

Of course, once the *Phenomenology* was written, Hegel himself was beyond it (just as I am at this moment passing beyond my justification of its higher destiny). Even in the case of a systematic philosopher who has produced a work of "Science," his universal activity of thinking goes on. Hegel is not his book, even if the book proves to be more important than anything he does afterwards.²² His putative "original nature" is not exhausted by it, and his "action," as the motion of bringing that "nature" to light, must go on. That history will continue, is one of the theorems of Hegel's science of experience (in which "history" is scientifically comprehended); and hence it is a misunderstanding of the "absoluteness" of the "system of science" to suppose that Hegel needed (or would have been deeply troubled by) the little sermon about the philosophy that a future age will need, which Croce made a Neapolitan visitor impose on him during the last months of his life.²³

It is in the *Werk*, says Hegel, that consciousness comes to be for itself what it truly is. In his view it is the "empty concept" of Real Individuality that disappears as a result. The *Werk* is what survives; and it survives as belonging to everyone. So the immediate identity of thought and speech (which is what validates the "empty concept") must give way to actions that leave a *record* of self-realization. Even the cobbler's "work"—being intended essentially for consumption—is not an adequate result of "action" to carry the dialectic forward to the next stage.

It is important to realize that the "pure action which is the self-identical form" is the thinking and speaking that is carried on by the community.²⁴ The agent becomes a simple member of that community again, as soon as her *Werk* is completed; but no one remains in the speaking community forever. Every determinate agent dies; the "original nature," that is not exhausted in the *Werk*, exhausts itself by nature. There is an essential conflict between it and the self-identical form. The *Werk*, on the other hand, precisely because it is the result of action (the result of "publication," we might say, in order to designate precisely the only activity that

completely satisfies the stipulated definition of action as a simple transition from darkness to daylight), can become a permanent moment in the “pure action that is the self-identical form.”

- 13./407. Thus the real monad is a contradiction. The whole process of its realization is accidental because it only accidentally understands its potential, defines its highest actualization, or chooses the right means (all the same thing). Also what happens to a good or a bad choice is a matter of chance.

The first “experience” of Real Individuality is the discovery that it is not the agent and the process that is “real.” What is real is the result, the product. And this discovery forces itself upon the agent who is certain of her own reality, because all of the moments that come together perfectly for the agent when she recognizes that spiritual self-expression (as the direct transition of thought into speech or writing) is the realization of her rational individuality, fall apart again in the independent career that the *Werk* actually enjoys. Everything that we say and do is always misunderstood; the “cunning of Reason”—which makes its first explicit appearance here, though it is not named—shows itself, for an author, in the fact that the book she writes is interpreted in unexpected ways. The terms of action as a process turn out now to have a reversed relationship. It is the author’s expression that was (and is) the Concept and the End; but it is the *Werk* which is the Reality and the “original essentiality.” It is now everyone’s “original nature,” since each must interpret it for herself. If someone gets the author’s meaning out of it, that is an accident; if some reader sympathizes with the author’s aim, that is an accident too.

Perhaps the reader never has a fair chance, because she never grasps the intended meaning of some crucial term which the author has chosen as the “means” for the expression of the Conceptual End. Consider, for example, the extraordinary difficulty of grasping Hegel’s definition of “action,” when he suddenly sprang it on us. We had a foretaste of the difficulty when he laid it down in paragraph 396 that “Action changes nothing and goes against nothing.” But that was in the preamble; so we left the problem in abeyance, and went ahead with a commonsensical interpretation of the self-realization of the real individuals through their life-activities. This seemed to be the only sensible course because the very first stipulation was that the “Real Individuals” shared *our* concept of them.

But when the statement of the Concept reached its climax, it was plain that no rational agent ever accepts such an absolute identity of her real self with the ordinary activities of her life as the text claimed (par. 404). The spontaneous feelings of satisfaction, disappointment, and regret that are bound to accompany all the ordinary activities of life were ruled out. So we had to look for some self-expressive activity of the ordinary rational consciousness where these feelings either do not come to consciousness at all, or are typically laughed off and dismissed as irrelevant or inappropriate when they do.

At this point the repeated insistence that the Real Individual “can have only the consciousness of the pure translation of *his own self* out of the night of possibility into the daylight of the present” alerted us to the fact that the primordial method of

self-expression is to speak out loud in the very language in which we formulate our projects and aims for ourselves. This agreed logically with the first appearance of the Concept of Spirit (which the echo-phrase *Tag der Gegenwart* was meant to recall to our minds). So we knew we were on the right road, and we could now accept the Leibnizian *monad* as the Concept which we shared with the consciousness that we were observing. Up to that point we would have said that there was a contrast between the *specific* character of the denizens of the spiritual animal kingdom, and the uniqueness of every individual in the rational kingdom of Leibniz.

In this way we came, finally, to a logically harmonious interpretation of the terms *Tun, Handeln, Handlung* in Hegel's text; and we shall soon see that we were right to let the discordant note struck in paragraph 396 (and sounded again in par. 400) come to its resolution gradually. But (if you grant that we are now right about Hegel's "intention") behold how easy it would be to go wrong! "It is accidental that the End has genuinely true essence, or that the In-itself is made into the End" because "it is accidental that the End-expressing Means is chosen." "The action of the individual [whether mine, the reader's or Hegel's] is accidental vis à vis actuality generally. Luck decides just as often in favor of a badly determined End and badly chosen Means, as against them." Many readers of these paragraphs must have felt, when they faced such counterintuitive statements about "action" as the last sentences in paragraph 396 or the first in paragraph 404, that Hegel's "means" was badly-chosen (and they may have doubted or despaired about the end). I can only hope that they will here find the "fortunate" decision that the author was bound to hope for.

This example clearly displays the *difference* between the Leibnizian Concept and the one that we share with the Real Individuals whom we are observing. Leibniz formulated an unshakably stable concept of Real Individuality. It was axiomatic for him that the thinking individual is a substance. Hence he had to hold that every individual is a self-enclosed world; so he argued that what appears to all of us as a "common" world is just the "pre-established harmony" of our separate substantial realities. At the moment when we saw that the hope of our philosophical little girl was vain—that she would not finally know what she thought when she saw what she said, because she would only be starting a potentially endless discussion about it—at that moment we recognized what is not acceptable in the Leibnizian doctrine. Our little girl could have her wish only if she sealed herself off from what everyone else saw in what she said. But that would be an absurd procedure in principle, because "saying something" is expressing it "for everyone."

The resolution of the problem must do proper justice to common sense. We must surrender the Leibnizian substantiality (and closed self-sufficiency) of the subject in favor of an actively constructed "harmony" about the object. Speech is so essentially evanescent that we do not recognize this transition from the reality of the subject to that of the *Werk* in ordinary discourse. If someone (for example, our little girl) says something that is misunderstood, then—now that she does "know what she thinks"—she will say something else in an effort to correct the misapprehension; and the discussion will (or can) continue until everyone is satisfied that no

misunderstanding exists. We still believe, at the end, that we, the active participants, are real, and that the words spoken are only the expression of our real individualities. But no one ever participates in a conversation on the Leibnizian assumption that she is Lewis Carroll's Red King, and that the harmony she is constructing is between her and the "others" in her own substantial "dream world."

What the "self-identical form of pure action" really constructs is the harmony that Leibniz had to ascribe to God's pre-establishment at the moment of Creation. By arriving at a harmonious interpretation of what the little girl thinks and says, we are constructing a "public fact"; and we all know and agree that the world of public facts (to which we have just added one) subsists independently of any one of us. Some of the public facts do not last as long as their active creators. What the little girl (and why shouldn't she be "Alice," since the Red King has now arrived to take the part of the Leibnizian monad?) sees when she says it, may be forgotten by everyone next week, or next year. But it is the world of public facts, not the separate worlds of individual agents, that is "substantial" nevertheless; and that is what Lewis Carroll made explicit when he put the idle fancy of a summer's day onto paper as the conversation of Alice with Tweedledum and Tweedledee about the slumbering Red King.²⁵

- 14./408. All this contingency is necessarily involved in the concept of action. Actualization of purpose is the concept of action. The work must disappear again in the continuum of action, because the *whole concept* involves the disappearance as much as the doing.

Real Individuality experiences this transition only gradually. As long as we stick to the sphere of oral speech, we are not conscious of the transition at all; and if we adopt the standpoint of "the pure action that is the self-identical form" we can successfully subsume all activity that produces useful goods under Real Individuality as the universal process. The adoption of this standpoint of "pure action" is the recognition of the subjective Thing Itself (*die Sache selbst*). We shall see, as we go, why my examples of the resolved dialectic of Hegel-interpretation, or of the "recorded" story of Alice's conversation with the brothers Tweedledum and Tweedledee, are premature. We must follow the course of the dialectic methodically.

The inversion of the roles and values of agency itself in the *Werk* is simple and direct. The Real End becomes once more a subjective project (which is only accidentally expressed in the work); and the achieved work becomes the "original essentiality" (which only accidentally corresponds to the projected End). This is the *simple* inversion of the immediate action of self-expression. But the active self now makes another inversion equally spontaneously. For even in the experience of how accidental my success in self-expression is, I am aware that it is the unity of intention and expression that is necessary and essential. Misunderstanding is only something that *happens* to what I say. The accident is accidental. Our little Alice, when she sees what she says, can defend what she "thinks" if she needs to. In this way the "unity and necessity" envelops (*übergreift*) the contingent fate of the first naïve act of self-expression. The continuing activity of self-expression does away

with the misunderstanding. What looks like the inevitability of failure, is just the necessary accident that keeps “action” going.

But a great transformation has occurred in this new inversion which is so automatic, spontaneous and transparent that it seems like an example of double negation in the formal sense. Alice says “p”; Tweedledum says: “I take it you mean, ‘not-p’”; and Alice says: “I meant what I said, not ‘not-p,’ but ‘p.’” The need, in ordinary conversation, to *reassert* *p* in company with the assertion of $\sim p$ is the signal that what Hegel calls “determinate negation” has occurred and a *new object* has been produced.²⁶ The motive of Alice’s first statement, since it was, *ex hypothesi*, a simple case of self-expression, was the personal “interest” she felt in the topic (whatever it is). The motive of her second statement is to establish the “truth” about what she said initially. And this motive will enter into the “interest” of both parties in any further discussion that the case turns out to need. Alice’s original, self-expressive ‘p’ and Tweedledum’s expression of the thought ‘not-p’ which happened in *his* self-expressive world, both disappear from now on. This is the proper “first inversion” of the Concept of “Real Individuality.” The quest for “truth” replaces “self-expression.”

If the monads were windowless, their different expressions would cancel out, and only the contradiction would remain. This would be the persistence of “vanishing.” According to the concept, each agent “vanishes” in her own *Werk* (par. 406).²⁷ But the experience of their mutual contradiction is, in fact, the “vanishing of vanishing.” Instead of becoming invisible to one another as a result of their contradiction, they become, for the first time, truly visible to each other in a *Werk* which belongs to neither of them personally, and “expresses” neither of them, but only itself. It is the *Werk* of “truth,” or the Fact Itself, *die Sache selbst*. We have reached the spiritual “perception” of Reason as a Thing.

(d) *The Sache selbst*

- 15./409. The work vanishes back into the process of action that vanished first into it. Thus the objectivity of experience itself is shown to be a vanishing moment. The *structure* of my interaction with objective being is the Thing Itself. This is what necessarily endures in the contingency of action.

The action vanishes in the *Werk*; and now the *Werk* vanishes back into the vanishing action; in this reciprocal process “vanishing vanishes.” For the “objective actuality” of the *Werk* is only a “vanishing moment” of the actuality that is truly objective. The transition that is made in the argument of this paragraph is from the ordinary sense of “objectivity” (where the object is that which is independent of the subjective awareness of it) to the Kantian sense (where what is objective is what is valid for all subjects). A standard of objectivity is established for the action of the Real Self, which inverts the Concept with which we began.

Objective “reality” (ordinary objectivity) is simply one moment in the cycle of action—the final one where the End is realized. According to the initial concept of action, this is the only moment that counts, and all the others exist for the sake of

it, and collapse into it. But the only action for which this concept can be successfully maintained is the expression of our thoughts in our speech; and there the project itself is a motion, so that the “realized End” is an evanescent phenomenon. The fate of that phenomenon is to vanish again into the thought-processes of ourselves and others.

It is not logically necessary to bring in any reference to empirical outsiders here (though Tweedledum and Tweedledee with their penchant for saying “Nohow” and “Contrariwise” are very helpful in making the dialectic explicit). What Hegel wants to emphasize is that I am my own other, I am always beyond what I say; I can react to it myself, and it is always perfectly obvious to me that this self-expression, this “realization,” is only a functional moment in the continuing activity of my thinking (which is the inward project or *subjective* End). But it is very useful to have the reaction of another self (especially someone who says “Nohow” or “Contrariwise”) if I am to become conscious that when I reformulate what I said the first time, my self-critical activity is controlled by an “objective” standard. I want to put something “right” that was “not right” before. “Feelings of lamentation and repentance” are not out of place now; and when I feel that I have got it right finally, the feeling may even be one of “exaltation” (contrast par. 404).

It is important that these reinstated feelings are logically independent of any outside reaction: I can have the feeling of regret myself, even though others are pleased with my action; and I can have the sensation of triumph and exaltation without having to satisfy anyone else. I only need to have the sense of a *standard* that I am applying to what I say; and the same is true about everything else that I do. Thus, the arising of the *Sache selbst*, this objective standard against which I judge every attempt that I make to express myself, is a comprehensive inversion of the concept of self-realization. It is not now the case that my thinking (the inward project) matters more than what I first said (which would be another “simple” inversion). No moment matters more than any other. None of them matter in themselves. It is my consciousness of the whole process that matters, for that is what I measure by the standard of the *Sache selbst*.

It is I as a rational critic who decides how the standard is to be applied to what I say or do. For this reason, all of the activities that could not satisfy the simple definition of self-realization—the initial concept that the Real Individual has of herself as “real in and for self”—can be comfortably accommodated under the aegis of the *Sache selbst*; and because I alone decide what the required standard is, this new kind of objectivity has no “real objectivity” of the primitive kind at all. The standard of the *Sache selbst* is essentially “public”; that is what makes it a rational standard. But because I define the whole that it is to be applied to, no one else can ever successfully invoke it against me. Whenever they disagree with my estimate, they will find that they have simply been deceived about the right way to apply it. Obviously, therefore, this new kind of objectivity is essentially slippery and ambiguous; and until it is reliably integrated somehow with the ordinary or primitive standard of objectivity (according to which what is objective is the Realized End as an outwardly observable fact or deed) this ambiguity will continue.

The *Sache selbst* (as my own rational standard of achievement) is the *Category*. As the self-conscious critic of what I do under every aspect, I identify finally with “the self-identical form of pure action.” I am conscious of myself objectively as the “individuality” of the whole cycle, and I identify subjectively with the universal standpoint of Reason, for which the cycle stably persists. Every *Werk* is subject to criticism. But then it is not me, and I can criticize it with the best; it is only a vanishing moment of my truly objective reality.

- 16./410. The Thing Itself is the dynamic unity of the action as a whole. It is the unity of category and case—the unity of *my* purpose and *my* means with the public fact. It is the Category for which the thing of sense-certainty and perception exists. But it is now the object of rational consciousness, and it will go through a dialectic like that of the sensible thing.

The Thing Itself is my rational Self as the identity of Reason with the world. We have already seen that this identity is more than the moment of publicly visible achievement. The Real Individual is not the collapsing of all activity into that moment, but the universal awareness of the objective permanence of the whole cycle in which that moment of externally visible objectivity is simply the one that is immediately available to universal observation. Through my transparent activity of speech I can make every other aspect of the cycle public as needed; in this way the Thing Itself, “the spiritual essentiality in which all these moments [project, means, and Realized End] are sublated as valid on their own account” can be made universally visible or public. I can explain everything that is not visible: the project, the rationale for the choice of the means, and so on. Speech is now visible as the universal Category, because everything can be expressed in speech; and every particular act is just a singular case or instance of it. “What is the case” is a function of its status as a concrete embodiment of the Category. The *Sache selbst* is the identity of the “pure” act (or universal Reason, the Category of Reality) with *my* act (as a Real Individual). But it is precisely my prerogative, as the Real Category, to say how that identity is to be interpreted. In other words, the Thing Itself is the absolute Law-Giving.

This “Thing Itself” is the Category for which the world of Sense-Certainty exists, or the self-certain Cartesian “existence” of the Kantian “I think.” We saw it assert its “real individuality” for the first time in the Protagorean moment of Sense-Certainty (pars. 100–102). Now it will go through a dialectical cycle analogous to that of Sense-Certainty and Perception. In its first immediate manifestation it will show itself to be as elusive as the “Now” that is Night turning into Day and back again.

- 17./411. Thus the true Concept of consciousness, the consciousness of its Substance, has come into being for it. But it is only an immediate awareness of its substance, and the spiritual essence has not yet grown into a real substance. Every moment is accidental for it, and none is essential; and yet at the same time, the essence is equally present in every moment, so that the essence can be predicated of every moment [just as every moment of Time is “Now”].

The rational consciousness that we are observing shares our concept of it. It knows itself to be the substantial (or objective) Concept of Reason. It is the real Category of "reality" in the ordinary sense. The world in which I consciously live and move is "mine." But we are merely observing subjects, and so is this rational self likewise. It knows that what it is observing is a substance—the Thing Itself, the eternal objectivity of Reason, or that which "truly is" at all times and in all places. But it has only a subjective, immediate or formal, consciousness of this substantiality of Reason. In the same way, sensory consciousness is certain that its object is a substantial Being, but its actual awareness is a flux of non-Being. "Now" is Day *or* Night, but never the substantial totality. The rational individual (conversely) knows that the (F)Act Itself is the whole cycle of moments, but it is itself always on the move from one moment to another. On the subjective side, every moment of action can be said to be *my* total (F)Act, although none of them is the essential one, and any moment can be dispensed with if necessary. The moments of action are the *species* of the (F)Act Itself; but like the moments of time, none of the species exemplifies the Genus better than the others. So the Category is equally free and indifferent with respect to all of them.

What we have reached here is the Kantian critical standpoint. My rational consciousness supplies the *form* of my experience. I am the categorical structure of the whole world in which I live and move. But now, instead of abstracting the form for the purposes of a formal theory of knowledge (in which there is no really universal subject of scientific knowledge, but any singular observer can satisfy, or fill out, the form) we are going to take seriously the fact that every observer is (in common-sense terms) an independent agent and interpreter in her own world of experience. This is the practical point of view of Protagoras; and the Protagorean political theory depended on the fact that my ownership of "my world" is not secure. I can only have a world, for as long as I am *alive*. (Hence the "common *logos*" of my community can always prevail over "mine.")

In the position that we have reached, that fact has been long forgotten; it is taken for granted, now, that we are all equally rational beings, and that our common Reason "owns" its world. (I use "ownership" to express the means-end relation upon which rational utility is based.) But it is obvious that only a really universal (or substantial) subject can truthfully say "This world is mine"—and so constitute a genuine *Sache selbst*. This identity of self and world is not *private* "ownership." For the first experience of consciousness was that a complete alienation of what is supposedly "owned" is a contradiction (death); and the second was that the voluntary alienation that is possible (serfdom) is contrary to Reason. Our problem, therefore, is to find out how we can constitute a rational community which can truthfully say "This world is ours" in a sense that confirms, and satisfyingly validates the primitive natural certainty of every rational agent that "the world is mine." We shall find that we cannot do this by a simple rational recognition (i.e. by a rational agreement or convention). The rational self, which grows like its own natural body, must grow from the Kantian "spiritual essence," that it has now become, into a "truly real Substance"; and it can only do that, by comprehending

that its present formal independence grew out of a self-conscious “substance” in the first place.

- 18./412. The consciousness that has achieved the standpoint of this formal idealism is *honorable*; for it cannot fail to preserve its own honor. If the Thing Itself is found to be lacking in some one moment of the present case of action, it will certainly be found adequately in another.

The “achievement of this idealism” is a familiar fact of ordinary life, and does not depend upon the study of Kant in the schoolroom. Anyone who is conscious that she is generally recognized as entitled to have and to express her own point of view, has achieved it; and as the naïve consciousness of the *Sache selbst*, Real Individuality is the perfectly reconciled or Happy Consciousness. Its own ideal standard always applies to its action in some way or other. The action always deserves to be “honored” by everyone, once the agent has presented it in the right light; the monads do not have to be windowless, in order to be completely autonomous. The Concept of the Real Individual, does have an application that is familiar after all (and even unchallengeable, as we shall see when we get to Conscience).

The concept of “honor” here is the classical concept of *tīmē*. But the classical concept has been comprehensively inverted, since *tīmē* was what a hero received from his equals or inferiors in recognition of deeds performed in public. *Honor* is now what one claims for oneself (and what one can self-sufficiently accord to oneself) on the basis of explanations of aim and motive etc.

- 19./413. We can say: “Anyway I tried.” Or: “I was the one who started things”; “I lost, but it was fun”; “There was nothing I could do.” Or: “I deserve my good luck”; or even “I really was on the right side (though I only read about it).”
- 20./414. The “honor” of this consciousness arises from its not putting its thoughts together. Anything said, done, thought or just luckily found can be made into the *Sache selbst*.

The concept of “honor” carries with it a new emphasis that arises necessarily in the Fichtean idealism of the “Thing Itself.” The original object of the Real Individual was simply to express and display *its own* reality. But the Thing Itself is essentially a *public* Thing; and when one claims “honor” for one’s action, one is claiming that it served the public in some way. One justifies one’s action, by revealing the honorable aspect of it in speech, i.e., one shows that it was a contribution to the public good. *All* of our activities come within the scope of the Thing Itself, as long as we can give them an “honorable” aspect in this way. Hegel’s naughty boys who rejoice to be punished are achieving self-realization by revising their concept of what “self-realization” is, and raising it to a higher conceptual level.

The story attached to the nursery rhyme of Jack Horner claims that “Jack Horner” stole the reward that he received, while at the same time congratulating himself, and expecting to be congratulated upon the honor of it. He was an agent for the Abbot of Glastonbury in his dealings with Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell

during the “dissolution of the monasteries” in England, and he kept for himself the title-deeds of a manor intended for the King. In this story Squire Horner did do something to earn congratulations; but at the bottom of Hegel’s list we find the country squire who sat at home, hearing and talking about King Henry’s dissolution of the monasteries, and congratulated himself for his loyal support of the King, because (once it was all over) he approved of it.²⁸ In this “null case” Hegel lets the judgment “bad” force its way back into the monadically closed Concept (contrast par. 403). This gives the opening for the backlash of Common Sense which will begin in paragraph 415.

As Hegel says in paragraph 414, the “honorableness” of this rational consciousness depends on its never bringing all the moments together. The Thing Itself is essentially *my* Thing in any case, because it is I who am the pure agent, and my pure activity transcends any and every actual *Werk* that I may bring forth. The whole Thing always remains mine, because it is the real “me.” I can identify it as the mere formulating of a project (“the empty End”); or as something that happens without my doing anything (like the country squire toasting the King’s success in dissolving the monasteries).

Hegel himself speaks of “the idealism of the *Sache selbst*” (par. 412); and since the *Sache selbst* is the Category, this is the idealism of Fichte.²⁹ It may seem outrageous for Hegel to parody Fichte like this, and still more so for me to put a universally derided rascal whose self-congratulation became a byword of the nursery, into the sheep’s clothing of the supremely moral Ego. But Hegel labors the point at what may well seem to be a tedious length. We can only understand this, if we remember the *Atheismsstreit*. The intensely religious, and almost frighteningly high-minded Fichte was turned out of his professorship at Jena in 1798, for identifying “God” with the “moral world-order.” In effect, he was denying that God was an “object” in the way that other people and things are “objects.” God is identical with the philosophical *Sache selbst*—the higher, autonomous objectivity of Reason.

Hegel wants to make us see that the pious folk who regarded Fichte’s view as tantamount to the denial that God is really “there” at all, were not so bigoted, or so obviously wrong, as we, who live in a world where the positive authority of an external divine power is accepted only by sectarian minorities, are easily tempted to believe. If the high moral tone of Fichte means that his piety ought not to be challenged, then that same tone can put “Jack” Horner beyond challenge likewise. Either God’s law is there, and the public facts can be judged by it; or we must leave the autonomous self alone to face its *inner* God, and allow its honorable statement of the case to stand as the conclusive definition of the only public fact that can properly concern us. By denying that Reason has any religion Hegel does justice to the common sense that called Fichte’s doctrine “atheism.” In the end, God will be present as a Spirit who is as much inward as outward. But he will not be a God of “moral order” or of “honorable justification.”

20./415. The honor is dishonorable. For we cannot help knowing that it is our own Thing that is at stake; and that our own Thing is equally the Thing Itself. Just being concerned is

not enough. "Concern" makes the Thing mine and not objective any more; but *my* Thing remains a public Thing.

Fichte was an activist who never hesitated to sacrifice personal advantage in the cause of the "Thing Itself." So the commonsense reaction that begins here is only doing justice to his real moral position.³⁰

The honorableness of "Jack" Horner or of the squire is dishonorable, because even in the comprehensive inversion of the original concept of Real Individuality, the moment of ordinary "reality" ought to keep its proper place. The pure act of categorical embodiment is my project; and my project is a definite performance, which is properly what is there to be evaluated. The actual achievement is as much my project as it is instantiated category; my project is the embodiment of the universal category in actuality. These three moments form a Hegelian syllogism. The honorable agent affects to be concerned only with doing the right thing; but the expectation of being honored for it, reveals the agent's equal concern with the project as her own project. It also shows, however, why being "concerned" in some way is not enough. The integrity of the action in this subjective perspective is a Thing that is the agent's own; but it is also supposed to be a matter of general concern, a public good. When I become concerned about it as my Thing, I have forgotten about the objective "truth" and returned to my original consciousness of the *Werk* as the "abiding actuality" that is my self-expression.

Hegel is now embarking on the dissolution, the logical destruction, of the subjective *Sache selbst*. Before we follow in his footsteps, we should consider what an honorable resolution of the dialectic that lets insincerity break in so easily, would be like. Just as Leibniz is the philosopher of Real Individuality, so Lessing is easily recognized as the outstanding representative of the *Sache selbst*. We can see the true ideal of this form of Idealism in his celebrated revision of the choice of Heracles as a choice between two supreme goods: the possession of truth and the devoted quest for it. He identifies the totality of action as the *Sache selbst*; and consequently he surrenders the possession of the truth, for the sake of the quest. His formulation of the choice deserves to be quoted at length:

It is not the truth which a man possesses, or believes that he possesses, but the earnest effort which he puts forth to reach the truth, which constitutes the worth of a man. For it is not by the possession, but by the search after truth that he enlarges his power, wherein alone consists his ever-increasing perfection. Possession makes one content, indolent, proud—

If God held enclosed in His right hand all truth, and in His left hand the ever-active striving after truth, although with the condition that I must forever err, and said to me: choose! I would humbly fall before His left hand and say: Father give! The pure truth is for Thee alone.³¹

We ought to remember at this point that in the first paragraph of the Introduction Hegel defines the *Sache selbst* of the philosopher as "the actual cognition of that which in truth is" (par. 73); and further that in the Preface he is careful to

show just how error must be involved in the philosophical concept of truth (pars. 38–39). There, too, we find a clear echo of Lessing. Here in the main body of Hegel's discussion, the *Sache selbst* is the first, or immediate, form of Reason as a self-conscious Substance. How utterly trivial, how "formal," this awareness of the "Substance" can become, we have already seen; and it will be demonstrated again. But Hegel's theory of the *Sache selbst* in its empty abstract form offers his proof that the choice which Lessing makes is not an open option, but a logical necessity; and all that happens between this point in the book and the achievement of absolute knowledge is the concrete demonstration that what is in God's left hand is identical with the "pure truth" in his right.

(e) *The Dialectic of Humbug*³²

22./416. In paragraph 415 the Thing Itself and its moments appear as content. They are just as necessary as forms, since they are the sides of the reflective self-consciousness of the Category. As such they are conceptual objects that can be presented to others. I can exhibit either side, and switch back and forth; the concrete whole can *only* be presented as a sequence of the sides. So a play of individualities arises in which the others are always deceived.

I have been using the things people say to illustrate the inner dialectic of the *abstract* Thing Itself. But so far Hegel has only been considering the way in which the agent consciousness can relate to the Thing Itself in its private thoughts. So my examples should be taken only as referring to how we talk to ourselves. (Jack Horner does, in fact, talk to *himself* in the nursery rhyme.) In paragraph 414, however, Hegel accused the agent consciousness of hypocrisy in its attempt to preserve its "honor" in its own eyes; and as I have pointed out, "honor" is essentially a relation between the self and others, even when it takes the form of secret self-congratulation.

Hegel now considers the way in which the hypocritical, or dishonorable, aspect of self-congratulation is revealed in public life. The private self-congratulation of the individual for personal success in meeting the standard of the Thing Itself is the breaking point of Real Individuality, because the Thing Itself is essentially a public standard. The relation of the agent with other observers reveals the hypocrisy of self-congratulation, by exhibiting it as a "humbug" (Royce's word for Hegel's *Betrug*)³³ practised with the formal concepts of "unity" and "publicity," the inward and the outward, what you see and what only I can see properly. This is where the *Sache selbst* and the cycle of its moments repeat the dialectic of the *Ding* and its "qualities."

In my self-justifying or self-congratulatory reflection upon my action, I only need to consider the *content* of the different moments: "This is what I planned, that is how I went about it, and there is what happened; but I meant well, I did not realize the approach would not work, and I could not control how things came out." In my relations with others, however, it is the double *form* of the act (the inward unity

known concretely only to me, and the moments that can be presented to others) which is crucial. The problem that arose in paragraph 415 was that the agent can present the honorable aspect of the action for public approval; but the community can always see the self-realizing aspect of it; and the agent cannot deny that that aspect is also essential.

The ambiguity of the sides is already clear. The action is my self-realization; but on the other hand, it is the achievement of a common good; it is the universal Thing Itself, a realization of the True or the Good. Both of these sides are essential to it; and I cannot make the identity explicit for others, because it is not properly explicit for me. I am only reflectively conscious of the sides, and the sides are all that I can show to others. I know that both sides are equally essential (like the “unity” and the “properties” of the sensible thing); but the unity of the sides is present only in the abstract shape of the “common good” which is one of them. We have already seen that no one can affect my sense of failure. Hegel is more interested in the ambiguity of successful activity. We can all collaborate in achieving a truly public objective; but only I can achieve my own self-realization. In the concept of the *Sache selbst* there is a complete “interfusion” (*Durchdringung*) of these two “Things.” So my situation is an impossible one; misunderstanding and the general consciousness of hypocrisy must ensue. Hegel calls this situation *Betrug*. This is just where the accusation of “hypocrisy” is raised in ordinary life. What will be called *hypocrisy* later in the *Phenomenology* is a very refined relative of this familiar condition.³⁴

- 23./417. I undertake something. Everyone assumes that I care about the Thing Itself. So they say “Look, it is already done,” or “Let’s all do it.” But I really wanted to be the one who does it. (“He doesn’t care *really*,” they say—but they wanted to be the *doers* too.) Then if they stick to their own Thing, I call out “Look, you are not doing it right,” or “That’s all wrong” or “*That’s* right” (see how *supportive* I am). They complain, but they wanted their activity to be noticed. Everyone acts for an audience, and “realizes himself” for a community.

What we are up against here is the recurrence of the paradox raised by the Comte d’Argenson conversing with the Abbé Desfontaines at the level of rational self-expression. We can all smile at the wit, when the Comte retorts that he sees no “necessity” for the Abbé’s continuing to exist; for we understand that kind of material necessity well enough. But how can I show “rationally” that *my* self-realization is “necessary”? Why should I ever be the one who has to do anything? If others want to do it, surely they have the same right (if there is a rational right here at all). And if they don’t want to do it, it would seem that they can always argue that there is no rational ground for doing it, and that nothing but the satisfaction of my vanity is involved. Yet the real Category of Reason is necessarily the expression of singular self-conscious free agency.

The fact that the “unity” of the Thing Itself remains private shows us how the primitive concept of Real Individuality is preserved in its comprehensive inversion into the *Sache selbst*. But now we can see, too, why the essential drive for publicity

and recognition makes the inversion necessary. Self-expression is not self-sufficient. It needs and demands to be recognized. This need is the source of the ambiguity. That the Thing Itself is objective and public, does not mean that it is not also essentially *my* Thing; it is the standard by which my action is to be judged, the unity in terms of which the whole cycle of my activity is to be interpreted. For active Reason, the agency of the singular self-consciousness is always the foundation stone upon which everything else rests. To convince oneself that only the objectivity of the Thing Itself matters (in both senses of “objectivity”) is the worst pitch of hypocrisy that the Real Individual can reach. For as soon as one says: “Oh well, it does not matter who does it, as long as it gets done right,” one is acting like the country squire who sits in his armchair and does not do anything.

Thus, when others complain that my interest in some undertaking is not really rational and objective after all, because I insist on being the one to do it, they are deceiving themselves as much as I am deceiving them. They would not complain if they did not want to be the ones to do it likewise. Humbug arises from the fact that the *Sache selbst* is taken to be purely “objective” by all parties. Each of us finds it realized in the judgment and interpretation of her own actions. We recognize its objectivity, but we do not yet recognize our own subjectivity as essential to it. The deception involved is essentially *self*-deception. When we charge someone with hypocrisy (meaning the deceitful concealment of her real motive for doing something) we always have to recognize that, because everyone must necessarily have a personal point of view that defines what the situation really is for her, it is possible that what we take to be deception on the other side is self-deception on our own part. It will still follow that the agent is not quite the individual that we thought she was; but we shall then be logically obliged to forgive this. The Thing Itself is a world in which we must all share, and in which we must respect the general need to share, because we recognize that for each of us the Thing Itself must necessarily be our own Thing also.

- 24./418. We must not deceive *ourselves*. Self-realization and public service are both essential to the Thing Itself. Thus we learn that the *Sache selbst* is the individuated unity of both moments, and they are not the “species” of it (as Genus). The *Sache selbst* is the action of each and all, the *spiritual* essence of all. None of the moments of action is the subject, all are dissolved in the *Sache selbst*. The *Sache selbst* is the individual subject, not a predicate. This is how we all know ourselves as the Category.

The paragraph begins by recapitulating paragraph 417. The individual who is concerned with “self-realization” deceives herself when she claims to be concerned with the public good. Yet “self-realization” is serious; it is not play. No one is satisfied unless what they achieve is a public good. So the problems of rivalry, jealousy and competition in public service cannot be eliminated.³⁵

The Reason that we are observing can go on spinning round from moment to moment between “Yes, I want to do this for the good of everyone,” and “No, leave me alone, I want to do it by myself.” But it is at the same level as we are. Hence

either philosophical consciousness or the actual exigencies of an existing situation may push a rational individual into the posture of “true identity” with the *Sache selbst*, to which we are ourselves now ready to move. Thus, in a committee that is stalled by interpersonal rivalry, someone who is not personally involved may begin trying to give *procedural* advice for the whole group which resolves or avoids the deadlock. Such a one is identifying with the *Sache selbst* as the simple *unity* of the two sides, and assuming the standpoint of a “lawgiver.” But, of course, she does so only for the moment; her fundamental concern is to make the “spiritual animal kingdom” work. We ourselves must now pass on to consider the “Wise (wo)man” as a stable posture of Reason on its own account.

In the formulation of laws and precepts that everyone can follow, we have a *harmonious* identity of individuality with the Category. We no longer have to switch back and forth between “self-realization” and “public service” as if they were species of the Category. We have finally found the species of “rational action” that is identical with the Genus. With the wise (wo)man enthroned in their midst, embodying the *Sache selbst* simply, the great community of self-realization can be at peace (but only if individual Reason can fulfil the definition Aristotle gave as the goal of a good judge: “the judge wants to be, as it were, justice ensouled”).³⁶

When we identify with the task of Reason in organizing and running the community in this way, the conflict between self-realization and producing a public good falls away. We do not retreat into the complacent uselessness of the Squire toasting his King, or the mischief done actively by Hegel’s schoolboys who are pleased to receive the notice of corporal punishment (par. 413). We shall not even be satisfied with the “achieved end”—for “justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done.” Like “being-for-self” and “being-for-the-other” (i.e. self-realization and service) these moments are all dissolved in the universal *Sache selbst*; and the *Sache selbst* “loses the relationship of the predicate, and the determinacy of lifeless abstract universality”—i.e. we have “justice ensouled.”

Aristotle’s *dikastes* is an ordinary citizen; and we all have some practice in assuming this posture. For the world of active self-realization would not function (not to speak of the world of economic competition) if we did not all comprehend it. Whenever we attempt it (or whenever we recognize the success of someone else’s attempt) we are at that moment concretely identical with the “Category” simply. We are the *Sache selbst*.

In theoretical observation we only have to recognize the “order of Nature” in order to be the “Category.” We only have to conceptualize the experience in a way that is “universally valid”—i.e. “objective” in the Kantian sense.³⁷ But now, the “observation” of individual legislative Reason has a harder task. It has to *make* the law for the case.

One can only identify successfully with the *Sache selbst* by becoming an observer. This is where Reason is fulfilled as a *whole* through the return into its first observational stance. The question that remains is whether individual Reason can maintain itself successfully in this posture of an active movement that realizes itself purely as a universal *Sache*. Can individual Reason produce “universal laws”—and

if it cannot, what can it do *universally* as the self-realization of a singular consciousness? That is what we now have to discover.

Before we go forward into Reason's world of "pure concepts," let us briefly review the logical movement of this section. The world of the "Real Individuals" has the following moments: first position (or Concept), Self-expression; first inversion (or Judgment), expression of the Thing Itself, with the resulting antithesis of Self-Realization and Public Good; second inversion (or syllogistic mediation), the Self as the Simple Category, or the Thing Itself as the legislative subject. The initial inversion of the agent into the *Werk* is the "antithetic" moment of the Concept itself. It is only when we are reflectively trying to say what the *Werk* "means," that we reach the level of self-expression as a shape of *truth*.³⁸

We should notice also, before we go on, that although the world of Reason is certainly that of "Civil Society" we have not been concerned anywhere with *economic* rationality. The "necessity" of Abbé Desfontaines belongs to the sphere of the natural Self-Consciousness, and Reason has done all that is necessary in that direction when it liberates serfs and bondservants, and recognizes them as free rational beings with their own contribution to make to the public good. Reason is concerned with the evolution of "morality" (not of economic life) and with the discovery that the Moral Law can only become *substantial* when Reason recognizes itself as the *subjectivity* of an "ethical" tradition.

In so far as it must take the economic sphere into account, we may notice that Reason can operate as Understanding (just as it did in the "observation of the inorganic"). No ambiguities are possible about market honesty and market justice. No one can pretend to be "public-spirited" when he is convicted of cheating. Jack Horner cannot pretend to be a pillar of the community if there is enough evidence to put him on trial.³⁹ Also "family interest" is a legitimate ground for doubting whether some spiritual animals really have honorable motives; but as we shall see, the *historian* ought not to worry about our being imposed upon. She reverts to the simple standpoint of the *Werk* (and the endless discussion of its significance!).

V C(b): Law-Giving Reason

The transition from the last section to this one is easy to understand, but not so easy to interpret. Formally, the Sache selbst is inverted first (simply or abstractly) into "Betrug"; and then the comprehensive inversion of this antithesis produces the concrete individuality of Reason. "The Sache selbst loses . . . the relationship of predicate and the determinacy of lifeless abstract universality." The moral individual identifies, so it would seem, with the social substance, and thus the whole problem of singular self-realization is sublated. "The originally-determinate nature of the individual has lost its positive significance," as Hegel says in the first paragraph of the new section.

The significance of this is that in the new Gestalt the citizen ceases to act in the private sphere, and begins to legislate in the public sphere. But what exactly does that entail? We are not yet dealing with a legislature, but with a singular rational consciousness. We are now observing the ethical wisdom of "common sense." "Reason as Law-

giver" is like "Sense-Certainty." It is a "Gestalt" that never changes—and at every stage of our spiritual evolution it remains inadequate in the same way. The kind of ethical identification, the actual embodiment of the moral reason of the "Spiritual animal kingdom" that occurs here, can happen in any social situation. Rational law-giving belongs equally to the culture that has not yet achieved the "Ethical Substance," and to our world in which the Ethical Substance has come and gone; while the *phronimos* of Aristotle's Ethics provides a good image of this Gestalt in the world of the Ethical Substance itself. Aristotle gives us ethical precepts, but not laws; and he is well aware that only a "good citizen" who understands the limits of ethical science can use his theory properly. The Law-Testing critics—in Aristotle's world, the Sophists—will make mince-meat of anyone who thinks that his treatise is a "law book." Yet everyone who has used Aristotle's Ethics, or the Bible—or Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, like the amusingly instructive Sergeant Cluff in the Moonstone⁴⁰—as a "philosophical guide of life," has proved that "Law-Giving Reason" is a stably self-maintaining Gestalt.

(f) *The Common Sense of the Absolute*

- 25./419. The individual is now a universal *self*, not just a determinate nature. He is now the self-consciousness that identifies with pure Reason. He thinks for the community of which as agent he is only a member.

This paragraph simply explains the formal advance that we have made; and since we have still one step to make, before we reach "True Spirit" we must interpret this section primarily in its modern perspective. The *Gestalt* of "Law-Testing Reason" that we shall face in the last step, is not a sceptical Sophist but the supremely moral figure of Kant. Just beyond him, however, as soon as the concept of "True Spirit" has been stated, we shall meet Antigone who proclaims an "immediate" Law of Reason of the sub-political kind that we encounter here. For that reason the pre-political situation is almost as important to us at this stage as the post-political situation to which the developed shape of Reason belongs.

In the motion of Real Individuality there are three moments. Initially, the Real Individual is an *active* self, a monad whose activity of realization constitutes its world. But through the recognition of the Thing Itself as the necessary rational standard of its activity (in the second, dialectical, moment) the Real Individual becomes the self-conscious rational Category. We have now reached the third moment, in which the dialectic tensions are resolved. The Real Individual is now a universal self; and the monadic self that aimed to express its own inward nature or substance, has been reduced to the active *moment* of this universal self. But that self-expressive monad is recognized and accepted as the concrete content which the abstract form of the *Sache selbst* (as the objective of all rational activity) must have. The rational selves are now seeking to express not just themselves as individuals, but the laws by which the self-expression of all of them have to be bounded.

- 26./420. What the Self has to do is to lay down the law for itself and everyone else. It is ethical consciousness of the ethical substance. This identity of self and object is the *Absolute*,

so the rational self cannot transcend it (and does not want to). It divides itself into Masses which are the determinate laws of the absolute essence. But this distinction of masses does not affect the unity of the moments (of Being, or pure consciousness, and Self, or singular self-consciousness).

The essential task of Reason as the self-conscious Category is to define itself—that is to say, to establish the public standards by which everyone’s activities are to be judged and evaluated. But the structure must be all form and no content, because the subjective decisions of individuals are to provide all of the concrete content. This separation is an impossible task, and we already know why. At the beginning of “the actualization of Self-Consciousness through Itself” Hegel warned us that “It is in the life of a *Volk* that the concept of self-conscious Reason’s actualization . . . has its fulfilled reality” (par. 350).

He had to make this clear at that point because the proper thinghood of Reason had to be pointed out in order for the speculative meaning of Reason’s attempt to observe itself in the skull to be understood. The singular active Reason has been in quest of that spiritual thinghood from the first. The subjectively embodied *Sache selbst* encounters this *Gegenstand* at once. The life of the *Volk* is for Reason, what the infinite Life of the cosmos was for the Understanding. Just as that cosmic process was the supersensible Thing of which the Understanding was the duplicated awareness, so the substantial life of the *Volk* is the Real Thing for which the subjective *Sache selbst* is the rationally active self-awareness.

“Self-Actualizing Reason” was portrayed for us as the rational consciousness that had *lost* this objective reality. The distinction between the rational consciousness that still has to create this substantial being, and the one that once had it, but has now lost it, is now deliberately cancelled in Hegel’s presentation of the “Individuality that is Real for itself In and For Itself.” Reason “in itself” has the task of creating this substantial reality; while Reason “for itself” has broken out of it, and can remember it; so the Reason that is “in and for itself” must be displayed in both perspectives. This is what Hegel’s two “examples” achieve.

The overt dialectical movement of this section is excessively simple. It is almost a piece of formal logic. This reduction is possible, because we are here dealing with a subjective Reason that knows itself to be immediately identical with the objective *Sache selbst*. But there is a much more interesting implicit dialectic that is masked by this formal immediacy; and I believe this is one of the places that Hegel was thinking of when he apologized in his letter to Schelling for the uneven working out of his design.⁴¹

Except for the summing up of the reconciliation of the “spiritual animal kingdom” with the “Thing Itself” there is no statement of the new Concept. The Concept and its immediate inversion are simply presented to us *in medias res*, as they find themselves after the “experience” starts. This is *not* because the Concept can be found without effort in an obvious source. It is certainly clear enough that the climactic development of Reason is the Critical Philosophy. But the *Gestalt* of “legislative Reason” is not Kantian.⁴² Kant’s “pure practical Reason” we shall meet in

the “result” of this present stage; for Kant was faithful to his “critical” conception of the *Sache selbst*. Pure Reason is for him a formal standard against which actions (of all kinds, and at all levels, including “legislation”) can be measured. Pure Reason does not supply what Kant called the “maxims” of action; it only tells us whether our actual maxims are rationally acceptable.⁴³ But the project of Legislative Reason (according to its concept) is to supply maxims for all actions.

The obvious case of a thinker who sought to employ “pure practical Reason” in this legislative way is Fichte. Hegel had already spilled some vitriolic ink upon his efforts (in the *Difference* essay). He wants to show us, now, just why Fichte’s procedure is unjustified. Fichte claims to be “deducing” a social structure by the use of Pure Reason. But, in fact, he presupposes the structure of the “Spiritual Animal Kingdom.”⁴⁴ So his Utopian fantasy only illustrates how Rational Individuality can circle back upon itself and make itself impregnable against critical attack. The problem is to go forward, and to see what Pure Reason really *can* supply without the illegitimate reinstatement of a standpoint that has been sublated.

The Utopian example of Fichte does at least show us where to look for the permanently valid subsistence of this *Gestalt*. Just as Hegel began his discussion of “practical Reason” by giving us the Ethical Substance as our touchstone, so we should approach “Law-Giving Reason” with the memory of the Athenian Law-giver in our minds. Solon has the *true* substance of Spirit as the real content of his categorical consciousness; and he is a Wise Man so he can express this ethical substance in a definition of what is “right and good.” The justification for the move from the very contemporary, and often hypocritical, self-righteousness of the formal *Sache selbst*, to the consciousness that has the “absolute *Sache*” as its content, lies in the one word “immediacy.” Reason can exist *immediately* as an actual Category only in the consciousness of a Wise Man like Solon. Solon was a great traveler. His wisdom was recognized everywhere. It exists immediately as the “sound sense” that is *truly* “sound”; its “way of being” (*Dasein*) must have the sort of actuality that is not afflicted by the antitheses of “certainty and truth,” “universal and singular,” “projected End and realized End”; otherwise it may turn into the “sound sense” of the solid citizen applauding something she reads in the morning paper. The Reason that can be taken seriously when it “gives laws” (universally) has to have *true* categorical solidity behind it.

The difficulty of working out a subjective phenomenological transition once this “Absolute” has arisen is obvious—for “Self-Consciousness cannot go beyond this object, and it no longer wants to.” The one remaining movement is, on the one hand, too slight, and on the other hand, too enormous, to be readily articulated. It is slight because of the immediacy of the identity that we have already reached; it is enormous because it embraces not only the recollected ethical substance of the past, but the universal community that the appearing of the Spirit has created since it began.

The ambiguity of “substantiality” is present even in the present paragraph. For although it may seem obvious (to those who have read the first section of chapter VI) that we should identify the “ethical substance” with Solon’s Athens, the “Law-

Giving Reason” with Solon’s proverbial “wisdom,” and the “masses” with the *public* and *private* aspects of the City’s life—governed by “human” and “divine” law respectively (see par. 495)—this interpretation can be shown to be mistaken.⁴⁵ The *Volk* of the Ethical Substance is, in fact (not the Athenians or the Spartans but) the “Hellenes.” This *Nation* is the “ethical substance” that we have lost; and the *Cities* were its “masses.” Only of the Nation can it be said that “Self-Consciousness cannot and does not want to go beyond this object.”⁴⁶ The whole “phenomenology of Spirit” is the story of how self-consciousness has “gone beyond” the spiritual substance in that unselfconscious form where the singular consciousness identifies with the immediate community of the *polis*.

The modern national community will only be truly absolute when it becomes as much “subject” as it is “substance.” The community for which that proposition is true will actually exist when Hegel’s work is comprehended. He believed the time was ripe for it in 1805; but, as the subsequent fate of his book shows, the “ripeness of time” is a very elastic conception.

The differentiation of the Hellenic *Volk* into City-masses caused every City-mass to have two aspects. There was universal religious custom (the Divine Law) and a specific City custom and constitution (the Human Law). So the City-mass was itself subdivided naturally into two masses (the men and the women) by an immediately felt, and culturally reinforced, identification of each sex with one of these two laws. The “mass-structure” of a modern *Volk* is less clear; we shall come to that later.⁴⁷

27./421. These laws are “laws of Nature.” They need no warrant.

The “laws or masses” that are “immediately recognized” in the world of natural consciousness are easy to point out. Men identify with Hellenic “freedom” (the free self-determination of their City); and women with Hellenic “nature” (the continuum of their own family with the universal family of the *Volk*). It is clear that Hegel held that the differentiation of the rational community into “masses” was necessary in the modern “rationalized” *Volk* (cf. pars. 492 and 593); but his reading of the Enlightenment and the Revolution shows that no specifically differentiated “shape” is logically inevitable (cf. par. 594). That is why “Law-Giving Reason” is time-bound (and not universally valid as it supposes itself to be). Rational “law-giving” is the expression of an intuitive sense of the whole social situation. If we reexamine the analogy drawn in paragraph 492 with Hegel’s own *Philosophy of Right* in mind, we can plausibly infer that the masses that have to be immediately recognized in the *morally* rational world of the Substance that is Subject are the triad of family, civil society and State; and finally the spiritually unified *universal* community of the Church.⁴⁸

We can easily see that the Ethical Substance of the Greek *polis* is not fully adequate to the formal requirements laid down in this paragraph. Self-Consciousness is here said to be the *Fürsichsein* of the ethical substance. This substance faces it as its *Ansichsein*. Formally speaking, that is the *first inversion*. It is not “the active self-

differentiating individuality” that fulfils the *Sache selbst* in the *polis* (as claimed in par. 419). In actuality, it is the custom. The substantial identity appears to be achieved without stress because every member of the *polis* is trained to do virtuous acts until she is spontaneously virtuous. But in this generation of the ethical Substance as the “result” (the *Anundfürsichsein*) the antithesis of “certainty” and “truth” is reborn. Neither Antigone nor Creon is “the Category.” Each is only one side of it.

If Hegel had been challenged to explain why this present section and the next one are not developed methodically, he would probably have said that the proper methodical development of this section is the whole of chapter VI (and perhaps that the methodical development of the next section is in chapters VII and VIII). For both Antigone and Creon are “lawgivers”; and we shall see what comes of the conflict of their respective “laws.”

28./422. Individual self-consciousness just knows what is right. The *laws* are there.

It is evident that instead of going through the dialectic of the Ethical Substance as *Ansichsein* (*Sittlichkeit*), *Fürsichsein* (Moral Autonomy), *Anundfürsichsein* (Substance as Subject), Hegel is anxious to make a painless and direct transition to *Sittlichkeit*. Once we get to that, the dialectic concealed in its seemingly perfect immediate harmony and stability will unfold necessarily; and no one will be surprised to find that the “immediate knowledge” of Reason is as slippery as that of Understanding, and absolutely tragic in its direct consequences. But the examples of Reason’s immediate knowledge that Hegel considers in the following paragraphs are a sufficient indication that the immediate rational identity of subjective Reason with the determinate content of the “fulfilled *Sache selbst*” is not yet the proper identity of “certainty” and “truth.” This *immediacy* is exactly what is characteristic of the “knowledge” of Antigone and Creon. They are “Law-Giving Reason” in its internal “antithesis” (or “judgment”).

29./423. This immediate certainty must be taken immediately (as in sense-certainty). Pure being, or the immediate masses of ethical substance, must be *instanced*.

The return to the logical level of “Sense-Certainty” (just when we had reached an “understanding” grip upon the *form* of the *Sache selbst*) is a clear indication that the immediate certainty of Law-Giving Reason is not yet its Truth. The examples that Hegel chooses, show that we have to consider modern Reason; and we can plausibly infer what the *modern* “masses” are. For these examples require a culturally limited interpretation, if they are to be regarded as “laws” of the two “masses” of the Ethical Substance of True Spirit, and to illustrate how its “being” is constituted.⁴⁹

I shall try to show that these examples both express and characterize the “masses” of the “true [Absolute] that is not substance but equally subject” (par. 17)—the community of “Absolute Knowledge.” But they also serve very well to mark the beginning and the end of the whole process of the realization of Spirit as

“the Absolute” (or as the negated Substance that is equally Subject). Hegel’s aim here is to show us how far beyond the next actual link in the chain of *Gestalten* the “resolution” of the dialectic of Reason with its “Absolute Thing” actually extends.

- 30./424. “Tell the truth.” This has to be relativized by adding “according to best knowledge and conviction.” The commandment did not say this, so the *law lied*. But in its subjective form it is accidental whether it produces the truth [cf. par. 413]. It unites a universal form, with a contingent content. If we ought to know the truth first, then the immediacy of the law is transcended.

Cephalus gives “telling the truth and paying one’s debts” as the very first definition of Justice in the *Republic*; and of course, Kant uses it as the paradigm of a Categorical Imperative. But neither for Plato, nor for Kant is this positive formula sufficient. As soon as Polemarchus takes over the argument from his father we discover that we need not tell the truth to the enemies of the City; and not even Kant maintains that we must always actually tell it.

Hegel treats the precept as if it were a “principle” of modern common sense, without any “ethical substance” to depend on. But the “modern” (Kantian) commandment is the critical imperative: “Do not tell lies.” Hegel cannot accuse that of “not speaking the truth” (an accusation which is the first, or direct, inversion of “Tell the truth”). Nor can he get from it the conclusion that our duty as humans is to “know the truth.” This is the “second inversion” which he makes of the simple commandment; it resolves the tension between “Tell the truth” and “You need not tell what you do not know.” It both refers us to the commandment of the Oracle at Delphi “Know thyself,” and gives the theoretical imperative of the philosophical (or “scientific”) community, the community of Absolute Knowledge. Only that community can “tell the truth” without being trapped by the false perspective that is implicit in all finite truth. The double perspective is important.

But when we grasp this ultimate resolution of the simple commandment, we can see that one reason that Hegel had for turning it into an example of the merely formal *Sache selbst* (which we have already transcended), is that, as the simple or immediate expression of Reason’s ultimate goal, the commandment exists already for the naïvely rational self-consciousness which has not yet achieved the Ethical Substance at all.⁵⁰

- 31./425. “Love thy neighbor.” Again I have to know what is good for him. But as for doing what is good for him, I cannot do anything compared with what the State does, and I cannot act either ethically or effectively against the proper activity of the State. My good deeds are accidents and affect accidental circumstances; and their effect is chancy. A commandment is a regulative ideal, not a law.

The second example characterizes the universal community of substantial subjectivity. The commandment is not unknown to Solon and his world—but one’s “neighbor” is one’s fellow-citizen, one’s guest friend, or (at the limit) a suppliant who speaks Greek. The “lawgiver” of Reason as a universal philosophical Church

is Jesus.⁵¹ The chapter on Spirit, which begins with the downfall of the Ethical Substance, carries the concept through “self-estrangement” and finally back to the absolute reconciliation of “evil and forgiveness.” The spirit of absolute forgiveness which is “God manifested in the midst of those who know themselves in the form of pure knowledge” (par. 671) is unmistakably “Christ risen in me” to use the Pauline expression which defines the “third relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness (the experience of salvation).

At this point, therefore, we hear the voice of the “Shaped Unchangeable” in its simple earthly existence; and Hegel’s comment is interesting. There is nothing *eristic* in his approach to this maxim as there was in the case of “Tell the truth.” He is only concerned with the question of *how* it can be fulfilled. In the first place, it presupposes self-knowledge as the human good, which Hegel has already derived as Reason’s goal from the duty of truth-telling. Implicit in the making of this connection we have the speculative justification for the downfall of the Ethical Substance in the tragedy of its divided certainty of truth. The gospel of the crucified Lawgiver of the Spiritual Kingdom can only be received by a world in which all are estranged; for it is only in this world that the rational tie of common humanity can become paramount over all the natural ties of blood and life in common. Thus it is the determination to fulfil Apollo’s command⁵² that brings to pass the downfall of the Ethical Substance.

The “experience” of the Christian commandment has first to be inverted into the recognition that only the State can really fulfil it properly. A direct attempt on the part of the rational individual to carry it out would take us straight back to the Law of the Heart, and to the criminal excess of Karl Moor in the Frenzy of Self-Conceit. Only the State can create and maintain the conditions for the achievement of the good life (as Aristotle would have said). The new Gospel was non-violent, but it spoke especially to those whose lives were far from good. It could only become “the belief of the world” after it had itself become decisively “other-worldly.” Charitable activity in this world, being based on the direct perception of another person’s rational need, becomes completely contingent both in its impact and in its actual consequences.

Here again, the defeat of the project of doing active good throws us back to the dialectic of Real Individuality (par. 413); and this time Hegel’s insistence that the result of the contradiction is a simple nullification of the individual effort is nearer to being the whole truth than it was in the case of truth-telling. The climax of the effort to “know ourselves” in one another individually is the recognition that we must forgive one another for the inevitability of our failure to act with universal unselfishness. This is what we absolutely know about our efforts to “love one another.” So the imperatives of self-knowledge and brotherly love do finally both “vanish” in the experience of forgiveness. This “vanishing,” however, is like the “vanishing” of project and result into one another in the experience of self-realization. It is a vanishing of human rational knowledge and action together into the higher concept of *divine* knowledge and action. Finite spirit “vanishes” and Absolute Spirit dawns.

Thus the second inversion of active brotherly love in mutual forgiveness has a positive consequence of just the sort that we should expect. But all that is visible immediately is the simple vanishing of Reason's activity in direct self-contradiction. The "laws" of legislative Reason are infinite commandments of God. They cannot be fulfilled. Practical Reason returns us to the Unhappy Consciousness.

- 32./426. It is a logical fact that we cannot go immediately from the universal to the singular. We can only produce formal universals (non-contradictions).

Hegel's present object is to make the transition to the simple "ethical substance" in which there is no independent singular consciousness. The demonstration that Reason cannot legislate the universal duty of rational individuals without being reduced to contradiction, leads to the reconciliation (or second inversion) that Reason is immediately identical with the Substance which it was seeking to express as a subjective universal "law." "Tell the truth that you know" and "Love the neighbors that you have, through your absolute commitment to the shared way of life" are expressions of "immediate ethical being." They are part of Antigone's "unwritten Law."

But the "unwritten law" is terrifyingly ambiguous and slippery in its interpretation. At the moment of action, all that pure Reason can do, is to tell us whether the law that we have *chosen* to set up for ourselves, is *formally* a law of Reason, or not. Individual Reason has only the standard of logical identity (or self-consistency) to express its own relation to the universal substance of Pure Reason. The "laws" of Reason do not turn out to be real laws; but as "commandments" they express this formal principle; so it is this that emerges as the "result."⁵³

- 33./427. So we are left with a logical form (non-contradiction) as the form of law.

We have now arrived at the Kantian conception of Critical Reason. It is important to recognize the ambiguity of the *form*. The "tautology" is not like the " $A = A$ " of Reinhold and Bardili. The Reason that commands us to "love our neighbors" is not as helpless as that. It can tell us, for example, that our neighbors are not "property"; and this interpretation (as distinct from the policy of Solon, who abolished debt-bondage, but not war-bondage) has the non-formal second formulation of the Categorical Imperative implicit in it. Hegel uses the words "self-identity," "formal" and "contradiction" in a way that is far from "formal logic." So the "critical Reason" that emerges here is not as empty as his language makes it seem. The Categorical Imperative cannot tell us whether to have property or not; but it can tell us what can be "property." The community of True Spirit violated it unambiguously on that point.

Since I must give some example I have deliberately anticipated the problem of "property" which Hegel uses to demonstrate the helplessness of Reason conceived as moral logic. We shall see why he chose this example when we get to it. What matters at the moment is to realize that the speculative or dynamic "identity" of Reason

is implicit in the static “form.” Reason really does issue the “commandments” (of “God”); and it really is the critical exercise of Reason which, in the millennial movement that comes to a climax in the Enlightenment, will sweep away not only “true Spirit” but even serfdom and benevolent despotism at last. The closure of Reason as a *Gestalt*—made possible by the “immediacy” of its presence as the *Sache selbst* here—should not cause us to forget that even in his discussion of “logical laws” Hegel made clear that it is the speculative sense of identity that matters. The stability and harmony of the Substance we have lost is “identical” with that which we are just now in the process of regaining. Neither Antigone nor Jesus is formally a Kantian. But the piety of both requires us to “respect humanity as an end.”

34./428. The ethical essence is just a standard for *testing* what can be a law.

It should hardly be necessary now to point out that the transition made here to the Kantian conception of Reason could not take place while the Ethical Substance of True Spirit was in full vigor.⁵⁴ “Law-giving” is a necessary function of the Ethical Substance. The “testing” of laws began in the critical activity of the Sophists, and was seen by those who participated in True Spirit as the operation of a merely “external” reflection, engaged in only by aliens who should be banished, and traitors who should be put to death. For True Spirit the law is simply there; it is to be accepted as it stands, because it is the law. Some of it was proposed by a lawgiver and approved by the community in general (male) assembly. But all of what is thus approved is the voice of Athena, the wise daughter of Zeus who established the first assembly of the fathers; and there are some laws which *all* Greeks, not just our City, know to be the decrees of Zeus himself. For a citizen to look critically at the laws of the City, or for a Greek to hold himself justified in transgressing the decrees of Zeus, would be absurd. Socrates (who was held by his fellow citizens to be a critic of the laws) affirms, on the contrary, that the critical posture of a subject towards the City’s Laws can never be just.

V C(c): Law-Testing Reason

In the process of our observation of Law-Giving we have recognized the established custom and law of the community as the real Thing Itself. Only our own observing stance remains (with its logical laws and standards) as the formal essence of Subjective Reason. This must now set itself aside as an objective Shape. We must recognize that Universal Reason does not come into existence as a subjective critical form; it has to exist first as a Substance. (We have made a circle back to the Self-Observation of Reason.)

(g) Critical and Speculative Observation

35./429. Practical Reason as ethical substance has shown itself to be a formal universal. But as the active universal that tests laws it seems to be identical with what we do. Now, however, we are observing it; and the difference is that one term of *our* comparing has

vanished. We are not testing commandments against ethical substance, but watching the testing of them for formal acceptability.

When an individual Reason seeks to distinguish itself within the whole that is rationally autonomous and self-sufficient, its activity becomes entirely a matter of chance. What it does depends on what it knows, what its circumstances are, and what it devises (this last is what Hegel calls “the contingency of the acting”). We have already contrasted this contingency with the reliable stability and self-sufficiency of the community’s activity. What is present for our observation, now, is simply the formal *Sache selbst* that arose initially as the internal standard of the Real Individual’s self-expression.

Hegel’s summing up makes the dialectic of “Law-Giving Reason” clear; we have discovered that the Pure Reason of the agent is a comparative and critical activity exactly like our own. The individual Reason stands apart from all the determinate content of its experience. It cannot make laws, but only produces precepts which its changing circumstances reveal to be dialectical, i.e., they sublimate themselves, and move away from the level of application at which they were first given. This capacity for critical evaluation, this “sublating” power is what abides. The subjective Thing Itself has gone through all its paces, and now stands revealed as the *critical* power of Reason. Our object of observation now, is the very capacity that we are using. But *we* knew from the beginning that we must not criticize; we are only allowed to watch the observed consciousness criticizing itself.

The difference between what we are doing, and what Kant claims Reason can do, is that we are now observing the *Sache selbst* as a formal Universal which has set itself up as the measuring rod of the realized universal authority of the community. In this comparison of Universals made by the formal Universal itself, the predicate of authority must inevitably belong to the real moment. Our posture is not that of testing either the Concept or the experience. We only watch how they “test” one another. It is true that we were the “testing Reason” that found the subjective legislation of Reason wanting; and it is very proper for Hegel to admit that our contribution was a bit more than simple “observation” in this case. But now it is our own testing attitude that has resulted (by determinate negation) from that last test; so we are now the simple observers of that same attitude in the observed consciousness; and we are watching that theoretical attitude go up against the ethical authority which we saw to be the Substance that both determines how moral precepts are to be applied, and reduces all singular moral action to a merely incidental status.

All that this critical Reason wants to do is what we have been doing, and what we shall continue to do when it loses. The very fact that we can go on as before shows that although that testing attitude surrenders to the real universal at this point, the defeat is not total and final. It arises, in fact, from the formal character of the universal standard that Law-Testing Reason wants to apply to the legislation of the real *Sache selbst*. The standard that we use is a Reason that continually reconciles contradictions in the new identity of a higher, more comprehensive, Concept. We began by accepting “experience”; we shall now see that the practical testing of “command-

ments” has to accept an organized world of experience. After that we can watch how the law-testing capacity of Reason emerges and becomes autonomous in its organized world. When we asked what we should accept as *our* beginning, the answer was obvious enough; we began where consciousness finds itself. In the same way, the critical Reason that cannot generate its own system of maxims, must begin with the natural social system in which Reason itself came to consciousness.

- 36./430. Testing contingently given maxims is futile. Should there be property categorically? Yes there *may*, but also no, there need not be, says our test. There must be property according to need. But we can’t rationally wait till the need happens to arise. Reason requires that we ask what property-system everyone needs; and we find that there is a conflict between satisfying need, and giving everyone fair and equal shares.

Just as law-giving Reason brought its own futility to light by evolving from the duty of telling the truth into that of knowing the truth, and then coming to the absolute knowledge that it must forgive and be forgiven for ignorance and impotence, so Law-Testing Reason discovers in experience that it cannot test the Substance effectively. The particular example that Hegel chooses, for the exemplification of how all the cows are black in this “naïveté of the void in cognition” (par. 16), is the institution of *property*. This is by no means an accident, because the two commandments that we are carrying forward within the “result” of Law-Giving Reason give us opposite answers.

The duty of “truthtelling” embraces “paying one’s debts”—which presupposes private property. The ideal of “justice” here is that of “giving to each his due.” What is due to each is what she earns and deserves. That is the right measure of her share in the consumption of the common good—which would not be “good” at all, if it were not distributed for individual consumption. In this perspective the privacy of property appears as the absolute presupposition of “justice” and “goodness.”

On the other hand, the ideal of brotherly love demands the sublation of the concept of property altogether; and this is not a mere “law of the heart,” but is just as much a necessary presupposition of natural justice. The ideal of Reason is that every individual should realize her rational potential as fully as possible, so everyone should have what she *needs* in order to be able to contribute all that she can to the communal life (the complete fulfilment of the common good). In this perspective, all material resources must be regarded as being always at the free disposal of Reason; and this perspective is more comprehensive, since it uses the criterion of the “common life.”

Unluckily for this ideal, however, the implicit assumption that every rational life requires and deserves absolute moral respect can only be made explicit in a world in which there is recognized private property. For it is only in the world in which property is recognized, that the recognition that persons are not property can be achieved and enforced; and without that achievement, the standard of justice as “from each according to ability, to each according to need” can never be more than a “law of the heart.” Lovers will achieve the Christian ideal, with what they chance

to possess (and for as long as they happen to be in love). Beyond that level “property” is a “fate”—as Hegel recognized already by 1798/9.⁵⁵

This internal dialectic of the concept of justice is much more important than the fact that different standards of justice are justifiable in terms of their abstract rationality. Hegel begins from the extreme communism of brotherly love. If we attempt to obey the precept “Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?” (Matthew 6, 31) we shall contradict the essence of rational individuality, which begins with personal responsibility. The downfall of True Spirit, and the long struggle towards the community of brotherly love, will show us how absolute the rational imperative for the realization of this “conscious essence” is. Hegel makes explicit here just why the personal control of one’s own means of livelihood is fundamental to the actuality of Reason.

There could, of course, be a communist society which respects this imperative of rational individuality. But the imperative of distributive justice is abstract equality: everyone should have an equal share; while the imperative of concrete community says that everyone should have what she needs. The dialectic of particular (distributive) justice and general justice necessarily exists in a socialist society, just as it does in the natural society based on family property and inheritance. We shall never have a “rational” society (in the Fichtean sense) because “justice” is a dialectical concept.

- 37./431. Non-property appears to be contradictory. But so is property. Property is *real*; but also it is for consumption. My property right is admitted; but the thing is useful to everyone, so why should I have it? Real property is a thing, and will not be mine forever. (Why should we expect consistency to tell us what is *right*, when it cannot tell us what is *true*?)

I hope this analysis makes the abstractness of Hegel’s argument, a bit more concrete; it has the structure of a Kantian antinomy. Each view is overturned by showing that the other is just as reasonable, and that both are “necessary.” Some system of distributive justice is necessary; and neither the universal continuity of Reason nor the singular assertive impulse of Nature can be granted a categorical validity. As soon as we allow the concepts of communal ownership and private property to develop a rationale based on the concept of rational action (which is the basis of this whole phase of Reason) they must either become arbitrary and irrational (in the fixity of what is actually recognized); or they contradict themselves (if we allow critical reason to consider why general recognition is accorded). But the formal canon of logical self-consistency applies equally well to any fixed state of things; it is no help at all in deciding how the motion of the concept should be fixed. (The moving concept here is Utility; “property” is just one side of it.)

At the end of the paragraph, Hegel refers to Kant’s own insistence that formal logical consistency cannot provide us with any material “truth.”⁵⁶ Why should it provide us with any material knowledge of what is “good,” he asks. I do not suppose Kant (or any Kantian) needs to have this pointed out. But, of course, what it means is that formal practical Reason needs a given content, just as the concept

requires the intuition in theoretical knowledge. Hegel is using the logic of Kant's *critical* stance to help us make the next step. It is a mistake to suppose that he is criticizing Kant; he is simply observing the motion of the Concept of Reason.⁵⁷

- 38./432. Thus both moments of the fulfilment of the empty spiritual essence have sublated themselves. But the ethical substance needs both. Their sublation means only that they are moments that cannot stand alone. Their emergence and disappearance has the formal significance that this is how Substance displays itself as consciousness.

This is the most important paragraph in the last two sections of the chapter. For Hegel here acknowledges that the negative dialectic which reduces both Law-Giving and Law-Testing to nullity operates only because (and in so far as) each of them is taken in its subjective immediacy (i.e. as a function of the "common sense" of the singular agent). After we have passed through "the experience of Spirit" the whole situation of self-conscious Reason will be transformed. We ought to understand this already, for we have seen that the chapter on "Spirit" will actually contain the Law-Giving of Reason; and we have recognized that our own procedure as speculative observers is the real operation of Law-Testing Reason. The Ethical Substance has to contain the "distinction" of the rational individual self-consciousness which is aware not just of its identity with and dependence on the Substance (like Socrates), but of its Kantian moral independence and autonomy. The otherworldly experience of God's love for every one of his children, and of the salvation of the "immortal soul" in Him, is the essential foundation for this moment of subjective autonomy.

Our own law-testing procedure is a *moment* in the greater cycle of logical comprehension; and it has always known itself to be that. It is not formal in the way in which Stoicism is formal; we saw at the beginning why error and ignorance are necessary in the comprehensive cycle. Those who complain that "dialectic and absoluteness are *ultimately* at loggerheads," or that Hegel seeks to "close the gates of truth,"⁵⁸ are merely expressing the Sceptic's absolute knowledge regarding the folly of Stoic pretensions. It is precisely the proper justification of *their own* critical Reason that Hegel wants to offer. If he can succeed, then perhaps what their intuitions demand (continuing dialectic and "open gates") can be secured, without any simple or direct contradiction of the logical "absoluteness" of Absolute Knowing. For *we, too*, are using critical Reason.

Of course, one part of the reason why *we* can go forward in our own law-testing posture is precisely that we do not claim to *do* the testing. We shall *watch* the Concept of the Ethical Substance test itself, shatter under the impact of individual self-assertion, and reform itself as a whole that incorporates active rational autonomy. It is the achievement of this whole that makes *our* kind of observation possible. It is clear that Hegel thought Kant's Critique was the birth of a "logic of experience" that is *not* merely formal; and his Science of Experience is built upon the Kantian foundation.⁵⁹ So his criticism of Law-Testing Reason is only dialectical; it is meant to bring home to us the fact that a long historical experience is required for the laying down of the substantial foundation that gives law-testing the sort of range and validity it can and does have.

- 39./433. These two Shapes are forms of *honorableness* seeking content for the Thing Itself in “healthy Reason” and “understanding insight.”

As moments of the formal *Sache selbst* Law-Giving and Law-Testing are phenomena of the moment when the *Phenomenology* was being written.⁶⁰ In the form of “commandments of Reason” (or of the absolute “Ought”) the community of rational freedom was “exhibiting itself as consciousness” because it had completed its great cycle of historical gestation. Utopian fantasies such as “Perpetual Peace” are moments of the real *Sache selbst*; they represent the turning back of the *Gestalt* of Real Individuality upon itself to form a closed circle for which the merely subjective *Sache selbst* forms the centre. Those who write these fantasies can have the comfortable consciousness of having “made their contribution,” “taken the first step” and so on. They stood up for what is “honorable.” But their contribution will turn out to be just a moment in a cycle that closes “dishonorably” by their standards. Young Rameau will demonstrate that their honor is identical with his dishonor. Hegel goes on, now, to give a very mild foretaste of that radical critique. Fichte (the legislator) and Kant (the tester) are setting themselves up as the enlightened despot of Reason (or its conceited Heart).

- 40./434. It is only the sense of honor that gives these rational ideals their substantial status. The legislation and the testing are essentially capricious. The singular consciousness cannot legislate despotically; and the laws that are genuinely absolute cannot be rejected as tyrannical decrees lacking conscientious authority.

Like Shakespeare’s Brutus, those who produce rational Utopias are “honorable men.” If they were not sincerely devoted (like Lavater) to the advance of “the knowledge of men and brotherly love,” their merely subjective fantasies would have no rational validity at all. The “laws” of an individual legislator are accidental and arbitrary expressions of personal feeling and capricious priorities. It is as if a cobbler were to decide what shoes each customer *ought* to wear without regard to the measure each of us carries in her own foot. This arbitrariness is exactly what is objectionable in a tyranny; but an ordinary tyrant would not try to make spontaneous ethical customs obedient to his whims (as Fichte, for example, wanted the duelling fraternities at Jena dissolved, because they offended his conception of the human vocation).

This is not how the legislator functioned in the concrete politics of Greek cities. Solon, for example, was a recognized and trusted leader at Athens, and an acknowledged “wise man”—i.e. someone who understood what the established customs were, and how the constitution actually worked. He was chosen by the parties in conflict because all sides felt that he would try to be impartial, and would propose an acceptable compromise solution for actual conflicts; and when he had done his best, his proposals were put to the Assembly for confirmation. He was not asked to use his own rational insight to produce a blueprint; and nothing became law on the basis of his personal interpretation of what was right and good.⁶¹

When Hegel says that the law-testing attitude “argues itself to be free from the absolute laws, and takes them for a caprice that is alien to it,”⁶² the “absoluteness” clearly belongs to the laws as God-given. Antigone’s appeal to the eternity of the law that she obeys, and the transcendent, humanly incomprehensible, character of its authority (see par. 437) is the first “shape” of identification with one’s own rational Substance.

- 41./435. These forms are the immediate negative subjective consciousness of ethical substance. With their supersession we arrive at positive awareness of being in the ethical substance.

Legislative Reason and Law-Testing Reason are both critical (and hence negative) in their relation to the “Substance or the real spiritual essence.” They are modes of subjectivity that have not yet assimilated or embodied the substance in themselves. Hegel’s “not yet” indicates that he is thinking especially of contemporary Utopian moral rationalism (especially Kant and Fichte).⁶³ The content of these *subjective* forms of the *Sache selbst* is a personal standard of behavior or of rationality. In its universal aspect it is merely a Utopian fantasy, a *Sollen*.

The dialectic of formal self-contradiction establishes that “Law-Testing” vanishes into the immediacy of the Ethical Substance: the “antithesis” disappears. We might want to argue that Socrates is as much a critical or testing spirit as Kant; but he presumes only to interpret the “Laws” (and to criticize the interpretations of others). He regards the Laws as the source from which he has derived the rational views that he has, and never pretends either to be able to derive them from his own Reason, or to be in a position to criticize them. His own critical activity is valid for him only as a sublated moment within the unity of the Ethical Substance; and his last words in the *Apology* (before the enigmatic farewell) are a request addressed to those who have voted against him on the jury, that they should apply his method of criticism to his own children if they appear to need it.⁶⁴ This is how Law-Testing Reason is present as a “sublated moment” in the simply substantial ethical substance. We must never forget that the Ethical Substance, even in its most perfect immediacy, is made up of singular self-conscious *subjects*; and their points of view and differences of interpretation are as manifold and as different in the Ethical Substance as they will be in the consciences of free modern Individuals.⁶⁵ They make “the spiritual essence actual, fulfilled, and self-conscious” by “knowing themselves” as “sublated moments” of that essence. Their subjective views of the essence are as different as the view of Meletus is from that of Socrates, or that of the jurors who voted for death from that of those who voted for acquittal; and away in domestic obscurity, not allowed to speak and vote in the light of day, there are the women who can differ as much as Antigone does from Ismene.⁶⁶

- 42./436. For self-conscious Reason, the law exists first as what is *in itself*. We do not claim to establish it, or presume to test it. It is the immediately existing will of all. It is the Category, the world, the Ego of the community. It is not an alien power, but *my* will. I do not *believe* in it (as the Unhappy Consciousness believes in God’s Will).

All of the “sublated moments” (whether legally present or legally excluded from Socrates’ trial) are *Athena’s* children. We ought not to name this religious *Gestalt* of their spiritual being yet; but it is the best way to express their consciousness of their “spiritual essence.” Athena (and her father Zeus) is the source of their law. The Athenians could name individuals (Solon and Cleisthenes seem to have been the most important) who had designed and proposed their fundamental laws. But it is Aeschylus who expresses for us how they regarded the instituted modes of procedure that made this human process of designing and reforming the Laws possible. Athena herself decides between Apollo and the Furies when Orestes comes before the Areopagus for judgment. The verdict of the court is Athena’s own wisdom. This is what it means to say that it is the “absolute pure will of all.”

The “will of all” is Rousseau’s term for the “sum” of individual wills, where each counts equally as one, and we are not allowed to inquire about the motivation of the individual votes. So Rousseau’s “will of all” is bound to involve a division, and it is hardly likely to be “pure” (i.e. determined by universal rational motives alone). Hegel wants to draw attention to the fact that the citizens of an effective *polis* had an attitude towards the maintenance of their “Constitution” which was both “pure” and unanimous. Thus, the initial verdict of “guilty,” in Socrates’ case, was reportedly reached by a majority of less than sixty in a jury of five hundred.⁶⁷ But the verdict became the “General Will” in virtue of the “pure will of all” that the verdict should be arrived at by majority vote.

When the “will of all” is “pure”—i.e. when the motive of all the voters is the general good—then Rousseau calls it the “General Will.” But Hegel’s “pure will of all” is clearly something different. This expression refers to the logically prior will of *every* voter to accept and maintain the result of the vote (even if he himself is in the minority who voted for acquittal). This “pure” motive can sometimes affect an actual vote. We are told that, in Socrates’ case, the final vote for the death penalty was larger than the vote for the “guilty” verdict. The only plausible explanation for this is that some who voted for acquittal felt that Socrates’ response to the verdict showed that he did not accept it, as he constitutionally ought to. He was not part of the “pure will of all”; and since it was “absolute,” or given by Athena herself, he was thereby proved to be guilty of “impiety” as charged.

The jurors who changed their minds could reasonably regard Socrates as guilty of “contempt of court” (as we would say) because he suggested that the appropriate penalty for his “offence” was to be fêted and maintained at public expense like an Olympic victor; after saying that, he offered to pay the small amount that he had of his own (plus a fairly large sum that his friends were willing to raise for him). But his contempt for the charge and the verdict was quite plain; and since it was Athena’s verdict, it was the “absolute” will of God. In spite of his eloquent defence of his acceptance of the death penalty in the *Crito*, we have to say that Plato’s Socrates was a proto-Kantian (or better a proto-Hegelian) “tester of the Laws,” because he used his God-given opportunity to propose a compromise, to tell the jury that their verdict was mistaken and ought to be rescinded.

Socrates presumed still to speak for the Goddess after her decision was given;

and he went on to *prophecy* the vengeance of Law-Testing Reason after the verdict for the death-penalty was given. At this point, he stands not with the Machiavellian *Gestalt* of the individual rational agent who survives the downfall of the Ethical Substance, but rather with *us*, who are “recollectively observing” the disaster after it has occurred.⁶⁸

At present, however, the prophetic right of Socrates is not our concern; what we have to comprehend is Athena’s right. She is the “universal Ego of the category” here, because it is respect for her that every juror expresses in his will to uphold the verdict, and his expectation that Socrates will accept it humbly (and not carry on with his “philosophizing” in Athena’s very court when he has just learned that it *is* in fact impiety against her). The world of Athena is just the actuality of this sense of awe. Athena is not the presence of a universal Intelligence on a mountainside to the prophet who will be His lawgiver to the people He has chosen; nor yet is she the Stoic universal presence that Lessing’s Nathan has taught his daughter to reverence, so that she can say confidently: “Wherever Moses stood, it was before God.”⁶⁹

Athena goes with the loyal Athenian everywhere, but only as the knowledge that he must return to the land where he was born. The Goddess is nowhere *beyond*; her existence is not a matter of “faith” (either religious or rational).⁷⁰ She is present in the City (rather than in her temple-image, for instance, which is an “abstract” object that simply *points* to her “real presence”). Hence an Athenian cannot have the sort of strictly personal encounter with her that the penitent can have with Christ as she kneels before the Crucifix. The consciousness of Athena starts with the community of Athens and returns to that. The singular consciousness, with the self-assertive and self-preservative urge that pertains naturally to every living organism, has been completely sublated. Socrates, in the *Crito*, produces the ideal (logical or philosophical) expression of this, when he grants the claim of “the Laws” that they are his real parents. He regards his education as his *spiritual* conception, gestation and birth as self-consciousness; and he distinguishes between that and his natural birth as a living organism. Plato turns this rational—and hence implicitly critical—consciousness back into the mythical form that is appropriate and proper for the immediate Ethical Substance in the “noble lie” of the *Republic*.⁷¹

(h) *The Transition to “Spirit”*

The “presence” of Athena to the good Athenian is the paradigm case of True Spirit. It would not be technically correct to call Athena the “Absolute Spirit” because the Absolute Spirit of the naïve Ethical Substance is the presence of *Zeus*—and implicitly of the other Olympians—to the virtuous *Greek*. But Athena, as personifying what the good Athenian knows that she must live and die for, is the “Truth.” So Athena’s “presence,” the sense that *my* true *identity* is that I am an *Athenian*, is the best case by which to test and interpret all of the statements about Hegel’s “spirit” being a “more-than-individual consciousness” (Lauer) or a “supra-personal consciousness” (Taylor);⁷² and to see what answer should be given

to those who object that “a superhuman spirit” is “intrusive” into the “biography of human spirit” (Loewenberg).⁷³

Athena is a good case because (for everyone except Thomas Taylor the Platonist) she survived only as an *aesthetic* “presence” in Hegel’s time. Yet she is True Spirit. This tells us something vital. True Spirit is not an independent object in the same sense that the Other against which the natural Self-Consciousness pits itself in the life and death struggle is “objective.” Athena is now as “dead” as Yorick. Her spiritual existence is exactly *like* Yorick’s. But what is the difference between her survival as an aesthetic spirit, and her *living* existence? The answer is simple. Those who knew her when she was “alive,” experienced her in a different way than we do, just as Hamlet had previously experienced Yorick in a different way than we do. But also they experienced her in a different way than that in which Hamlet experienced Yorick (or they experienced one another). They knew her as their “substance,” the *content* of their formal rational capacity, and the living spirit that gave each of them their individual identity.

Aesthetically, of course, one aspect of their experience was the lump of stone that was so offensive to the God of Moses. But *we* can experience that still; and the fact that (unlike Moses, the early Christians or Cromwell’s soldiers) we do not have *any* “religious” experience of “the idol”—not even a *negative* one—helps us to see that the physical object was only the external focus point through which the sense that a mass of subjective experiences (cognitive and volitional) were shared in common, could be expressed. The spiritual “identity” took different shapes in different individuals and in different situations. It was different for Solon the lawgiver, and for Socrates the lawtester; but Socrates went on campaign, and fought bravely; and we need not doubt that Solon did, or would have done, the same.⁷⁴ The feeling of this identity does not make one a hero; it only makes one as brave as one is capable of being. That follows definitionally from the claim that the identity is “truly” felt. The wife with small children who sent her husband out to fight as well provisioned as she could make him, and with the best psychological support she could manage to give, expressed the same identity; and when the dead were taken up for burial it was the “identity with Athena” that comforted the widow and enabled her neighbors and friends to support her.

This sense of “identity with God” as my *true* selfhood is quite easy to illustrate and appreciate in the Greek experience, because their religion was so political. Is it correct to call that with which I feel identical “supra-personal”? I believe it is, because what makes it rational for the soldier to go out to die is the consciousness that this “ethical substance” is what his personality *depends on*. The person that he is, he could only create because this substance was available to him for his self-realization; and when he dies (as he must in the course of nature) it is this living community for which his personality will retain whatever significance he has managed to create in his life and death.

Is it “more-than-individual”? If this means anything other than the interpretation I have already given for “supra-personal,” then I think the rational (Hegelian) answer is “No.” To be individuated is the perfect *fulfilment* of this Substance.

A rational individual can exist only within the life-sphere of a substantial community of essentially similar individuals. Within that community "Spirit" is the identical self-structure that they all share; and the structure is not just rationally-formal but recollectively-material. A sub-linguistic sense of the identity (a sense of common "substance") may be the most important form of it (as when the widow is comforted after the battle). But in terms of discursive conceptual cognition, the minimum shape of it occurs when two users of a common language are united in the awareness of having "truly" communicated. This oneness of a selfhood that is necessarily reciprocally "other" to itself is just what rational individuality (the *Sache selbst*) is; and Spirit (whether finite or absolute) has no other experienceable being than this "oneness." Spirit *is* individuality; and one of its poles must always be a living mortal flesh and blood individual. Without that it would cease to be an "objective experience" altogether. Abraham's God is an object of our experience either because some living human was Abraham, or because some other human (or group of humans) invented "Abraham" and his experiences (just as Shakespeare invented both Hamlet and Yorick); and Abraham, or his inventor(s), belonged to a community of True Spirit.

We can, of course, ascribe self-consciousness to "spirits" of all kinds. This is what the Athenians themselves did with Athena; and they imagined plenty of experiences for her. But Athena is as dead as her worshippers (and as alive as her poets—so far as our cultural tradition has preserved them for us). All who live in the world of Hegel's Reason are agreed that there are no truly immortal self-conscious spirits like Athena. But that is not a matter of logic.⁷⁵ On the other hand, to suppose that there is a singular eternal Spirit (like Abraham's "God" taken as the absolutely independent Self with whom Abraham—or his inventors—assumed that he was communicating) is to suppose what Hegel's whole logic of "self-conscious Spirit" has already shown to be *impossible*. The impossibility is a conceptual one: in other words, when we speak about *this* Absolute Spirit we do not (and we cannot) know what we are talking about; and we cannot give any determinable meaning to what we say.

What it means to affirm the existence of Hegel's "Spirit" is exactly what the affirmation that they were "Athena's children" meant to the Athenians. It means that certain experiences of a deeper or higher identity that every individual has, or can have, reveal the true meaning of what it is to be rational (or human). This is affirmed even though (and indeed, partly because) these experiences appear to be in stark conflict with all of our ordinary discourse and assumptions about individual life as a struggle against the mortality to which we all fall victim. To say that the substantiality of Reason is "ethical" or that the "element" of rational existence is "Spirit," is to say that if we want to comprehend what distinguishes us, as human, from the rest of animal life, we must begin from the experiences in which we know that we are "members one of another." We must begin from the fact that Yorick and Hamlet are alive "for us"—even though they never lived for themselves in the ordinary sense at all—and not from the fact that we do not want to die, and that nothing will be "for us" in the way that it is now once we are dead.

The Hegelian doctrine is that these experiences of communal identity and spiritual life are where the rational comprehension of human individuality must start. We must begin with Reason as the objective *Sache selbst* (in both senses of “objective”). Reason is in the public world as a set of institutions that are on the one hand publicly identifiable, and on the other hand valid for all who can identify them. In True Spirit, the rational individual identifies her own rational humanity directly with this objective complex.

If we identify this reading of Hegel as what Loewenberg calls “the humanistic interpretation,” then the probability is that we shall ourselves be guilty of failing to invert the common-sense view of what it means to be human as we should; and it is quite certain that others will misunderstand us, and that we shall be partly to blame for that. To be a “human spirit” involves being a human animal. But Spirit is not *founded* upon Nature; the animal existence is only a moment in the *self*-founding of Spirit. The crucial distinction is that the humanity of the spirit is founded in, and begins from, the clear consciousness of being identically (or “substantially”) an ingredient in the great community of the living and the dead who make up the total fabric of Reason.

The ordinary consciousness of being human is founded in our animal life, with all of the overbearing needs that must be satisfied if human spiritual existence is to be possible at all. We ought not to permit any reduction of the rhetoric of “Spirit” to a rhetoric of “humanism” because humanity has these two necessary sides, and it is the “human animal” side that is *naturally* fundamental. For the “human animal” to go to the death in a struggle is (functionally) irrational; but that is not necessarily the case for a “human spirit.” We have to insist on the *spiritual* language in order to make clear that “rational individuality” is objective in quite another sense than that in which “natural individuality” is objective.

We are spirits in a different way from that in which we are animals; and it is as spirits that we are *essentially* rational. So in order to comprehend our rationality we have to turn the whole structure of our natural experience upside down. But we do not have to go outside our experience, except as a transitional step that we must make in order to perform the inversion (like the “construction” made in proving a theorem in geometry). I have chosen to take my stand on the case of Athena here at the very portal of True Spirit because we can all see that her “more-than-individual” personality is a “necessary construction” of Athenian “ethical life” and nothing more.

But I must finally come to grips with the only criticism of Hegel’s concept of Spirit that appeals to the *experience* of something “more-than-individual.” Fackenheim’s claim about Hegel’s True Spirit is that he is not entitled to say what he does about it because:

According to it, Spirit can be and is complete or infinite, and this assertion is thus far unjustified and indeed unintelligible. For it must thus far on the contrary seem that Spirit can *be* a bond between substance and self, if at all, only if it is eternally *fragmentary*.⁷⁶

Hegel, of course, is not making categorical assertions about what True Spirit is, but only about how it is experienced by those who are conscious of themselves “in it.” He fully agrees that the experience of “True Spirit” turns out to be “fragmentary.” Like Faust, the Greek Spirit, as an immediate identity, was wrecked upon the alien “necessity” of the life-world that it excluded. But even as a *particular* Spirit it was necessarily experienced as a “whole.” It had to be so experienced, because it is the true *identity* of the rational self that is conscious of “substantial being” in it.

The obvious objection—the one that is virtually explicit in Fackenheim’s failure to understand how Hegel can say what he says at all—is that all religious experience is “fragmentary” because it is the experience of a Spirit that “passes our comprehension.” Hegel himself took this awareness of Spirit as *sublime* to be typically Jewish;⁷⁷ and from the first he was looking for a way of sublating this sublimity of God.

The Greeks seem to be almost unique in experiencing the “bad infinity” of the Absolute only as an *alien* necessity or “Fate.” But that is why their “Spirit” is *true*. When we look for the phenomenal origin of this necessary “fragmentariness” (or finitude) of Spirit we find it—most obviously—in the bad infinity of non-human nature. Hegel will show (and in part he has already shown) that “the moral law within” brings us back to True Spirit; but apart from the abstract righteousness which Hegel’s argument bids us set aside in favor of Athena’s “wisdom,” the infinity of the Absolute is the “starry heavens” and the abysses of natural time. These fill the mind of the Psalmist.

According to Hegel’s theory of experience we must adopt a Hellenic-Christian view of that endless greatness. About the “starry heavens” Pascal says: “By space, the Universe comprehends and engulfs me like a point. But by thought I comprehend it.”⁷⁸

This is Hegel’s view exactly. He himself says of the infinite “life force” that fills the abysses of time, that it is “indifferent to what kind of mills it drives” (par. 285). That an exact contemporary of Wordsworth and Hölderlin (and a close personal friend of the latter) should see and say this, fills *me* with intellectual wonder. For it seems to be exactly what we ought to say about the “creative evolution” that gave the dinosaurs such a long run, before throwing up the mammal that is both Pascal’s “thinking reed” and the author of Auschwitz, the Dresden firestorm, and Nagasaki.

Whether we look outside or inside ourselves, the bad infinite, or the “more-than-individual,” is no suitable object of religious reverence. We must maintain Hegel’s “spiritual” terminology because his language clarifies the religious language of tradition in a rational way. Those who use it become functionally liberated from the bad infinite or Sublime; for even as “believers” they are bound to agree with Thomas Aquinas that what they are talking about is not humanly comprehensible in its “sublime” aspect; and they will be morally rational in the sense that they will not try to impose their religious faith upon others by the use of force (which would contradict its *spiritual* essence). There is no need to quarrel with the critically and morally “faithful.” The real enemy of the Hegelian theory is the purely “philosophical” interpreter like Taylor who ascribes to Hegel a theory which he says himself that no rational person of our time could hold.⁷⁹

I do not know quite what to say about Taylor's thesis because I cannot discover what his "self-positing Spirit" is. I suspect that he is ascribing to Hegel something that no clearheaded person could have held at any time because it is logically inconsistent. But it is also possible that what he calls "self-positing Spirit" is only the upside-down (or "mystified") view that enlightened common sense is bound to have of the rational concept of "substantial subjectivity" which Hegel expounds in the *Phenomenology*. So let us review that briefly in an anticipatory way.⁸⁰

Spirit is the self-consciousness of a community; and rational individuality has now been shown to be the self-consciousness of a community. So the *social* character of Spirit does not imply that it is a "more-than-individual" self-consciousness. We have discovered that in order to be rational individuals we must embody the way of life of a free community as our "Substance." In "True Spirit" the identification of Individual with Universal is simple and direct. There is a deep ambiguity in it, created by the opposed foundations of our natural and our rational individuality; but every rational individual identifies simply with the whole substance. Solon is the universally recognized "wisdom" of the community.

When the harmony of Nature and Reason is ruptured, Spirit goes into "self-estrangement." Now it has a *ruptured* self-consciousness like that which is shared between Lord and Serf. We were able to express Lordship and Bondage as a unity, but to express Self-Estranged Spirit is more difficult, because it has contradictory sides that must be expressed separately. When this Spirit comes to perfect self-possession, however, it is completely expressed by the rationally individuated self-consciousness of Rameau's Nephew. The crucial point is that this shattered community which expresses itself first as verbal contradiction, and then as universal utility (the material contradiction of the "end" that identifies itself only as a "means"), and finally as Rational Terror, is already the universal community of Reason. We can successfully express each of its shattered moments as an individuated shape of Self-Consciousness.

Finally Rational Morality constructs itself out of the shattered fragments of this self-alienated substance through a wrestling match with its projected absolute self-knowledge (the God of Reason postulated as comprehending the world of finite experience); and with Conscience we reach the solid earth of self-conscious common sense at last.

But what does "self-consciousness" mean at that mature stage? How can one rational individual claim to be the "self" of all these highly complex historical worlds? Anyone's knowledge of the world must be "fragmentary." The solution is that anyone who knows enough about the Substance to bring its "Spirit" to life, knows enough to comprehend its structure from within. Solon did not know everything about Athenian life. No doubt he had many discussions, and some heated arguments in preparing his constitutional reform. I shall argue soon that Hegel does not properly know what Sophocles expressed in the *Antigone*. In that aspect spiritual knowledge is an endless self-critical debate. It is what Oakeshott (followed by Rorty) called "the conversation of mankind."⁸¹ The effective existence of that conversation itself implies that the relevant "whole" has been comprehended. It

makes sense for me to criticize Hegel's view of Antigone, because he was right in recognizing the self-image of Athena's shattered wisdom in Antigone's confrontation with Creon. He saw the concrete social logic of the *polis* in the (completely imaginary) facts. What was required for that was only "lingering with the Thing Itself." In the aesthetic realm of recollection, the "Spirit" is only what Dante called "il lungo studio e il grand' amore." Years of devotion can give only "fragmentary" insight; but the fragment contains everything essential.

It would be "impious" for anyone to claim to speak with Athena's voice. Yet Aeschylus brought her on stage, and let her speak for herself. Moses came from the mountain and spoke God's words; and a long line of prophets followed his example. Hegel called Napoleon "this world-soul," and no one thinks he was mistaken. What saved Aeschylus from prosecution, or the prophets from being stoned, is the same Spirit that made Napoleon a "world-soul": the Spirit that enabled their audience to recognize that they were expressing the *substance* of real life. There is no independent higher Self behind or above these speakers (whatever they may all believe, and *need* to believe). There is only the spirit of Reason sustaining them, "proceeding between" them and their audience, and returning to them in confirmation of its substantial being as "what truly is." It sustains them (they are "*in it*") because it arises for them out of the cultural heritage that each of them shares with his fellows. What Hegel saw was that these uses of language (like Napoleon's faith in himself) expressed the real nature of human Reason (and Unreason) and of human social solidarity (so far as that solidarity is truly human—i.e. rational).

So Hegel does not deserve to be greeted—like the last of the Jewish prophets—by the incredulous cries of Meredy and Hardith, "Is not this the civil servant's son, from Stuttgart, etc."⁸² All that Hegel, the observer, does is to talk to us *about* the ways in which our poets and prophets have spoken, and to show us several necessary truths that we are not usually conscious of. First, he proves that the way they spoke was necessary for the advent of morally autonomous Reason; and then he makes us see how these modes of speech form a pattern that forces us to admit that *all* rational speech (not just that of the poets and prophets) is the utterance of a different "self" than the one who is fighting a losing battle to stay alive encased in a human skin. We all know this perfectly well. But never, until Hegel wrote, did we know how to put our rational and our natural knowledge together without speaking in ways that are not humanly interpretable and testable. A critic who accuses Hegel of speaking not as the poets and prophets speak, but in some highly peculiar *philosophically* prophetic way of his own, is committing the ultimate rational injustice of obscuring his supreme achievement. Taylor's theory of a "self-positing Spirit" that is somehow "transcendent" is itself "the sin against Hegel's Spirit."

43./437. The distinctions within the law are not accidental. They are *masses* articulated by the communal life as the immortal Gods. If I presume to ask "Who made them?" I have gone outside them. They *are*.

The last paragraph of the chapter presents only one serious problem for the interpreter. Having established the “completely transparent” unity of the “Ethical Substance” (for which the best gloss I can find is the conversation of Socrates with “the Laws” in the *Crito*) Hegel now speaks once more of the “*distinctions in the essence*” that are not “accidental determinacies.” Single living citizens such as Socrates are only accidental determinacies in the essence. The “distinctions” that Hegel means are “the masses of its articulation into members (*ihrer Gliederung*)” which are “permeated by its life.” These masses do not introduce any “inequality” into the “unity of the essence with Self-Consciousness.” They are “unsundered spirits which are clear to themselves, immaculate heavenly shapes that maintain in their distinctions the inviolate innocence and concord of their essence.” There cannot be any question that these “immaculate heavenly shapes” are the twelve Olympians; what we have to understand is the relation between “the mortals” and “the Immortals.”

The “unity of essence with self-consciousness,” for which I have been using Athens and Athena as a model, is actually the unity of the Greek cities in their conscious cultural distinction from the “barbarians” who do not recognize Father Zeus and join in celebrating his Games at Olympia. The description of the relations of the cities as “inviolable innocence and concord” is certainly ironic. Hegel’s *Einmüthigkeit* translates the Greek *homonoia*. But as soon as we turn to the myths and literary sources—and especially to Homer—we can see that even the “immaculate heavenly shapes” do not live “innocently” or “in concord.” That is only how they appear in the fixity of sculpture. At this moment, when the Ethical Substance is making its first appearance for us, the sculptural perspective is the right one. The “immaculate heavenly shape” corresponds to the “Concept at rest”; and this is what is pictured in the deliberately idealized sketch of the harmony of life inside one of the “masses” with which Hegel’s detailed account of True Spirit will begin.

The claim that the “Ethical Substance” is the whole *world* of the Greek cities raises the difficulty that it was not Hellas but Athens, Sparta, Thebes etc. with which the singular consciousness identified. Much of the hostility and warfare of the cities (including enmities that were traditional and deeprooted) reflects this fact. The conflicts of the immortal Gods were (as Hegel will later insist) ironic and not serious. The Gods could not literally *kill* one another; but it is not true that they could not *harm* one another. Hephaestus was lamed by the might of Zeus and so on. When they are interpreted philosophically the myths can only express what is “primordially” true; but such primordial truths as the lameness of Hephaestus and the jealousy of Hera have their historic analogues in the permanent enslavement of Messenia by the Spartans, and the absolutely inveterate hostility between Sparta and Argos.

Still, the cities did unite in harmony (almost) to repel the Great King of Persia twice; and one moral of the story of Eteocles and Polyneices is precisely that the *polis* was *not* really self-sufficient and independent.⁸³ Polyneices was able to raise an army in which six of the seven champions came from elsewhere; and when Creon polluted the altars of the other cities by forbidding the burial of the defeated dead,

it was those other cities who were “the Fury” that forced him to reverse his edict. So once the motion of the Concept begins, we shall have to admit that we are not just observing one of the masses, but “one of the masses moving within the Ethical Substance”; and it is precisely the fact that the human communities were not “unsundered,” “clear to themselves,” “immaculate,” “innocent,” or (above all) “of one mind” that brings the whole world that centred upon Delphi and Olympus to grief. Still, it is this unanimous substance of the national (linguistic and cultural) community that the Spirit aims to recover through the sublation of the *estranged* (supra-national) regime of servitude and alienation.

The fact that within the immediate Substance, singular consciousness identifies itself as Athenian, Spartan, Theban and so on, is just what the disappearance of critical Reason serves to explain. True Spirit is the invisibility of the *Suche selbst*, in the “disappearance of disappearance.” The Gods whom the loyal Athenian worshipped were the Gods *of the Greeks*. All of the cities had temples of Athena, and (as Plato insisted) the citizen-soldier was usually fighting his “brothers” when he went to war. This fact was visible in religion, but not in the daylight rational discourse of politics. Antigone, coming from the dark privacy of the family home, and caring only for the family cult that was maintained there, really does see what is invisible to Creon until it is too late—the paramount authority of Zeus. But the lines that Hegel quotes express perfectly both the immediate “absoluteness” of the law for both of them, and the lack of any context in which a critical consciousness can operate. It is the lack of that individually comprehensive context that makes the encounter between Creon and Antigone tragic.

The example of the “deposit” (which Hegel offers in his final contrast between critical Reason and True Spirit) comes from Kant, of course, but also from the first book of the *Republic*.⁸⁴ Again, we should note that the right of property is taken to be fundamental. Just as I can give away what I wish to, so (in the “state of nature”) I can take whatever I wish, and only the “law of the stronger” can compel me to give it up.⁸⁵ This is the primitive rationality of natural self-consciousness, and there is nothing illogical in it. It only becomes illogical if I belong to a community that has an “absolute” right, and that community recognizes me as the rightful owner of some goods, and my neighbor as the owner of others. The “love of my neighbor” may lead me to withhold his sword from him, if he comes to me raving. But then I shall try to call other neighbors to witness that I am not trying to steal the sword from him. That is how the naïve “ethical” consciousness works. There is no need to “test” the maxim that I should restore what is left with me for safe-keeping. Thus Hegel closes the chapter by giving True Spirit’s answer to the question “whether there should be property of not?” (while reinforcing the point that “pure Reason” cannot decide this).

The *truth* of Law-Testing Reason is that it begins by taking itself to be the “empty” Category that receives from “experience” all the content for which it “legislates *a priori*”; but it ends by recognizing that all the categorical structure is and must be already present in the ethical world that it was initially presuming to “test.” From “testing” it is reduced to *observing*, so nothing goes forward from

“Reason” except our own “Observing Reason.” The chapter on Reason closes into a perfect circle. It begins and ends in “Observation”; and the Observing Reason that goes forward is *comprehensive*. It does not just observe Nature as an external or found “objectivity”; it observes the Ethical Substance—the total unity or identity of Nature and Spirit as a harmony that has *made itself*. It is the Ethical Substance, seen clearly as the source of self-conscious individual Reason, that becomes the subject of the new experience. In this chapter (of our commentary) the “thinghood” of Reason has emerged as its (simple) “self.” True Spirit is the self-realizing consciousness that takes its own self-making to be the direct expression of nature. What True Spirit lacks is the awareness that Spirit must make itself in the radical sense of expressing a freedom that is *opposed* to Nature. True Spirit does not know that it must “create itself from nothing.”

This “nothing” is the speculative observing consciousness that we are carrying forward from Hegel’s fifth chapter.⁸⁶ After its disruptive presence in True Spirit has become apparent, we shall watch it go through the whole of its evolution (as already elaborated in chapters IV and V). What has happened in Hegel’s fifth chapter has been the transformation of “Reason” from a passive observer into an active self-positing “force”; this is apparent in the “inner circle” completed between “Self-Observation” (Logic and Psychology) and “Law-Giving Reason.” But the chapter as a whole makes its circle upon *our* own position of Observation; that is why the movement of Law-Giving and Law-Testing Reason has to be essentially a self-annihilation.

The first position of “Law-Giving Reason” is the resolution of the dialectical problem of the *Sache selbst*. But the experience of “Law-Giving Reason” is that all that individual Reason can produce, when it does successfully identify with and incarnate the *Sache selbst*, is “commandments” which the individual rational self cannot fulfil. The comprehensive inversion of this second position is the adoption of the critical posture that admits that all the ethical content of morality must come from “experience,” and claims to be the formal “category” by which all ethical intuitions must be “determined.”

The “experience” of that “moral category” is then to discover that it determines nothing; it is identical with the principle of “respect.” The comprehensive inversion of the resulting “infinite judgment” (the Category that should determine everything and can determine nothing) is “disappearance” back into a purely theoretical observation. Practical Reason must accept imperatives that come from a “heteronomous” source; looking back to chapter IV, we can say that Reason must initially accept the imperatives of Life. This natural life can be described indifferently as “subrational” or “suprarational” depending on whether we look at it in a “finite” or an “infinite” context. The naïve *ethical* consciousness must of course take it in its “infinite” context. But although the “unwritten and unshaking *Recht* of the Gods” is “suprarational” in the sense that it transcends the critical Reason of individuals, it is not “supernatural”; it belongs to “experience.” Reason, which came to a tragic-comic impasse when it looked for itself in the skull, has now found the “thinghood” in which it recognizes itself—and the occasion for its real tragedy.

On the side of Consciousness, all pretence of a “difference” between itself and its object can now be dropped. What I observe and recognize as the foundation of all judgment and testing is my own rational “nature”; my object is the Substance of which I am an accident. When “difference” is reborn (as it immediately will be) it is because the Object itself (the *Sache selbst* as a communal self-consciousness) cannot maintain itself as a living object—a “mass” within the “essence”—without an essential differentiation. The “mass” divides at once into two identical “masses,” the natural community and the self-conscious one—two masses that are quite “different” in spite of their real identity. The *polis* is both a natural mass of families, and a constitutional mass (*politeia*), or *Sache selbst* (*res publica*). Out of this *antithesis* Law-Testing Reason will eventually be reborn. But at the moment it has come to self-expressive identity with the *Sache selbst* that it merely observes.⁸⁷

Notes

1. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, IV, 1, 96–98.

2. Everyone who has read Kojève (or even a disciple of his like Barry Cooper [1984]) will know that I am here agreeing with, and confirming, one of his principal theses. I am also disagreeing with one of his minor ones, because he thinks that it is only *intellectual* action that “changes nothing and goes against nothing” (1946, 90). Kojève does not see that (because Hegel is not a materialist) moving matter about in ways useful to the community does not change anything in “Reason.” Hegel’s contrast is between utilitarian action and the action of Antigone (or between the productive labor of the proletariat, and their political “action”).

In connection with the “Napoleonic” thesis, however, we must note that Kojève’s Hero of Reason (like his Sage) can never transcend the world of “real individuals” and become the “world-soul” that Hegel took him for. Hegel does not think that the “man of destiny” (to use a familiar name for him that is neutral) could ever have arisen just from the *Hobbesian* struggle in which “rational utility” is born. His genesis was among the loyal servants of the Gods who sacrificed themselves in the struggle and never thought (like Hobbesian rational individuals) of submission. The universal “Spirit” that is *appearing* in Hegel’s book has no intelligible place in Kojève’s world at all. It began to appear in a man who died voluntarily without fighting to show that we all belong to a “Kingdom *not of* this World.” Hegel wants to show how that Kingdom comes to be “*in* this world” by comprehending its real relation *to* this world. Kojève admits the spiritual possibility of the “sage” who *has* this knowledge; but not of the philosopher who *expresses* the universal consciousness of the whole community as *its* “self-consciousness.” (In defence of Kojève we must admit that Hegel has, so far, remained a “Sage”; but there are still some of us who think—with Plato and Hegel, and against Hobbes and Kojève—that “philosophy” can belong to “the people.”)

3. It is the *Monadology* of Leibniz that expresses Reason’s consciousness of itself at this stage. The Real Individuals are Monads expressing what they are “in themselves” both for themselves and for everyone else. They are not “windowless,” but all live and move freely in the universal daylight of Reason. (Conceptually, Frau Bauer’s sphere is the smallest, and that of Leibniz the largest; but socially even the rational world of Leibniz is narrowly hemmed in by subrational tradition; it is Napoleon who is the shape of the *real* Category.)

4. For a somewhat more “progressive” view (and for the possible influence of T. G. von Hippel) see D. Macgregor (1992) chapter 5.

5. Once we take seriously the claim that Reason now engulfs all the previous shapes—"that its account with them is closed"—it is clear that we must not look for the "spiritual kingdom of animals" in a restricted compass (such as the University, the "learned world," or the world of art). The "spiritual animal kingdom" is as *universal* as its "natural" counterpart. The "learned world" is a useful *model* (partly because language is the only fully "transparent" mode for self-expression and the expression of "truth"—the *Sache selbst*). So we can forgive those—for instance R. C. Solomon (1983, 517; 1993, 206)—who use this *example*. I should like to forgive Royce, who begins from a broader concept (1919, 196–198); but he originated the "art for art's sake" heresy which is unforgivable. Kojève (1946, 90) flatly says "Cette individualité—c'est l'Intellectuel." For the right interpretation of the text he cites in support see note 3 and the Commentary (here and below—pars. 400–404).

Findlay (1958, 113) and Lauer (1976, 171) are fairly innocent of offence. But Bréhier (1926, II, 742ff) and Loewenberg (1965, 170–171) bring in the artists (whose *Werk* belongs to "Spirit" and will not fit in here). Hyppolite (1946, 287; 1974, 297) explicitly agrees with Bréhier; as far as I can see Flay (1984, 336 n. 17) is wrong in saying that Hyppolite criticizes Royce. They are all following Royce. G. Shapiro (1978/1979) gives a good overview of the "intellectual world" readings. He avoids the excess of including "artists"; and he rightly sees that *economic competition* is not involved.

6. The *geistige Tierreich* is more accurately identified as "Civil Society" than as "the academic community." R. C. Solomon (1983, 515) is on the right track when he points to the class structure of the 1805/1806 *Philosophy of Spirit*. The academic community is properly the *self-dissolution of all spiritual specification*. Even at its worst moments, the learned world (and especially the community of philosophers) realizes the negative *Gestalt* of "Absolute Culture"—a world of failing communication, but a rationally unified community nonetheless. (W. Desmond, 1989, provides a paradigm of how far the mistaken view of the academic community can go. But of course he is only one of many.)

7. At the other end of the social spectrum (and nearer to the beginning of this rational world) Queen Elizabeth—whose position and power were actually defined by tradition—showed her consciousness of being a Real Individual when she boasted that "I thank God that I am endued with such qualities that if I were turned out of the Realm in my petticoat I were able to live in any place in Christome" (Chamberlin, *Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 142; but I cite it from the *Oxford Book of Quotations*).

8. For Hegel's knowledge of *The Antiquary* see N. Waszek (1984).

9. This is the clearest way of expressing what Hegel means about the "determinacy" of the "original nature" here. Flay's commonsensical comment that "The capacities and talents which form the individual's actions are such that they are not only his, but are also appropriate to and belong in the world in which he acts. His purposes, ends, and means are also shared with others in that world," (1984, 144) follows from the fact that nothing is a "talent" unless it is perceived as a tinting of Reason. Flay's point that the same "tints" occur in others, or that talents are *shared*, is important to the concept of "natural Reason" as an "animal kingdom."

10. Far from being a *name* for a unity that is "unattainable" (as W. Becker says [1971, 110]), the unity of the Category is achieved (as more than a legal fiction) in every lawabiding citizen or group. There is a *contradiction* implicit in it; between its finite and infinite aspects as "objective Spirit." So Becker is right that it is *logically* unattainable in the objective shape of a perfectly stable social system for a finite community (such as Plato's Republic). But eventually this logical difficulty will be resolved in the absolute community of *forgiveness*; and at

all times (except for moments like 1793) the unity maintains itself more stably than any of Becker's games with "names" (or abstract concepts) can ever do. (The brief overview of Aristotle and Kant in Flay [1984, 171–175] will be found very helpful.)

11. It is worthy of note that Machiavelli himself does not need to make hypocritical distinctions between the policy of the Prince and the national *virtù* that is his goal.

12. These examples are in the spirit of Hyppolite's interpretation (1946, I, 293; 1974, 303). But it should be noted that they are *limit* cases. In the main, the answer is that the routine of life is set by the responsibilities the individual has chosen to take on. The presupposition of "Real Individuality" is "the career open to the talents"; and Hegel is considering, as always, the typical, fully mature, *Gestalt*. Thus the proper solution of the problem is that given in the next paragraph.

13. Lasson mistakenly divided this paragraph in two in his editing; and the division survived in Hoffmeister's edition (and hence in Miller's translation and his numbering).

14. This is why the identification of the *Sache selbst* as "commodity" or "money" is mistaken. A detailed reading based on this interpretation of the "hidden" meaning is given by W. Kaminski (1976, chapter VIII—see also 1977/1978). He understands *die Sache selbst* as "a synonym for the concept of commodity." But this is far removed from what "consciousness" takes it for (and even from what "we" can observe). André Kaan (1971) gives a more accurate account of that. With his help the ordinary reader may be able to understand the peculiar language of Howard Kainz (1976, 126–127 and notes). See also A. Hofstadter (1975).

15. To the best of my recollection it *was* Suzanne Langer who gave the example of the little girl in a class that I attended in my student days. But this is an inward consciousness, which may possibly be illusory according to the standard of "fact." Some writers (J. L. Navickas, 1976, 193 for example—with Flay's approval [1984, 336–337, n. 20]) use this seemingly romantic doctrine of self-expression as evidence of Hegel's "existential" distance from the "essentialism" of Plato. But it appears to me that the dialectic of "Individuality" and the *Sache selbst* is a picture of the Republic running itself without needing "Guardians."

16. Lauer (1976, 167–169) has a good discussion of the ambiguities of "action," *Werk*, and the *Sache selbst*. His translation of *Sache selbst* as "what really matters" is quite a good expression for what it means as it makes its first appearance. "What really matters" at this stage is "self-realization; but a realization has to be *generally* valuable. So the ambiguity soon develops. Ultimately Reason itself (as the real but universal "Category") is the *Sache selbst*.

17. See R. C. Solomon (1983).

18. The probable origin of this view is in Rudolf Haym (1857, 160; cited by Kaufmann [1965, 104] and Kainz [1976, 160]). But see especially J. N. Shklar (1976). Like Solomon, Shklar was persuaded by Kaufmann to regard Hegel's "logical science" as a mere *Schein*. But she remains much closer to the scientific spirit of Hegel's interpretation of human affairs than Solomon in spite of that. The inversion of perspective in her book arises from the elementary failure to appreciate the logical function of the "science of experience" within the "system of science."

19. J. Loewenberg (1965), 371. The view that Hegel's "method" and his "system" are at odds goes back to Marx; and the claim that the concept of philosophy as "absolute knowledge" involves an absurd attempt "to close the gates of truth" was made by Croce. But both Marx and Croce remained committed to the ideals of "Science" and "system." I have therefore chosen Loewenberg as the standard-bearer for the *existential* interpretation of Hegel. In

the first place his actual contribution to the understanding of Hegel's text is more solid and significant than Kaufmann's; and in the second place his inspiration came from Royce (who belongs to my own cultural tradition) rather than from Nietzsche (who does not).

20. See D. P. Verene (1985). Verene recognizes that Hegel's work aims to be a logical as well as an imaginative whole. But I have a strong suspicion that his frank admission that his interpretation is not meant to coincide with Hegel's both cloaks and arises from a conviction that Hegel is attempting the impossible. (If that suspicion is mistaken then Verene's book does not belong in this gallery, because he is not violating the integral unity of Hegel's project and achievement simply by focussing on *one* aspect of it.)

21. The saying sticks in my memory from the Horace lectures of T. E. Wright. Compare R. J. White, *Dr. Bentley* (London, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1965, 221).

22. This is not a position that I myself hold. I would be prepared to maintain, however, that the *Phenomenology* and the *Science of Logic* (1812–1816) are more important than anything Hegel achieved in the Berlin years of his world-historical prominence.

23. See B. Croce (1966, 178–190). Within the perspective of Real Individuality Croce's complaints that "Philosophy of Nature" and "Philosophy of History" are pseudo-sciences cannot be refuted; and the grounding of "Sanseverino's" general standpoint here is plain—cf: "it is the destiny of the exceptional man to come into the world with a task to perform, knowing however that the labors of human thought extend to infinity so that, accomplishing his task, he must resign himself to a transference of the torch into other hands" (183).

24. If we want to be formally correct we can say that it is "philosophical logic"; but nothing is *logic* until the philosophically "interested" community recognizes itself therein.

25. *Through the Looking Glass*, chapter 4 (*Complete Works*, Modern Library, n.d., 188–190).

26. No effective conversation would have the *pure* form that I have suggested. A more adequate formulation might be: *Alice*: "p." *Timeedledum*: "I take it that you mean 'q.'"
Alice: "No, not 'q,' but 'p₁.'" (Here "p₁" represents some reformulation of "p" which Alice hopes will prove more understandable.) But I have stuck to the pure form of double negation in order to represent clearly Hegel's doctrine that "positive and negative disappear together."

27. Peace has often been kept for a time (and the more violent forms of conflict are sometimes successfully avoided), by "treaties" and "agreements" to which the contracting parties attach different interpretations. Thus "vanishing" *can* persist.

28. The Horner who prospered at the time of the Dissolution was Thomas Horner, Steward to the Abbot of Glastonbury. He served on the jury that condemned the Abbot; and shortly afterwards, we find him established as the Squire of Mells. How he got the title to this Manor, we do not know. The story that he stole it from a pie containing twelve title-deeds sent to the King by the Abbot is not found before the Victorian period (see I. and P. Opie, *Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1952). I have deliberately chosen a political example, where "honorable" does not seem to be the naïvely objective epithet either for "Jack" Horner or for the King and his ministers. Squire Horner can get in because his dishonesty is only imputed, not publicly recognized. So can Findlay's "business executive"—if he is concerned with the firm's "bottom line" and not just with his own salary. But Findlay's "disinterestedly frightful Nazi" (1958, 113) is a problematic case. Hegel would certainly agree that the Jerusalem court treated Eichmann as a "real Individual" in rejecting his defence; but his argument was at the level of Conscience. Himmler, who was a model bourgeois in his personal life, might perhaps satisfy the Concept.

29. J. N. Shklar is right on this point (1976, 120–121) and her references to other places where Hegel criticizes Fichte are worth examining. She also gets the primitive shape of honorable concern with the *Sache selbst* right (125–126); and she shows how by taking *Beauty* as the *Sache selbst* the concept of this section can be applied to artists. But anyone who examines her interpretation in terms of Kant's aesthetic theory will see that Hegel himself does *not* mean to produce “a serious discussion of aesthetic theory” (129). (Compare especially the first two sentences—three sentences in Miller's translation—of Hegel's summing up in par. 418.)

30. In view of his utopian projects in social philosophy we can fairly regard Fichte as a good model of “Law-Giving Reason.” He does not really belong to the level of the simple *Sache selbst*.

31. *Werke*, ed. Rilla, VIII, 27; cf. H. E. Allison (1966) 135.

32. R. B. Pippin (1993b) discusses several crucial transitions in an interesting way; but perhaps his most valuable pages (73–77) are devoted to this section.

33. Royce (1919) 199; silently adopted by Findlay (1958, 112); and restored to Royce by Loewenberg (1965, 168).

34. That refined relative is not what is called “hypocrisy” in ordinary parlance at all. See the commentary on paragraph 666. But this is the moment to quote R. C. Solomon (1983, 517) who says with amusing irony:

Consider a scholar laboring for years on a study of a philosopher who has been dead for 150 years; on the one hand, no task could be more disinterested and free from suggestion of personal gain; on the other hand, no enterprise would be more personally cautious since, for the scholar—as Hegel indelicately puts it—“the most important thing is his own vanity.” But, of course, this is merely a hypothetical example.

(par. 665 will provide the only response that either of us need.)

35. The disagreements of parliamentary parties about what the “public good” actually *is*, belong to a higher level than these problems of “individual Reason.” But the “leadership contests” of a particular party often provide good examples of the “Humbug” problem.

36. *Nicomachean Ethics*, V, 4 (1132a 20–21). This is as far as Kojève's interpretation of Hegel can take us. His “Sage” is “Law-Giving Reason”; and the *ideal* of the “universal homogeneous State” would be to have a Sage at its centre. Kojève's “State” is the Civil Society of individual Reason (i.e. of “Real Individuality”). His commitments to Marxian materialism, and to the “existential ontology” of *Sein und Zeit*, make any “identity of thought and thing” impossible, except the identity of the rational individual with her body. Hegel's “Spirit” is necessarily a “myth.” Kojève can employ it usefully only as the conceptual instrument (of a nominalist logic) for organizing communal “ideologies.”

37. There are different *levels* of observational “objectivity,” but it begins already with the transition from Sense-Certainty to Perception; and this transition may not be easy, as anyone who remembers the first “observations” she made with a microscope will know.

38. We first saw this kind of subordinate internal motion in the Law of the Heart.

39. Self-realization cannot be separated from “self-interest”; but one ceases to be a “Real Individual” if one sets one's course with the simple object of getting rich. Thus Ernst Bloch goes rather too far when he says that “the ‘Spiritual kingdom of animals’ means the capitalist society” (1952, 67). But the dialectic of self-realization and social utility does presuppose

the world of free enterprise. Bloch is certainly closer to the truth than Kojève (or anyone else) who thinks that Hegel means to set up a contrast between “intellectual” and “real” *Werke*.

40. See Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*, *passim*. It is important that the wisdom should be rational; hence the Bible is a rather ambiguous example. Calvin conceived the Bible as a “law-book”; and there is no doubt that much of the “reason” that went into his use of it was his own. But the community that was obliged to burn Michael Servetus was no more “rational” than the one that burned Bruno (perhaps less so, because Servetus argued only for the *Sache selbst*, whereas in Bruno’s case the *Gegensatz* between the *Sache selbst* and his own *Sache* is clearly visible). There have been many Christians of all denominations, however, who have used the wisdom of their holy Book in a perfectly rational spirit. Its divine origin only serves in such cases to conceal, excuse, or explain the inevitable inadequacies, imperfections and outright contradictions of *Gesetzgebende Vernunft*. Those who, like Sergeant Cluff, adopt a book of *human* wisdom as their guide, simply prefer to be open-eyed about this problem, and not to have faith that there is a higher wisdom in which all imperfections and conflicts are mended and reconciled. (A. Cutrofello [1995, 155–156] has grasped this transition correctly in his identification of J. Rawls as the “*liberal lawgiver*.”)

41. Letter 95 (1 May, 1807), Hoffmeister, I, 161; Butler and Seiler, 80: “I need not mention—for you will find it out for yourself all too easily—that some sections still need groundwork [*Unterarbeitung*] in many directions in order to be subdued [to the plan].”

42. For a more carefully nuanced discussion of this question see D. C. Hoy (1989). As W. H. Walsh (1969, 26) pointed out, some respected Kant-interpreters have taken Kant to be a moral intuitionist. But even if this is a mistake, there are many others (for instance, Bishop Butler and the Moral Sense school) who have held that “sound Reason knows immediately what is right and good.” Nor does Hegel want to claim simply that they are mistaken. It is important for his Science that each *Gestalt* is a perpetual partner in the ring-dance of Truth.

43. Hegel is often careless in ascribing views to thinkers. But he would never be as careless as Lauer makes out (1976, 172). Lauer’s puzzle about the “inadequacy” of Hegel’s account arises from his own overhasty assumption.

44. *G.W.* IV, 54–62; Harris and Cerf, 144–154. In “Law-Testing Reason” the Critical theory of Practical Reason does reach back and *envelop* both of the preceding phases—but within a new concept of a higher order. We can get our legislative *maxims* from our education (and from those whom we recognize to be “wiser” than we are in some relevant sense). But everyone must critically evaluate both the “content” of their situation, and the “form” of their maxims for themselves.

45. The evidence for this claim is in the last paragraph of the chapter (par. 437), and we shall discuss it when we reach that point. In view of the ambiguity of this present paragraph, “mistaken” may be too strong a word. But the criticism of the first example would be different as applied to the *City*’s masses; civically one owes the “truth” to friends and not to enemies. Also, if we take the *Cities* as the “law-giving individuals” they each gave “different” laws. It seems clear that Hegel’s *Gestalt* of “Law-Giving” is meant to be both “pre-political” and “post-political,” but not “Greek political.” The culminating moment of chapter V is at the point of closure for chapter VI. Antigone and Conscience are both of them intuitive shapes of the Categorical Imperative. (R. C. Solomon (1983, 523–525) says that Hegel’s “glib dismissal” of Kant is “scandalous”; and that this passage about “masses” is “an unforgettably obscure rendition of Kant.” He ought to have seen, rather, that it is not an account of Kant’s theory at all.)

46. It is no longer clear that this is true. A structure of international institutions is taking shape which partially replaces the “judgment of God” (in warfare); and in view of what the “judgment of God” now means, it is clear that we must rationally *want* to replace it. This imperative is already implicit in the concept of the “Absolute Religion.” What “Self-Consciousness *can* do” remains to be seen; but since the “phenomenology of the Spirit” does not end with chapter VI, there is no reason to believe that this change of historical perspective requires any *logical* revision of the “science of experience.” (The *Philosophy of Right* is quite a different matter. But the historical inadequacy of that was already obvious a hundred years before Hiroshima.)

47. In paragraph 492 Hegel speaks as if there are necessarily *three* “spiritual” masses in modern society. But we shall see that there are really *four*. See chapter 5.

48. Hegel (and his world) saw the family and the State as the identical masses that are “given” to Reason in its naïvely “ethical” substantiality. But we do not have to accept them in that naturally determined form. Hegel himself would agree that the spiritual unity of the *universal* human family is the only ultimate standard for Reason. But he would also insist that the subjective application of this “standard”—even in a “critical” sense—is completely void of any practical validity or authority in the “substantial” community. It is only the actual structure of the community which we manage to establish that can have the practical authority of Reason (because we know that our rational lives would be impossible without it). We shall see why this is inevitable in “Law-Testing Reason.”

49. When we look for the two laws of Legislative Reason in the Sphere of True Spirit we can see that the “masses” of Reason are the civil community (of our Nation) and the religious community (of humanity living and dead). “Telling the truth” is the first precept of “Justice”; and “loving your (most immediate) neighbor” is the first precept of Antigone’s “Religion.”

50. Herodotus (I, 137) reports that the Medes taught their sons three things: to ride, to shoot, and to tell the truth.

51. This “law” (“Love thy neighbor”) was discussed by Kant (*Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. L. W. Beck, 1959, 399).

52. In the *Protagoras* (343b) Plato ascribes the saying “Know thyself” to the Seven Wise Men in council. Hegel certainly understood that at Delphi it meant “Know thyself, that thou art a mortal, not a God.” The conceptual context of “Love thy neighbor,” on the other hand, is the dictum of John (I John, 4:8): “He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.”

53. Finite Reason is about to close upon itself as the circle that began with the Observation of individual reasoning in “logical laws.” This is how Reason makes itself into an abiding *Gestalt*.

54. When Kant’s moral theory is interpreted without reference to the “postulates” that define the Moral World-View Hegel’s own theory can be seen as a first cousin of it. See especially R. B. Pippin (1991). (N. Rotenstreich [1987, 99–100] has used this paragraph to show why there cannot be a “religion of Reason.” But that is too easy a way of dealing with the problem. He goes deeper later on [103–105].)

55. On the dialectic of Justice compare S. B. Smith (1989, 201). For Hegel’s view of property see the fragment *welchem Zwecke denn* (*Hegel-Studien* 17, 1982, 20–23; Knox, 308); and “The Spirit of Christianity” (*TW-A. I*, 333–334; Knox, 221). Judith Shklar rightly points out that in criticizing Kant Hegel has the *Metaphysik der Sitten* in mind (1976, 137, n. 114). Hegel made a thorough study of this in 1798 (Rosenkranz, 87). (In Hegel’s own theory it

becomes a communal responsibility to see that individuals have the private property holding necessary for autonomous action. See especially M. Westphal (1987). For a good account of Hegel's own theory of property, see P. G. Stillman (1980, 1980b and 1977). The view of R. Teichgraber [1977] is flawed by misunderstandings.)

56. The reference is to two passages in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (K.R. V B 84, 189–193). For a good discussion of Kant's moral doctrine see K. Herb and B. Ludwig (1993).

57. Charles Taylor has written two valuable pages on the relation of Hegel and Kant here; and also on the relation of *Sittlichkeit* to concrete *Moralität* (1975, 168–170).

58. See the references to Loewenberg and Croce in notes 19 and 23 above. (Of course, this complaint is found everywhere. I have chosen only the most trenchant formulations of it, in writers whose respect for Hegel is genuine, and who do not have the sceptical consciousness of superiority to system-making, and triumph over illusion.)

59. Many interpreters who want to convince themselves that the *Phenomenology* is not essential to the system are simply trying to close their eyes to this problem of justifying the “certainty” of Reason. It is incumbent upon those who believe that Hegel's “system” is somehow valid without the Science of Experience, to explain both *what* the Hegelian logic is, and how we come to be able to *do* it at all (if it is anything more than the “neo-Platonic fantasy” that Michael Rosen calls it). My conception of Hegel's “logic of experience” as the transcendental logic of the historical evolution of human rational community answers both questions; and I do not know any other “answers” that will not fall victim to Michael Rosen's attack.

60. The formal *Sache selbst* is represented by what we might call “Stoicism reborn” in such Utopian forms as Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, or Fichte's *Closed Action State*.

61. This summary is based on the accounts in Diogenes Laertius (I, 45–62), Plutarch, and Aristotle's *Politics*, which were the sources available to Hegel; but nothing that I say conflicts with the more reliable account in Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens* (which he did not have).

62. I am not sure where this “argument” is to be found. I take it that Hegel regards it as generally *assumed*; so I have not looked for a place where it is *explicit*.

63. About the ancient Sophists it would be more appropriate to say that the substance has its reality in them *no longer*. The use of “not yet” with reference to the present indicates a change of temporal perspective in this third phase of Hegel's fifth chapter. In “Self-Actualization” we thought of the Ethical Substance as what was *lost*. *Now* we are thinking of its coming restoration in a fully rational form. But it is only the “lost” Substance that belongs to *experience*; so we shall return at once to the standpoint of *recollection*. (Hegel's own example of the commandment that is “not actual,” establishes that Jesus is included here, even if Lessing's *Nathan* and Jacobi's emotional appeals to the Gospel are more immediately prominent in his mind.)

64. *Apology* 41e–42a.

65. In the “Religion” chapter we shall discover that before there was an Ethical Substance there was a “first substantiality in which the subject simply disappears.” This was the “divine life” of *Nature*. Recognition of “individuality” (both “equal” and “unequal”) is the distinctive characteristic of *Sittlichkeit* in the proper sense.

66. For Hegel it was the slave-population that made the great difference between the classical ethical substance and the *moralized Sittlichkeit* that is “not yet.” For us it is the women-folk as well. But the embodiment of Kant's Categorical Imperative makes an enormous difference in any case.

67. The size of the majority can be inferred from “Socrates” statement that “if thirty votes had gone the other way, I should have been acquitted” (*Apology* 36a). The total size of the jury can be inferred from this comment, together with Diogenes Laertius II, 41 (but the reliability of the tradition is uncertain).

68. The possibility of this sort of “logical” prophecy shows that Hegel’s later doctrine that philosophy is not concerned with the future needs a cautious (and dialectical) interpretation. It is both true and not true. But we must leave that problem unexamined for the present.

69. *Nathan the Wise*, Act II, scene 2 (Everyman ed., 158). There is, of course, an ambiguity here, since wherever an Athenian went Athena was with him, and this was true of Moses in a similar sense as one of the *chosen* people. But what Recha means is clearly that we all walk in the sight of the same God always. The case on which my claim about Athena is based is actually *Spartan*—see Hegel’s interpretation of the conversation of Spartias and Bulis with the Great King (Herodotus, VII, 134–136) in *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 381–382; Cerf and Harris, 145–146). But Hegel could have cited Socrates’ attitude to banishment, if he had not been concerned at that point with *Jacobi*’s misinterpretation of Greek *Sittlichkeit*.

70. Hegel’s definition of “faith” here seems to refer to the Unhappy Consciousness (and it is certainly meant to *include* the Unhappy Consciousness): “for faith intuitively [the essence] too, of course, but it is an alien essence . . . faith begins from the singular consciousness, it is the movement of that consciousness, always going towards this unity, *without reaching the presence* of its essence.” As *distinct* from the Unhappy Consciousness, Faith proper seems to be the perfect *species* of this genus (the one that *does* imaginatively come into the “presence of its essence”).

71. *Crito* 50e; *Republic* III, 414b–e. The designation “noble lie” is the verdict of “Law-Testing Reason” in this instance. What follows about the four metals and the guardianship of the City (415a–c) is, of course, peculiar to Plato’s ideal City. But the beginning of his “Phoenician tale” simply spells out the argument of the *Crito* as the real meaning of the myth of Cadmus. The Athenians did not need the colorful myth of the “Sown men.” They thought that they were the *original* children of their soil.

Terry Pinkard (1991) has made an interesting attempt to insert the whole dialectic of chapter IV A between chapters V and VI. Some insights result, but the effort is unpersuasive because *rational* individuals (of a proto-Kantian kind) simply could not get into a “life and death struggle” about their “absolute freedom.” (I agree with Pinkard’s contention that Hegel wanted to reject the metaphysical basis of recognition, and substitute a non-metaphysical theory of social ethics; but I do not find that his essay shows how that change is achieved.)

72. Q. Lauer (1976, 177); C. Taylor (1975, 167) (and a host of other places). For a good critique of Taylor’s view, see T. Pinkard (1994, 8–17).

73. J. Loewenberg (1965, 298). Loewenberg makes this objection only later when we come to chapter VII. But Athena is there too. If she is not “intrusive” in chapter VI, then it is plausible to suppose that her more strictly “absolute” companions are not “intrusive” in chapter VII either (or to put it another way, the “non-intrusive” interpretation that we find for her should logically be the one adopted for them too. This is clearly Loewenberg’s own view, but the required non-intrusive interpretation eludes him [see 1965, 301–302].)

74. There is no direct testimony that Solon fought in a campaign. But for his willingness (and his confidence of ability) see Diogenes Laertius I, 49. (For Socrates, the best testimony is the speech of Alcibiades in the *Symposium*.)

75. J.M.E. McTaggart thought that a community of “immortals” was what Hegel’s theory *does* assert; and it is at least debateable whether his view violates Hegel’s Logic (though it certainly violates my neo-Kantian interpretation, in which the “Science of experience” is fundamental). All the other Anglo-Hegelians were sure that McTaggart was wrong about Hegel, and (although he was not as wrong as some of them about the “personality” of the Absolute) I have no hesitation in agreeing with them.

76. E. Fackenheim, 1967, 47. Fackenheim understands very clearly that “True Spirit” is “fragmentary” in Hegel’s own view, and that the completion of Spirit involves the comprehending of its history. But (as the word “eternally” shows in this quotation) he thinks that completion is not *logically* possible (because history is never complete). We have to concede that there must always be a “tension” between finite and absolute Spirit. Fackenheim infers that the comprehension of the Absolute by the finite spirit must always be “fragmentary.”

The inference is correct in its empirical aspect, but mistaken in its logical aspect. Fackenheim’s problem is the same as Loewenberg’s. Loewenberg is an agnostic and Fackenheim a believer; but both of them think (like Lauer) that the “Providence” of the World-History lectures is a real “being,” (not a *Vorstellung*, or the “outwardly” objective presentation of what is properly “inward”—i.e. a *logical* object. So they suppose that there has to be an actually comprehensive knowing (by the “Absolute Spirit”); and *this* knowledge we (logically) cannot have.

Hegel’s theory, on the other hand, is that we have to project the *Vorstellung* of the “Absolute Knower” into “outward” objectivity, in order to objectify for ourselves the formally Absolute Knowledge that we do (implicitly) have. When we have (by this means) made our absolute knowledge explicit for ourselves, that knowledge itself will show us *that* there is not (and *why*, as far as we are concerned, there cannot be) any “absolute knowing” of the material type projected in the *Vorstellung*.

All three authors know that Hegel claims for us only a “formally” Absolute Knowledge. But they do not see how he can possibly validate it, once the existence of the materially absolute Knower has been admitted; and if the admission were categorical, scepticism on that point would be logically sound. No finite spirit can (with rational self-certainty) have anything that deserves to be called “God’s knowledge,” if we mean by that a material knowledge that is “outside of time.” What we know (materially) about the “future” cannot be like what we know (materially) about the past; and there is not (there *cannot* be) a knowledge for which no difference between future and past exists. This comprehension of “absolute teleology” is a very important aspect of our actual philosophical (or “absolute”) knowledge.

77. As soon as we look beyond the phenomenology of the Christian experience of the Spirit, we are bound to recognize that this sublime or bad infinite consciousness has an important place in all living “universal” religious traditions. Hegel recognized this in his Berlin lectures.

78. *Pensées* (ed. L. Brunschvicg, 1914) VI, 348. A. M. Olson (1992) has now given us a theological interpretation of Hegel’s “Absolute Spirit” in terms of the *Umgreifende* of Karl Jaspers. He appears to accept an interpretation of “the Comprehensive” that is functionally harmless. (Cf. also N. Rotenstreich [1980]; and for a quotation that supports Olson’s view see J. Yerkes [1983, 270].)

79. C. Taylor (1975, 538) (and other places). In *that* passage it seems clear that Taylor is ascribing to Hegel the “Identity theory” of Schelling in an interpretation very like the one which Jacobi gives in the “Introduction” (1815) to his “Collected Philosophical Writings” (*Werke* II, 47–58, and 77–93; Di Giovanni, 1994,). It is a consistent interpretation of Hegel’s

“speculative *religion*”; but it is only a *Vorstellung*, not the “Science” that Hegel set out to found in 1806 at all. It is clear that Jacobi agrees with Taylor that no one can seriously hold what these “speculative” idealists are supposed to be asserting.

I am not sure that that is a just verdict, because I do not think that “romantic pantheism” is by any means dead. But no whole-hearted Hegelian, such as myself, holds anything of the kind. We want to have done with “faith.” (Analogical inferences about “superhuman” cognition, are like analogical inferences about “subhuman” feelings. Some may find them valuable—and indeed indispensable—for the satisfactory organization of their own lives. But the one thing which, by definition, they are not and cannot become, is “absolute knowledge.” So Hegel certainly does not subscribe to any Aristotelian analogical argument for the “existence of God.”)

A very good summing up of Hegel’s concept of Spirit—one that is inspired by Taylor, and arrives at a highly plausible summing up of Taylor’s position—can be found in M. Hardimon (1994, 43–52). The summing up is at the level of *religious* consciousness. Hardimon’s account has made me aware that the real issue between Taylor and a would-be “scientific” Hegelian like myself concerns the final overcoming of the *Vorstellung* of “the Absolute Spirit” in Philosophy. The *contradictoriness* of the *Vorstellung* becomes completely patent in Hardimon. This *mystical* religious view is the *content* of Absolute Knowing. But it can only be “knowledge” when its contradictory character is resolved.

The whole argument about “Self-Positing Spirit” is very abstract. Taylor’s dissatisfaction with the position he ascribes to Hegel, does not prevent him from applying the Hegelian concept of Spirit in his own philosophy of action in a way that seems to me admirable. See for instance C. Taylor (1978 and 1983).

80. Charles Taylor’s way of interpreting Hegel has an eminently respectable ancestry among the theologians. The “pantheist” interpretation of the Identity philosophy began as a line of critical attack (notably in the essays of F. H. Jacobi); but it was taken up positively by D. F. Strauss as the truth of speculative experience. W. Dilthey and W. Lütgert carried on this tradition—see W. Pannenberg (1969) for a review of the story. But compare also K. Barth (1959, 285, 286).

What Taylor fails to recognize is that when the theological mode of expression is rejected as completely implausible (or, more logically, as vague to the point of meaninglessness) Hegel’s post-Kantian “system of experience” has not been dealt with. There is a way of reading what Hegel says that does not require any “act of faith,” but only a close attention to the concepts that we all use, and to the ways in which they interact and fit together. Of course, this strictly immanent way of reading Hegel will not satisfy those whose religious experience impels them into “faith”; and some of them may find “faith” in Hegel’s Absolute Spirit satisfying (or debate about it rewarding). See, for example, K. Schmitz (1973). But the Hegelian *philosophy* is a logical account of why the *concept* of “faith” (*including* scepticism or unbelief) is *necessary* in the human thought-world, and a demonstration of how it works.

81. Compare *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979), 389. Oakeshott’s essay appeared first as a small book (Cambridge, 1959). It is reprinted in his *Rationalism and Politics* (1962, 1991). The image is older; it may have originated with Hölderlin.

There is an important sense in which Hegel’s concept of Spirit has its logical origin in the Averroist theory of the Active Intellect; and the beginnings of the “history of consciousness” can be found in Ibn Tufail’s philosophical romance *Hayy ibn Yakzan* (compare E. Behler, 1972, 190–197). But Taylor does not mean to ascribe metaphysical Averroism to Hegel. (In my own view, it would be correct to say that Hegel has provided a theory of how

human social consciousness constructs itself step by step pragmatically and logically so as to satisfy the Averroist imperative. But Hegel was conscious of the traditional problem in its Christian neo-Platonic, rather than its Arabic Aristotelian shape.)

82. Compare Matthew 13:54–58 with Loewenberg (1965) 301–302. J. Habermas (1973) has claimed that there are *two* models of *Geist* in Hegel's texts (and the controversies in the tradition certainly seem to support this view). There is an intersubjective model (in which *Geist* is a medium of communication); and an "idealist" model in which the "absolute Spirit" is an achievement of reflection. M. Theunissen (1970) agrees that both models are present in Hegel's Berlin writings. Only the first model is conceptually present in the *Phenomenology*. The second is shown to be a necessary *Vorstellung* of the religious standpoint. In my view, that is how it should be regarded in the Berlin lectures. (I agree with R. R. Williams' critique of the supposed "alternative"—see especially 1987, 14–18. R. D. Winfield's commentary on Williams seems to me to be based on another version of the false alternative.)

83. Plato's doctrine that the Greek cities ought not to enslave other Greeks shows a deeper insight than Aristotle's definition of the *polis*.

84. See *Critique of Practical Reason*, section 4, Remark (*Akad.* V, 27–28; Beck, L.L.A., 26–27); and *Republic* I, 331c. (It is certainly the naïve *ethical* view, that I ought to "love my brother" and "be his keeper"—but only in the restricted sense of "doing good to friends" which Polemarchus offers in place of the first definition of "justice" offered by Cephalus. The dialectic between "truth-telling" and "loving thy neighbor" begins at once in the *Republic*.)

85. Judith Shklar (1976, 139–140) is mistaken in thinking that Hegel is criticizing Kant's *ethics* here. It is essential to his argument that the ethics of dignity and respect is sound (otherwise he could not validly make his transition to "True Spirit"). But Kant's belief that one's ethical duty can be demonstrated by "moral Reason" is mistaken. Kant is *unethical*, when he begins to think that it needs or ought to be so demonstrated.

86. Our "Observing Reason" goes forward from one stage to the next, all the time. But it is important to remark upon it here, because the proper integration of *our* critical Law-Testing attitude into the "substance" is the problem that now remains; the substance itself must evolve into a structural image of Critical Reason, before that can happen. This is the theme of Hegel's chapter VI.

87. The approach of J. E. Russon (1993) is rather different from the one that I have adopted. But his "Conclusion" shows clearly what has to be integrated in the resulting Concept of Spirit.

Chapter 3

The Eden of the Spirit

VI. Spirit

We have now completed the phenomenology of the individuated shapes of Consciousness. From this point onwards we shall be dealing with the evolution of the rational social order in its logically necessary shapes. Hegel's sixth chapter is best regarded as a "phenomenology of law." Beginning with Ethical Law (or Custom) we move through Positive (Roman) Law to Natural Law and arrive finally at Moral Law. At that stage we shall have completed a circle because the last shape of singular Reason was the Law-Testing Reason of Kant's Categorical Imperative.

Hegel begins the new chapter, as usual, with a brief survey of the previous chapter, in order for us to see where we are, and how we have arrived here. He is concerned with the advance from the subjective moral Reason of a Kantian consciousness to the substantial ethical way of life of True Spirit. We should notice that this advance—which requires a new chapter—involves a movement back to the "life of the Volk" from which Active Reason began (par. 350); and we should take note that Hegel did not use the Kantian language of morality and conscience in chapter V, and he does not use it now. Morality and Conscience are modes of "Spirit" at which we shall arrive in the last part of this chapter. Only the formal category of a rational autonomy that takes itself to be able to make "laws of freedom" spontaneously, is transcended in the move from "the Category" to Antigone's "unwritten law." Concrete moral autonomy is an essential moment of the fully developed Objective Spirit. There are slaves in the Sophoclean world, but not in ours.¹

Historically, the transition at the beginning of this chapter is a great leap backwards. From Kant's Categorical Imperative we go back to a world of custom where there was no critical Reason at all. We should always remember that the standpoint of Law-Testing Reason is also our own standpoint as the speculative observers who are constructing the Science of Experience. It is our function to recognize how the concept of Truth is tested in experience, and so to achieve the "actual cognition of what is in truth" which is the Sache selbst in philosophy (par. 73). At the end of Hegel's fifth chapter we reached the formal Category, or the subjective shape of that Sache selbst. We had to construct that standpoint out of the experiences of our own culture, and the self-conscious doctrines of the Age of Reason, together with those elements of the earlier culture which that standpoint presupposes and embodies as an achieved formation of singular rational consciousness, before we could embark on the comprehension of our communal life. We shall now

see that the whole standpoint (and argument) of chapter V belongs within the social context of the "Truth of Enlightenment" in chapter VI.²

The "advance" from the world of Fichte to the world of Sophocles is a logical development. The formal category requires concrete content. The Categorical Imperative cannot give itself its own content (or even choose rationally between alternative social possibilities). The logical advance does not imply that Sophocles was more rational than Kant. On the contrary, Sophocles did not have the standards of what we call "critical Reason" at all. He was a superbly rational observer of his world and its life; but he was not a rational individual in the way that Kant and Fichte are. He presents the world that he lives in to itself (and mediately to us) in its truest guise. In that world no one was rational in the way in which Kant and Fichte are rational. Thus Sophocles, for example, certainly agrees with the Antigone Chorus that the Theban Shepherd is a "good man, for a slave"; but he takes the slave-status to be proper to the shepherd by nature.

It is not Sophocles, or even Plato, who are "more advanced" than Kant. It is rather we who, because we stand upon Kant's shoulders, can see and say why the Hellenism of Schiller and Hölderlin is an advance over Kant. Kant knew more than anyone had ever known before him. But he knew it all "falsely" (as Hegel puts it in the Preface [par. 39]), because he did not grasp that a rational order must uncritically be, before anyone can critically "have" Reason at all. This is what Hegel showed us by his critique of the formal *Sache selbst*, the standard or criterion that the subject of a singular rational consciousness has to realize internally.

As we saw in the world of the Real Individuals, the standard is needed in the first place, for the evaluation of our own rational activity of self-expression. And in that world it really does exist as the "law of nature"—the unwritten law that "lives eternally, not just today and yesterday," which Antigone recognizes in and behind the proclamations of Zeus or the Dike of the underworld (par. 437). Hegel fastened on these two lines of Sophocles as the primitive intuition of the "Categorical Imperative." This intuition of Reason as the world-sustaining Category is a double inversion of the critical Reason of the "law-testing observer." The ethical law is simply there; it is not to be tested, but only obeyed. That is the simple inversion. In Antigone's willing and devoted obedience, however, it becomes her law, the law of her Reason. This is a second inversion, because the law is dominantly united with the mind that recognizes it. Antigone does not posit it; on the contrary, it is her "substance." The critical attitude of "testing" the law is sublated completely. To "observe" this law as Reason, is to accept it as categorical, and obey it. The law itself becomes actual as Antigone's obedient subjectivity. This is the "comprehensive inversion" of the "testing" attitude; for Antigone must still interpret the law freely in order to posit (not the law but) herself as its actuality.

(a) Spirit as Substance

- 1./438. Spirit is the realized *truth* of Reason's certainty. It is its own world, and the world is itself. As Observation Reason finds itself; the "thing" it finds is not its body, but its activity as self. This too is one-sided; as the actual category, Reason is finally *in and for itself*. To begin with, this *Sache selbst* is only an abstract essence, an arbitrary self-

knowledge that makes laws arbitrarily, and has no consciousness of its substantiality. The self-conscious Substance is Spirit.

The first paragraph of Hegel's new chapter is simply a review of the stages by which *our* rational consciousness arrived at this intuition of its own "substantial" existence as Spirit.³ We can understand it only if we have followed the argument of Hegel's fifth chapter. To comment upon it is virtually useless, so I shall simply fill out the analysis that I have already given, and advise anyone who does not know what the analysis means to reexamine the detailed discussion of "Reason" with the summary in mind.

For Observing Reason the identity of itself and the world is evident first as the "laws of Nature." Then, in organic life, we discover that Nature's laws are not directly observable at all; and when we observe our own rational behavior, the absurdity of expecting to observe Reason as "natural law" in this direct mode becomes patent. Reason only *is* what it is for itself, i.e. it is what it *does*. But, as we are shown in Section B of chapter V, this truth is one-sided too. Reason has to be both "in itself" (i.e., it has to be found by observation) and "for itself" (i.e., it has to be a law that makes itself—like that living law of the organism which we cannot observe). This identity of "what is" with "what acts" arrives on the scene as the *Sache selbst*, the standard that Reason applies in doing what it does. But it is only an abstract standard that is reached in the evolution of singular self-expression; and the claim that Reason can *give* laws is rapidly exposed as a dialectical illusion since Reason contradicts itself in its "law-giving." Even the claim that it can test or assess laws is a mere opinion. When this opinion is put aside Reason finds itself as "Spirit." That is to say that Reason recognizes itself as the immediate presence of an absolute Law in the actual consciousness. What we realize, when we discover that any proposed law can meet our "test," is that we would never have set out to be law-testers, if we were not already conscious of an actual law in our experience that is quite beyond all testing. This experience was the necessary presupposition of our own "testing" posture from the first. Once we realize this, we can recognize where and when in our tradition that experience was, for the first time, self-consciously expressed.⁴

This last step is the only novelty. The subjective pretension that we can test laws for their rationality has to be looked at "from the side of the Substance"—i.e. from the side of the rational community of which we are members. We have to reflect on what we already know, when we claim to be necessarily able to do something which experience clearly shows that (as single individuals) we actually cannot do. This unarticulated knowledge is the consciousness that we are united with a "Substance" of whose full development our *critical* Reason is the climactic moment. We must now observe how that unity itself developed, in order to comprehend our own critical faculty.

"Communal recognition" was the standard of truth that became visible to us in the last chapter as the *Sache selbst*, or as the proper (Kantian) sense in which Truth is objective. But the primitive (natural) sense of "objectivity" is "existing in and for itself" (in such a way that no one can *have* or *possess* or *use* it). "Spirit" is the

coincidence of these two senses of “objectivity.” Thus the *immediately true* mode of Spirit exists where there is a spontaneous recognition by a human community of a standard for rational action that is absolute or “divine,” i.e. beyond all possibility of criticism because it is “objective” in both senses. Like the law of gravity, the law that Antigone recognizes is simply there.

Antigone (and all the other characters in Sophocles’ play, especially the Chorus) is “true Spirit.” The spiritual essence of Reason—its categorical objectivity as “law”—is “actual as consciousness” in Antigone’s mind. The custom that she follows is directly known to her as her own substance. She cannot live with herself if she does not follow it, because her natural existence as a living organism is not her “self.” She identifies her very selfhood with the way of life of this actual community to which she belongs. In the play she is about to become an adult member in it, by passing from the status of unmarried girl to that of wife and mother.

This substance is true spirit, because it is both “in itself” as law and “for itself” as action. It is a law of freedom, because it mediates the free existence of a community that gives itself its own particular laws. The “in and for itself subsisting essence portrays itself to itself (*sich sich selbst vorstellt*)” in all the ceremonial ways that are immemorially prescribed for its members to act, but especially in the religious ceremonies that are both common and peculiar to its members. When Antigone buries Polyneices in defiance of Creon’s edict, she is identifying both herself and him with the “law of Zeus,” i.e. with the universal customary way of the Greeks, not with that of Thebes in particular.⁵ True Spirit is the *Greek* spirit. That is to say, it is the universal spirit of a national community of free particular communities.⁶

- 2./439. Reason’s true essence is the ethical substance that is actual as Spirit. This actuality is the conscious identity of the self and its world (which are conscious opposites). As *substance* it is the common ground on which everyone stands; and its maintenance is also the goal that everyone strives for. It is the *work* that everyone helps to produce. Everyone gets his living from it, and it makes self-expression possible for all. This surrender for the self-expression of its members is its own life.

This paragraph consists of the simplest common sense truths about the ethical substance. But Hegel has organized them so that the paradoxical aspect of obvious common sense truth is made clear. We can overcome the apparent contradiction by giving the “sides” the different names that the Understanding would give them. Hegel himself sets us on our path by distinguishing Substance as the *essence*, and Spirit as the *actuality* of the ethical order. As actuality—i.e. as what “works,” and moves to “realize” itself—spirit is the “self” of the general consciousness.

In order to understand why simple common sense needs to be made into paradoxes, we have only to consider the ethical substance that is not yet a spirit, not yet “dissolved in the self.” Antigone says confidently that the “unwritten law lives forever, and no man knows from whence it appeared.” For her personally it is the decree of Zeus and *Dike*; but really the “unwritten law” is older than they are. We shall meet it in chapter VII as the universal Light-Essence for which everything

else is accidental and phenomenal. In the universal light there are no selves, so it is not a “spirit” and has no selfhood of its own—no proper name like the “Zeus” of Antigone.

“True Spirit,” on the other hand, is the immediate unity of substance and subject. So it is necessarily a self-consciousness. Hegel is deliberately echoing the beginning of chapter IV (pars. 167–168) when he says that “the Spirit steps forth over against the Self of actual consciousness,” but then adds that it is rather the case that “the Self steps forth over against itself as objective actual world.” Logically, the change of subject enables him to insist on the identity of the whole, and it is this preservation of self-identity that is important. The Spirit is the Self of actual consciousness; but it does also “confront the Self as an other” (Antigone’s immemorial *law*). This confrontation (with its imperative “otherness”) is also the typical shape of abstract moral Reason. The *absolute* otherness of Nature’s law is pre-spiritual; what is distinctive about the consciousness of Spirit proper is that the law-giving voice is known to be one’s own true self. So the true Spirit of the “ethical world” can only be adequately expressed by starting not from the Spirit but from “the Self”; it is the true Self of the whole community that encounters itself as “the objective, actual world.”

This objectivity is of the naïve, common-sense kind typified by the stone statue of Zeus or Athena. The lump of stone is a holy thing that must not be profaned or violated, precisely because the objectivity of God’s law in my spiritual world does not have the ordinary meaning of merely instrumental usefulness (or hindrance) to my rational purposes. This cultural order is my true self; and I am a moment of this substance. As Sophocles, I am an “Athenian,” one of the children of Athena; but I can express the truth of my situation by dramatizing a myth about Thebes long ago, because Athena herself is a child of Zeus. Properly speaking, my ethical substance is that of the Hellenes. In my true identity, I am a *Greek*; it is the Greek cultural world that is my true self.

As actual consciousness, the Spirit is truly the self of this substance. In its independent (or truth-knowing) aspect the rational self is not, as Descartes thought, a “thinking substance”; but neither is it simply the Aristotelian “soul”—the form of one mortal living body. It is the consciousness of a Spirit that has a truly substantial body—the Earth. In its immediate truth, Spirit is the consciousness of belonging to this particular community on earth. But the immediate truth of this consciousness is ambiguous. My community is a “universal” for me, only when it particularizes itself. I am a Greek, because I am an Athenian (or a Theban). As we approach the string of logical concepts through which Hegel characterizes Spirit as Substance, we should note first that I am a “Greek” because that word designates the community with whom I can immediately communicate both as a thinker, and as a rational agent. The essentially evanescent process of using a common language is Spirit as the universal Self; the whole string of “substantial” concepts depends upon it, and exist within it.

Hence Hegel can say that “Spirit, being the *substance* and the universal, self-identical, abiding essence, is the undisturbed and undissolved *Grund* and *starting-*

point for the action of all—and their *purpose* and *goal*, as the thought-of *in-itself* of all Self-Consciousness.” It seems paradoxical that what is necessarily there as the presupposition of everything I do, is also the purpose and goal of my life, that the “in-itself” is what has still to be actualized by my own self-realization as its abiding self-consciousness. But this was the simple common sense of Greek political life, and precisely because the “essence” did not in fact abide, we can see clearly why the circle was necessary. What the Greeks of the mainland and the islands achieved against the Persians, they could not maintain against Alexander, the conqueror who arose among themselves. What it *meant* to be a “Greek” changed at that point. The whole Mediterranean world was “Hellenized”; but the “Hellenistic world” was quite different from the narrower world of the free Hellenes. In Alexander’s world there was an “essence” still, but no “substance” any more. The Substance endured only as long as the Hellenes were effectively able to maintain it as their “purpose and goal.”

This *substance* was alive. The “unwavering and just *self-identity*” of the “law of Zeus and *Dike*” to which Antigone appeals, exists in the consciousness of a people divided into a number of self-maintaining “masses.” All of them take their living from the soil and the waters of Hellas; they depend upon the constant cycle in the sky above and the earth beneath. Zeus in the sky is not only their Father (in nature) but their King (in ethics). His thunderbolt is the arm of divine Justice; and *Dike*, who dwells with the Harvest Goddess and the Lord of Death beneath the Earth, is also an *ethical*, not just a natural, power. She is the personification of “custom” (especially the way of the Gods or of nature) and of social order. Her name is the root of *dikaos* (meaning “just” or “upright”) and of *dikaosyne*, the virtue that we translate as “justice.”

When Zeus and *Dike* prevail, all the children of Hellas can enjoy the fruits of Mother Earth (and of the sea) though they must work hard to get enough. But it is the cultural activity of their hard-earned leisure that is the momentum of the universal “self,” the spinning of the substance on its axis. This movement, this living soul of the natural “Infinite” of Understanding (par. 162) is *bewirkte*; it is produced by the human will, following the divinely and naturally appointed way that *Dike* has defined. If that willing obedience fails, then the *substantial* universal Self will vanish, for the “true Self” is nothing but the self-awareness *of* that willing obedience (compare par. 351). When it does disappear, the being of the *Sache selbst* will be dissolved in quite a different self—and “dissolved” in a more radical way.

Let us consider now the “tearing-up” of this universal substance. As “being-for-self” the substance exists in the independent lives of the Hellenes. It articulates itself into “masses” (par. 437) which are the different *poleis*; and the singular selves who make up these “masses” tear the substance up into separate lives. They “dissolve” it and “singularize” it into the living fabric of their own domestic existence.

What Hegel says requires us to concentrate on the spiritual aspect of this “tearing it up and taking one’s share for oneself.” The physical problem of getting a living for the singular natural self (and the family units) was there before the “true Spirit” came, and continues more or less unchanged when that Spirit is gone. It is

not in the daily round of material labor that the “being-for-self” of the singular consciousness is the self-conscious “moment of the action and self of all.” This economic “dissolution and singularizing of the essence” into private utilities is not where the “essence” is “actual and alive,” but rather where it is “dead.” We are “tearing up the living essence, and taking our share of it,” when we go to the Assembly or to the Temple; and above all, when we go to the drama festivals—for it is then that we are all dissolved as separate beings in one “Self,” women as well as men, slaves as well as free citizens.

This brings us to the final problem at the heart of the paragraph. When Hegel says that the ethical substance is the “universal *work* that produces itself through the action of each and every one as their unity and equality” it is natural and easy to think of the *polis*, its constitution and institutions, as this *Werk*. But the City is only the *particular* aspect of the universal culture that gives itself so benevolently to be torn up into our self-enjoyment. In the world of the “Real Individuals” we were gradually driven to accept the linguistic expression of the self—and objectively of the “true” and the “just”—as the universal *Werk* of Reason. Now we must remember what Protagoras said when he was asked “Who teaches virtue?”: “You might as well ask who teaches Greek?”⁷ It is the virtue shaped by one’s general education that is the *Werk* which is identical with “being-for-self,” and with the activity of self-expression. This is the inverted disciplinary shape under which the whole account of rational self-expression in chapter V C is carried forward into True Spirit.

- 3./440. The previous *Gestalten* are abstract moments of this living whole. They subsist as permanent *Gestalten* only within it. They advance out of it, and retreat back again. Spirit contains the moments of consciousness as an objective substance; and the moments of self-consciousness as an independent self. As the unity of the two it is consciousness that *has* Reason (as a pre-Kantian mode of awareness). When it is aware of Reason as existing (not just as *belonging* to it) it is Spirit in and for itself.

All of the previous shapes of consciousness are “abstractions” from this “self-maintaining absolutely real essence.” So we must try to see how they are present in the culture of the Greek cities. There is no problem about the “shapes” of “Consciousness.” Every culture has Sense-Certainty, Perception and Understanding; and “Understanding” belongs to the Greeks, in a strong sense, because they were the actual inventors of the “Infinite” which Hegel has reinstated for our culture as the climax of the conceptual development of the Understanding.

It is with Self-Consciousness that the difficulties begin. I believe I have adequately demonstrated in my first volume that the whole concept of Life and Desire is Greek;⁸ and that the Struggle for Recognition, Lordship and Serfdom, are Hellenic phenomena needs no demonstration. Stoicism and Scepticism are obviously Hellenic too; but there is a problem about how they can be “vanishing quantities” in the communal substance.⁹ The Unhappy Consciousness poses a big problem; but let us leave it aside for the moment and return to it after examining the Hellenic shapes of Reason.

For the *Gestalten* of Reason in the Ethical Substance, Hegel himself gives us a complete review later on (par. 461). This survey is interesting in several ways; and when we understand the point of view from which it is composed we shall comprehend the relation between chapter V and chapter VI better. In effect, Hegel returns to the moment where "Observing Reason" had to confess that it had failed to "find itself." At that point he had to tell us what it was that the singular observer had failed to find. Reason was not to be found in the world of observables, because it is the communal substance of the rational way of life that makes "observation" possible. The substance is now found. True Spirit observes itself as "the *Volk*" (pars. 349–352, compare par. 461).

But Reason is not "found" in the scientific sense; or, to be more exact, when it is scientifically observed, it is already passing away. "What observation knew as something *just found there*, in which the self had no part, is here a custom just found there, but an actuality which is at the same time the deed and work of him who finds it." So says Hegel; and this reminds us of Aristotle claiming that the *polis* is natural "but the man who first constructed such a community was none the less the greatest of benefactors."¹⁰ When one can formulate the paradox like that, one is not expressing the immediate *self-consciousness* of the *polis*. Aristotle is a Macedonian observer, looking at the *polis* in the scientific way from outside. But Reason finds itself intuitively from inside. The rational human consciousness discovers its own nature *as nature*. It knows that it had to make what it is discovering; and it even knows that there had to be a first maker-discoverer. This paradox of a *nature that is made* is expressed in the image of a hero-founder who was half-God and half-man.

The Reason that discovers itself as a self-making, is an active Reason that must make its own self-consciousness as an image of itself. Active Reason in chapter V was "outside the Substance." The Substance was either ahead of it, or behind it (par. 357). "The man who is outside the *polis*," said Aristotle (stating "the pure theory without actuality" [par. 355]) "must be either a beast or a God."¹¹ He, the self-sufficient philosopher, is a God (or at least, as like one as he can be); the pre-political barbarians are "beasts." But the Active Reason that makes the substance must "in itself" be *both* divine and bestial; for the moment of singular Reason that is vanishing into the Substance (par. 355) the founder who made the political community was "divine"; and the consciousness that leaves the *polis* behind will become bestial. We saw this latter piece of intuitive knowledge confirmed in the career of Faust, the master of all the sciences.

But in fact, Active Reason is not simply a vanishing moment in the Substance after all. It becomes substantial in the family. From the point of view of all members, family-consciousness is a consciousness of *transience*, or of vanishing and mortality. But the rational member identifies both with his family and his community; hence his transient enjoyment of life becomes "universal life" in the transition from "pleasure" to "virtue." "The singular [individual] seeking the pleasure of the enjoyment of his singularity, finds it in the family, and the necessity in which the pleasure perishes is his own self-consciousness as citizen of his people;—or it is his knowing the *law of his heart* as the law of all hearts, knowing the consciousness of

the *self* as the recognized universal order;—it is the *virtue*, that enjoys the fruits of its sacrifice” (par. 461).¹² Hegel speaks only of the male citizen. But everything he says is true for Antigone; and in the play itself *she* is the consciousness for whom the whole cycle is “true.”

“And finally, the consciousness of *the Thing itself* is satisfied in the real Substance that contains and maintains the abstract moments of the empty category in a positive way” (par. 461). Hegel has demonstrated this in par. 439: the spiritual substance is “ground and starting-point,” “purpose and goal,” and *Werk* (as action in process). The law-giving of the *Sache selbst* is the custom, actually effective in all minds and hearts; and its content is the unwritten law of the *Volk* universally, and the public law of this Greek community in particular. The “originally determinate nature” (par. 398) of the Real Individuals—which was found to be nothing but the indefinitely plastic freedom of universal rationality—is now properly determined by nature (par. 459) since the two sexes allot themselves automatically to the consciousness of the *Sache selbst* on its two sides.

These two sides of the *Sache selbst* are “the ethical *Mächte* in which it has a genuine content that has taken the place of those commands without substance that sound Reason wanted to give and to know” (par. 461). What is interesting here is that *custom* is clearly declared to be Law-Giving Reason. The only “lawgiver” in sight is the mythical hero who was both divine and human. This is odd because the Greek political tradition is full of “lawgivers” who were quite historical. Several of the “Seven Wise Men”—who belong to the earliest traditions of *philosophy*—were recognized “lawgivers”; and the professional philosophers who came later, regarded “law-giving” as a proper part of their function. Thus, Protagoras served on the constitutional commission for the founding of the colony at Thurii; and Plato’s Academy sent expert advisers on constitutional reform to several cities where the need for it was felt. None of this rational law-giving properly belongs to “True Spirit.”¹³

“By this means [i.e. through the genuine content] it [the conscious *Sache selbst*] has a standard that is full of content and determinate in itself, for the testing not of the laws, but rather of what is done” (par. 461). Like rational law-giving, rational testing disappears completely. The standard is “the *unwritten and unwavering Recht* . . . that lives forever, and none knows from whence it appeared” (par. 437); and Antigone does not “test” Creon’s proclamation as a “law,” but as “something done” here and now, at this specific juncture in the life of the City. Her attitude is radically different from that of Socrates, who accepted the “absolute right” of the Laws, but said that he would never give up the pursuit of philosophy. Socrates is Aristotle’s divine outsider. He is a Real Individual who is prepared to “test the laws” by the standard of his own Reason. He is not an “outside observer” like Aristotle or Protagoras; he knows that the *Volk* (Athena’s *Volk*) is his substance. But Aristophanes can quite legitimately portray him (in the *Clouds*) as spiritually *identical* with Protagoras.¹⁴

Thus, there were singular *Gestalten* of “Lawtesting Reason” in the world of the Ethical Substance, just as there were “Lawgivers.” There were also “Real

Individuals” of the most immediate type. Families moved to other cities, to practise crafts that were in demand. They might remain indefinitely but they did not (in the ordinary course of events) acquire citizenship where they settled. Cephalus (in the *Republic*) is a good example. But in the perspective of True Spirit, these *metics*, like the peripatetic Sophists and bards, belong already to the “Condition of Right.” Their existence—like that of Socrates, the actual moment of transition—is a visible sign of the implicit contradiction in “spiritual thinghood.”

Now we can come back to Self-Consciousness; and having studied how Hegel himself interprets the *Gestalten* of Reason as “vanishing quantities” in True Spirit, we realize that the problem posed by the moments of the final “syllogism” (of chapter IV) is a difficult one. The exposition of “Desire” as the primitive *Gestalt* of singular selfhood fits directly into the theory of the family as a self-liquidating educational institution for the *polis*; and although Lordship and Bondage achieves world-historical objectivity as the basic institutional structure of the Feudal System, it is easily recognized as a “vanishing quantity” in the *polis*. Slaves were “property.” The City itself owned slaves; and like all other private property, the whole slave population was at its disposal through the ethical commitment of its citizens. Hegel’s distinction between “Independence and Dependence of Consciousness” is mirrored in Aristotle’s distinction between the City’s “members” and its “necessary conditions.”¹⁵

The syllogism of Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness is only plainly recognizable in the *downfall* of the True Spirit. Hegel himself says that Stoicism becomes substantial, it becomes the “shape of a world” in the “Condition of Right” (pars. 479–480); and at that stage it is no “moment or vanishing quantity that dances forth and goes back into its ground and essence.” But we can distinguish here between Greek Stoicism and Roman Stoicism—just as we have distinguished between *political* servitude and *feudal* servitude or between the essentially Real Individuality of the City-Constitution, and the marginally Real Individuality of resident aliens (*metics*) or of “strangers” like the peripatetic Sophists. In fact, those very Sophists belong to the “shape” of Scepticism as it dances out of the Substance and goes back again.

This seems hardly good enough. For the City does not *need* those resident aliens and strangers in the way in which it *must* have slaves.¹⁶ Aristophanes can make everyone laugh at the Sophists. But his message is precisely that far from being “necessary” they are dangerous; and his “Socrates” is a portent of doom.

Plato’s Socrates is the solution of our problem. For he is both Stoic and Sceptic; and in his willing devotion to the City, the two tendencies are visibly displayed as “vanishing moments” essential to the Substance. The *polis* “comes into existence for the sake of life, and continues in existence for the sake of the good life,” says Aristotle.¹⁷ As the proper climax of the “good life” philosophy is necessary to the *polis*. The extremes represented by “Stoicism” and “Scepticism” are the dialectical poles of the Socratic “care of the soul”; and the harmonized soul is possible only in the perfectly harmonious society. Thus the Platonic image of the “City in the Heavens,” and the Aristotelian theory of politics as the supreme practical science

adds the final touch of perfection to True Spirit: the intellectual intuition of “life in the *Volk*.”

But just as the comic poet saw doom in Socrates, so Aristotle the political theorist *is* doom as the tutor of Alexander. With Alexander’s armies the Stoic vision of a *universal* “city in the Heavens” went forth into the world; and Scepticism went forth with it as the truth of the actual world. The political substance of Virtue broke up into the antithesis of Virtue and the Way of the World. The natural self-consciousness was now fully formed into a universal spirit. What Hegel says at the beginning of chapter IV became the truth absolutely known to Reason as its own truth: “Consciousness is for itself what is true” (par. 166).

Thus we come, finally, to the Unhappy Consciousness. The complete *Gestalt* of the Unhappy Consciousness, as a singular shape, cannot possibly occur within the essentially “happy” consciousness of the Olympian world. In its substantial aspect the Unhappy Consciousness is precisely the *fate* of the Ethical Substance. Its “advance and retreat” is the movement of Spirit as a whole, and we must say of it that, in the “shape” of the Roman Empire and the Roman Universal Church it “advances out of the downfall of the ethical substance” in order to return to its “ground and essence” in the “morally subjectified ethical substance” (i.e., the rational Lutheranism which is finally sublated by “Absolute Knowledge”).

But as a moment of the singular consciousness the Unhappy Consciousness is not “substantial.” When we finally get to Religion (which is *absolutely* “substantial”) Hegel tells us: “The Self-Consciousness that has its fulfilment in the shape of the *unhappy* Consciousness was only the *suffering* [*Schmerz*] of the Spirit wrestling itself ever again towards objectivity but never reaching it” (par. 673).

This is the right clue for the identification of the Unhappy Consciousness as a vanishing moment inside the closed circle of “True Spirit.” This “wrestling” of the natural self-consciousness “towards objectivity” is the main topic of the two great trilogies that have come down to us from ancient tragedy.

In the *Oresteia* we see how the “happy consciousness” of true identity with the spiritual substance reconciles the unhappy consciousness of the natural self that must deny and sacrifice itself in order to achieve this “identity,” yet must not lose its own identity in the process. The critical moment comes in the *Eumenides*. Orestes is wrestling—as hopelessly as any believer in “original sin”—with the Furies called up by the murder of his mother. His sin against the happy integrity of natural life, in the interest of the self-conscious freedom of political kingship, is as “absolute” as it can be. But the divine powers of the spiritual order (Apollo and Athena) appear to us and save him. Athena reconciles the Furies with Apollo within the overall kingship of Zeus. Orestes returns to Argos confirmed in his kingship.

The story of Oedipus suggests the hope of a higher reconciliation. Oedipus is led by Apollo (as Orestes was). But unlike Orestes he is led unwittingly. He does not know what Apollo has caused him to do until Apollo reveals it afterwards. So he is unreconciled; he puts the blame firmly on Apollo for what he has done. If he died when Jocasta dies, Scepticism would be triumphant. There is no justice in his world at that point. But at Colonus he is reconciled; miraculously his death will be

a blessing to the city in which he dies. He dies happy, not in Thebes, but in the newborn Athens where Theseus speaks for Zeus.

Only in the *Antigone* does the Unhappy Consciousness emerge triumphant. Antigone (like Clytaemnestra) violates her proper spiritual status; and Creon's edict violates the wisdom of Athena's settlement with the Furies. Both of them lose the happy destiny that belongs to the finite natural self within that settlement. Antigone never gets the husband and child that she was just about to have; and Creon loses the wife and child that he has had. Antigone dies and Creon lives. The "shape" of unhappiness is *complete*; and even the natural pattern of the *Schmerz* of mortality is inverted: *ethically* it ought to be the man who dies and the woman who lives to mourn.

The *Antigone* is the rational premonition that the truth of Spirit will perish in the universal triumph of this moment which we have so far observed only as a *Gestalt* of the singular consciousness. In the triumph of the Roman Legions, the "Unhappiness" of the World-Spirit begins. But the fragility of True Spirit was evident long before that. Stoicism emerged (as a moment that does not any longer "retreat into its ground and essence") in the time of Alexander; and the "unhappiness" of the World-Spirit comes with the advent of the Emperor as an alien "judge." That is also when the story of God's incarnation as a human mediator has its origin. By then True Spirit is long gone.

It was in the astounding success of the mainland Greeks (and the islands) in their resistance to the Great King that the Ethical Substance existed, acted and moved harmoniously. During the manhood of Aeschylus (and the childhood of Sophocles) Hellas existed briefly and for the very first time as a Nation strong and united enough to overcome "unhappiness." This moment was the beginning of the motion of Spirit from Substance to Subject; and the process in which "truth" gives way to "unhappiness" coincides precisely with the long life of Sophocles.

By looking forward in Hegel's text, we have now provided a much fuller account of how the preceding shapes are necessary moments of True Spirit than Hegel himself offers at this point in his extremely schematic account. But there is one difficulty in that schematic summary which we have still to comment on. What is called "Reason" is the singular subjective consciousness that takes itself to *have* reason as its distinguishing "property"; but Spirit is the experience of consciousness in which we begin with the clear awareness that no singular consciousness *has* reason, except through its participation in the Objective Reason that is socially established.

It is not Reason that is the "property" of the singular consciousness, but singular consciousness that is the property of the "rational thing." That will turn out not to be the final truth, because the concept of thinghood is inadequate to Spirit. Hence the "experience of Spirit" itself involves the emergence of the self that *is* Reason (the Stoic *spark* of divinity), and a long process of *Bildung* towards the knowledge of itself as *absolute* spirit. In that process the self that has reason is an alienated shape. Reason is degraded into the distributively universal means or instrument for the organization of the material world. Hegel's characterization of Reason in this paragraph looks forward to that "fallen" condition. It can only be

reconciled with the opening claim of chapter V that “Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it *is* all reality” (par. 233, my italics) by taking that proud claim as the *programme* of the Stoic self who emerges from the downfall of “True Spirit”; while the characterization of the finite *Gestalt* that “*has* Reason,” refers to the “Reason” that *results* from chapter V—the Reason that has reached the end of its fall, and has experienced the formal emptiness of its Stoic pretention to the ultimate limit.¹⁸

(b) *Spirit as the Intuitive Subject*

- 4./441. The immediate truth of Spirit is in the ethical life of a *Volk* (the individual that is a world). It must go through a series of shapes (leaving ethical beauty behind) to reach *Wissen* of itself. These shapes are real spirits or world-shapes.

The existence of a “custom,” by which all who speak a certain language and recognize common Gods are bound, constitutes the immediate unity of a *Volk*—its bond. In the Germany of his time, Hegel felt himself to be, first of all, a Swabian. He could speak of Württemberg as his “fatherland.” But it was properly speaking “the Germans” who were *das Volk*. Being a Swabian was like being an Athenian or a Spartan. One had to be Athenian or Spartan or Corinthian, or Milesian, or Eleatic, or Seriphian and so on, in order to be a Greek at all; and in Hegel’s Germany it was the same. Being a Swabian was a very important ethical reality. It created bonds of loyalty even in the academic world, where “truth” was, supposedly, the only *Sache selbst*. But it was to the *Germans* that Hegel wanted to give “Philosophy,” just as Voss had given them Homer, and Luther (who was no Swabian) had given them the Bible. The language is the immediate “universe” of discourse, and the *Volk* which speaks that language is the “world” with which the speaker can immediately know herself to be identical.

Beyond this immediate universe and world, there is the universe of thought as such, and the world of Reason generally. As the truth of Reason, Spirit must therefore pass from *its* “certainty,” the certainty of identity with one’s own linguistic community, to its “truth”—the scientifically validated identity with any and every truth-seeking rational consciousness past, present, or to come. The movement from the certainty that Spirit is the *Sache selbst* (which was “Reason’s truth”) to that “absolute” truth of Spirit is what we are now going to observe.

The immediate certainty of the Ethical Substance is not even full-fledged Self-Consciousness. We have already seen how all the shapes of Self-Consciousness and Reason are sublated within the Ethical Substance. But the Substance itself must “*advance* to the consciousness of what it immediately is.” Its immediate self-consciousness is an “intuition,” not yet a thought. The “shape of the world” for True Spirit is an *aesthetic* awareness. The citizens of this world must, of course, think; but their ethical thought moves towards an “intellectual intuition.” The only mode in which their substantial identity can be expressed is the creative spontaneity of the artist. It is the artists of this world who create the sensory objectivity of its uni-

versal selfhood. True Spirit is visible to itself *as* a spirit (an I that is We) in the family of the Olympians; and the advance towards thoughtful consciousness of what Spirit immediately is, begins with the portrayal of human life in tragedy.¹⁹

The form of truth's immediacy, the shape of spiritual *certainly*, is Beauty. The explanation of this proposition is a long story, and no more than a few clues to the main sources of it can be offered here. We should remember, first, Plato's doctrine that among the Ideas, Beauty is the one through which the Form of the Good appears to the senses.²⁰ This Platonic doctrine expresses for Hegel the rational goal of Greek art; and his concept of True Spirit explains why the Hellenic canon (especially in sculpture) is for him the absolute canon of Beauty. The conception of Beauty as an objective standard (in the Kantian sense) comes from Kant himself. Kant held that judgments of Beauty, though necessarily immediate and non-discursive, were intentionally "objective"; that is to say, every rational observer with the appropriate sensory capacities can either appreciate their truth, or dispute about it.

The critical thinkers who brought these two doctrines together, so as to confer upon Greek art (especially drama and sculpture) the canonical status that it enjoys in Hegel's recollection of our cultural tradition, were Winckelmann²¹ and Schiller. But the great *paradigm* of the theory, the properly aesthetic proof of it, so to speak, was provided by Goethe; and although other Romantic thinkers (such as the Schlegels and Novalis) made important contributions to the sympathetic understanding of non-Hellenic cultures (for example, Egypt and India) the welding of *all* the traditions into a unified "phenomenology of Beauty" around the "Greek ideal" was Hegel's own achievement.²²

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* both creates and utilizes this central trunk of Hegel's aesthetic theory. Since Beauty is the immediate appearance of the Spirit as *absolute* we cannot discuss it properly until we reach his account of the "Art-Religion." But it seems proper to point out, at once, that the central thesis of the *Phenomenology* ("that the True is not Substance, but just as much Subject") is bound to produce a tremendous revolution in our conception of aesthetic standards generally. I do not see how anyone can challenge the thesis of Winckelmann, Schiller, Goethe, and Hölderlin, that it was the Greeks who gave *our* culture its absolute standard of Beauty. But, if I have comprehended it rightly, Hegel's analysis of Kantian "objectivity" as a double inversion of ordinary objectivity (i.e. a concept that must necessarily comprehend ordinary objectivity as its own "Substance") means that the Kantian objectivity of aesthetic judgment is itself "relative." Thus, the Greek experience enshrines the absolute canon of Beauty "for us," because it was in the culture of the Greek cities that the Absolute first *appeared* "for us." Anyone who tries to deny that, and seeks to apply a non-Hellenic standard to our tradition, will only produce a distorted, whimsically subjective, interpretation of our art—one in which both the "Renaissance" and "Romanticism" will be radically misunderstood. But if someone whose cultural substance is not European wants to "comprehend the recollected past in the daylight of the present" then she must necessarily have concepts that are logically analogous both to the Platonic theory of

the “objectivity of the Idea” and to the Kantian theory of the “objectivity of judgment”—for otherwise the effort of comprehension will not be recognizable and identifiable as “comprehensive recollection”; but equally certainly she *cannot* have the Greek canon of the Beautiful, but must have instead the actual shape in which the “Absolute” sensibly appeared in her non-European tradition. Thus the universal objectivity of aesthetic judgment (and, indeed, of value judgments generally) is not as simple and intuitive as it appeared to Kant and the Enlightenment. Reason is forced back to its ground in Spirit precisely because aesthetic objectivity is necessarily historical (and hence conceptually dialectical).

It is my view (a view that I shall try to demonstrate in its proper place, which is in the commentary on “The Art-Religion”) that Hegel understood this historical relativity of his own aesthetic theory perfectly. He came to grips with the problem, I think, when he was developing the aesthetic theory itself, during the years of his close association with Hölderlin. More than any of the publicly visible figures I have mentioned (and more than Schelling whose importance was also enormous) Hölderlin influenced Hegel’s aesthetic theory, especially the “classical Ideal” at the heart of it. Hölderlin’s influence extends to the smallest details; some of the oddities in Hölderlin’s versions of the *Antigone*—which his other friends and contemporaries ascribed to his mental breakdown—find a plausible explanation and justification in Hegel’s analysis; and Hegel’s analysis has never been suspected or accused of simple craziness.²³

Hellas, the spiritual “shape” of Beauty, is dead and gone. The substance of the *Sache selbst* has now taken on a higher form. Our own substantial world has expanded until in the shape of self-conscious (i.e. “philosophical”) Reason it has become concretely universal. In the world of “Beauty” the Concept of Reason itself is present but invisible, because it is unmoving. It becomes visible (to Anaxagoras, Plato, and Aristotle) only when it is beginning to move (in what Plato called the “war” between Poetry and Philosophy). The “appearing” of Spirit is the full history of that movement. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the *logos*, the scientific account, of Spirit’s appearing. Now that we have discovered Spirit, as the “ground” of the evolutionary movement of Reason, we can conceptually comprehend what the Greeks could make visible to themselves only in their art. In their art, the substantial unity of their self-consciousness with their actual life, was unfolded in a series of “presentations” (*Vorstellungen*) that go all the way from the visibly transformed environment of temple architecture to the moving images of mortal life in drama, (with the sculpted Gods as the middle term). Plato’s theory of Ideas conceptualizes the eternal stillness of this “middle.” But our perspective is not that of Plato—for whom any actual “movement” of the Concept could only be degenerative. Our perspective is that of a critical Reason which has comprehended the necessity of movement. We have no need to weep for Antigone, to curse Creon, or to extol Athena’s wise judgment of Orestes.

For us, this Greek “homeland” of the Spirit is only one region of the “homeland of truth” (par. 167). It is the Earthly Paradise—the garden which God (i.e. Father Zeus and his *Dike*) planted “eastward in Eden.” We have a journey to make from

here that will open out the “homeland of truth” for us as a whole. Our destination is the spiritual Paradise. But that destination is not identical with Dante’s Rose, and it still includes the man-made Eden that we started from; so the best “sign” for our journey is not the Cross but the Rainbow (the first sign that God gave to man in our own religious tradition). The rainbow clearly goes from Earth to Heaven and back; and we can never reach the end of it. Also it is not a substance, but a phenomenon. We shall find that this makes it an apt symbol both for our quest, and for the role of “God” (the supposed substantial being) in the quest. Even here, though we are only just starting our quest, we cannot rightly say which “end” of the cultural bow we are starting at (that of Sophocles or that of Hölderlin). From the beginning (our own “philosophical” beginning) we must see it as a complete arc.

- 5./442. The immediate life of Spirit is its Truth. When it reaches the abstract *Wissen* of its essence, ethical life perishes in formal legal right. After that it is divided into the real life of culture, and the realm of thought. Insight, becoming general as enlightenment, confounds and revolutionizes this distinction; and self-consciousness (as Morality) grasps itself as what is essential. As Conscience it is spirit certain of itself.
- 6./443. These three phases, ethical life, the shattered world and the moral world-view, are the spirits from whose development the actual self-consciousness of absolute spirit emerges as the final result.

For us, the historic community who are the great-grandchildren of Hellas, the Greek experience is the truth of sensible being, because it gave us our standard of sensible Beauty. Truth is for Hegel a Platonic form, in the sense that it is a standard by which “facts” are measured; it is only “correctness” that pertains to the propositions and sentences that meet the measure of “fact.” This does not mean that Hegel either ignores or despises the ordinary “truth of fact.” He made that clear in the Preface (pars. 39–41). But he also made clear that for the science of how the concept of truth has “appeared” this ordinary standpoint is a logically *inverted* one (par. 26). As soon as we admit that truth has appeared in different shapes it becomes axiomatic that one can “know something” (i.e. possess the truth about it) “falsely.” If we are to be able to measure this falsity we must necessarily have a *conceptual* measure for it; and now that we have come to the “ground” of Reason we can see that the factual and the conceptual standards of truth have to be united. There are many students of Hegel who get to this point and then become *Platonists*. That is to say, they accept the direct unification of the two standards as their concept of Truth, and they think that this concept is (or at least that it ought to be) Hegel’s. What is involved is an arrest at the “first inversion” (which results in the view that it is only the *Platonic* concept of Truth which really matters). What these interpreters make of Hegel, as a result, is a brilliant interpreter of human culture in the Platonic tradition, but one who somehow managed to mystify himself and everyone else with a lot of loose, and ultimately meaningless, talk about “system,” “science” and “logic.” This view is offered to us in many forms, and in versions that are both positively and negatively critical. In my opinion the positive critics (those who think of themselves as Hegel’s “friends”) are more dangerously mis-

taken—further from Hegel and his truth—than the negative ones. But that is only an opinion. What is a certainty (and one that I shall try to raise to “truth”) is that all of them are *wrong*.

Nothing could be less Hegelian than this aesthetically intuitive concept of “Truth.” In the last analysis we shall find that Hegel is closer to the ordinary concept of truth than to this neo-Platonic and mystical conception. Of course, he is also far removed from the ordinary “correspondence theory”; but the distance between “truth” and “correspondence” is something that he wants (more than anything else) to make comprehensible to ordinary consciousness. The mantle of the prophet is not for him—whether it be the agile wit that produces paragraphs headed “Why I am so wise,” or the earnest profundity that speaks with a bewildering simplicity of the “uncoveredness” of Truth, and manages, as it does so, to veil the truth ever more deeply. That Hegel also made himself appear superhumanly wise, and that he effectively veiled the truth that he wanted to uncover, is empirically undeniable. But I aim to show that his failure was only an empirical one. Anyone who will take the “logic” and the “system” seriously will find that *science*, not “wisdom,” is indeed the goal that is reached, and that it is wedded with common sense and public discourse, not with the depth of what is “uncovered” but remains beyond speech.

What is “uncovered” but beyond speech in the Greek experience, is not deep but shallow. It is the aesthetic surface of truth and no more. Our world has largely lost touch with the sense-world as an object of cognitive contemplation. But there is no need for anyone (except artists) to become ecstatic about the rediscovery of it. To do so is like getting fixated upon the “riches” of Sense Certainty. Hegel himself tended to become ecstatic about the Greeks at times. This makes it all the more important to underline the calm objectivity with which he describes the career of “Spirit” here, and to point out that the Conscience which is its result is something that Squire Horner (as shallow a “self” as any) had, but Sophocles (as deep a “self” as any) did not. Anyone who cannot see this as a revolutionary *advance* is out of tune with Hegel himself.

About the stages of this advance, there is not much that can usefully be said at this stage. The fate of Beauty is to perish in its direct opposite—the abstract (formally conceptual) knowledge of essence. This formal community of Legal Right is the real world of *Stoicism*; a world which the triumph of Scepticism reveals to be the simple prevalence of the “law of the stronger.” The Unhappy Consciousness—in which the inevitability of death, and the Last Judgment of the Unchangeable beyond death, controls the “harsh actuality” of natural violence—is the world of *Bildung*. The static *Gestalt* of self-abnegation turns into the moving Concept of Faith, as the saved self remade by voluntary discipline gradually gains its concrete shape and content; and the world of Faith is also (necessarily) the world of Reason.²⁴ This world and the world beyond are brought together by the rational insight of the Enlightenment. Insight appears to belong to the individual because it is immediate; but it is really communal, because it is not insight at all unless it is shared, and spontaneously communicated. That is why it can revolutionize the spiritual world.

We must supply here the memory of the actual Revolution; with it the resurrection of the Ethical World as “Morality” begins; and, as the preamble of chapter V shows, the Idealism of Critical Reason is the stable *Gestalt* of Reason proper. So we must integrate what we observed in that chapter with the concrete *Gestalt* that will come before us in the Moral World-View.

Since Hegel ends his preview with Conscience, we can safely infer that this is the stable *Gestalt* of concrete Spirit; we must never forget that Conscience is a “world-shape”; its dialectical dissolution (when we come to it) has to be taken simply as the logical transition to the sphere of Absolute Spirit. Mutual recognition and forgiveness *maintain* the world of Conscience; this is the World-Shape in which moral autonomy is integrated with its ethical ground. Hence Conscience needs all of the complements and supplements that I have brought into Hegel’s summary above; if it did not contain all the spiritual content that we have recollected in our science, the individual conscience could never count as the complete “shape” of our actual world. Speaking formally, the rational conscience is the same identical *Sache selbst* from which our quest for the Ethical Substance (as its ground) began. It is with Jack Horner that the circle closes; and we may note, in passing, that the “hypocrite” was a familiar *Gestalt* within the Ethical Substance. Creon is as bad as Pilate, or any modern successor of Pilate, when he says that “Hades put a stop to this marriage [not me].”²⁵

A: The True Spirit, Ethical Life

The transition from Law-Testing is directly to Sittlichkeit. The observant moral critic discovers by experience that she must move from critical judgment to immediate identification with what is observed to be the ethical substance of the consciousness that pretended to judge it. It is not because I have the faculty of moral judgment that I know what is right. Rather it is because what is right is my own substance already that I have the faculty of choice and decision. The circle of Ethical Life ends at its own beginning; and now we turn to go round it from its beginning. Antigone’s protest looks like Conscience to us; but that is not how it appeared to her.

(c) The Ethical Substance

- 7./444. In its simple truth, Spirit is consciousness, and strikes its moments asunder. This is the division produced by action between universal essence and singular actuality. Self-Consciousness raises the singular agent to ethical action on one side and brings the essence down to singular actuality (as *its own work*) on the other.

We have already seen (par. 441) that the Ethical Substance is not yet an actual, thinking self-consciousness, and that it must *advance* to that. The dissolution of Critical Reason was the dissolution of Self-Consciousness as such. True Spirit is like the Unhappy Consciousness; it exists at the level of “consciousness.” We must begin by seeing what this means.

In the observational forms of Consciousness the “self” is just *forgotten*; it is there, but it is sublated in that quite elementary way. Consciousness is a purely theoretical, contemplative attitude: simple awareness of the world as “what is.” So it is not properly “consciousness” that trembles at the lightning flash, or cowers instinctively at the thunder; being then in the presence of Zeus, the finite *self* is made mindful of itself—and the true Spirit exists as the object of consciousness, because the Greek observer is in the presence of the divine King.

This finite self of True Spirit is a mode of Reason. It trembles in the presence of the thunderbolt because it recognizes the absolute presence of the creative Reason of which it is itself a “child”—a mere “mortal” but one who is free. In its maturity this self is not properly fearful, therefore, but in *awe*; the inevitability of death it has long since recognized and accepted.

Whenever I act I must be aware of the *Trennung* between my subjective consciousness, and the Substance that I have been observing. In the case of the Ethical Substance I must be aware of the *Trennung* between the substantial *custom* and my personal consciousness of it. Antigone distinguishes between the “unwritten law” and her own mortal consciousness. She condemns Creon’s decree by reference to the objective custom; and she makes this judgment as one of the children of the Dragon whose teeth Cadmus sowed. The tribes dwelling in Attica followed their customs; but when Theseus united them, he created a *self-consciousness* in the Ethical World—the community of Athena. This *Gemeinwesen* (par. 450) stands between the “singularized” consciousness (of families and tribes) and the Sky Father. It is an “infinite middle” in the good sense of “infinite,” because it is a complete and self-sufficient embodiment of the universal custom in a concrete communal way of life. It unites the singular consciousness of the child of Zeus with the Father, by establishing the way in which to achieve the goal of an ethical life. This communal *self-consciousness* had its implicit being in the worshipper’s consciousness that she was the *child* of Zeus; but now that implicit unity becomes explicit. Athena herself, the wisdom of Zeus, raises the singular consciousness up to unity with the divine Father; all of the tribes (and their members) know that they belong to Athena’s City.

Implicitly, this unity of consciousness with the Substance that is its “true self” must exist for every child who is born free in the *polis*. The child becomes a self-conscious citizen because it is “raised up to the universal essence” in its education; it identifies with the custom as its own ethical being. When the adult stands forth as a self-conscious Athenian, then the “universal essence” of the custom is brought down into effective agency; the thought-substance is now completely united with the singular action of the free self. Ethical life as the goal (*Zweck*) is achieved. The identity has been produced; and it knows itself as its own production—it is the identity of a self. The conscious self has become what it wanted to be from the first; but both the substance and the consciousness are divided in this process. How this happens is explained in the next paragraph.

- 8./445. This stepping-asunder of consciousness means that the ethical substance both exists as independent of self-consciousness, and displays the self-distinguishing nature of

consciousness. There is the human law, and behind it a natural (or divine) law. Self-Consciousness divides, and allots itself logically to one of these laws; as a result it becomes a dialectical unity of knowledge and ignorance. It experiences the contradiction both of the powers and of its cognition. Through its downfall the ethical substance becomes actual self-consciousness and ethical life perishes.

Self-Consciousness “strikes consciousness apart” into the substance and the “consciousness” of it. This is the establishment of the Substance as a recognized social authority. As authoritative the community exists as an antithesis (*Gegensatz*) to the self. But because it has divided in the process of becoming a human authority, it “equally displays in itself the nature of consciousness” through an inward self-distinction. Instead of being one solidary system of ethical custom it is now two different “laws,” the divine law that was always there, and the human law that has been “thought of” and realized by self-consciousness. In empirically descriptive terms the Hellenic *Volk* becomes a community of independent political communities.

This is the “division of the substance” that we have already discussed. But we must now examine how the “articulation into masses” displays the “nature of consciousness” in the Substance. The “articulation into masses” that are not accidental “distinctions in the essence” but arise necessarily from the activity of “self-consciousness” was first mentioned in paragraph 437. The “ethical essence” is the whole Greek world over which Zeus holds sway. But the self-consciousness of different groups articulates the essence into different “masses” each of which establishes its own “human law.” All of these communities have the same “divine law.” But each self-conscious mass within the whole builds its own law onto that foundation. The communities cannot help being aware that this is a matter of human institution (i.e. of the establishing of a “self-conscious” identity within the ethical substance of the essence), because in this respect they are all different, whereas with respect to the “divine law” they are all the same.

The universal custom of Zeus and *Dike* was always *substantial* because all of the Greeks spontaneously observed it. But there was no humanly instituted system of enforcement behind it. The families and tribes maintained their own ancestral friendships and vendettas, out of ethical commitment alone. That “law of nature” was both erratic and irrationally wasteful; hence the articulation into “masses” with a self-conscious identity was essential to the Substance itself. The justice of Zeus can only reliably be done by communities that have a “self-conscious identity”—or in plain language a *public will* executed by a State-power that is recognized and supported by the Will of All—i.e. by the whole mass of singular consciousness.

When “simple substance” articulates itself into “masses” (the “cities”) it becomes an “ethical essence” that is internally “distinguished.”²⁶ “It splits into a human and a divine law.” The public will of each of the masses must maintain both the *Sitten* that it has established, and those that were there before it began its own law-giving activity. By a natural necessity that we shall soon understand, male con-

sciousness is now devoted to the particular law of the City, while female consciousness remains devoted to the older universal custom of the *Volk*. This allotment of self-consciousness was firmly rooted in the universal custom, otherwise the political development of the independent “masses” could never have occurred.

In paragraph 446 we shall learn that the articulation of the simple substance into masses that possess a self-conscious identity, is the creation of “spiritual *things*.” The mass of consciousness becomes a self-conscious Concept as the city of Thebes or Athens; but in the backward-looking perspective of the original continuum of *spiritual* Sense-Certainty this “thing” is a multitude of “properties”—the families in which its citizens are born and made. The older community of families and tribes, with its “divine law,” becomes a *political* community (*Gemeinwesen*) because it is a self-conscious mass that has a will to maintain itself. It may take itself to be a substance (just as Perception takes its “things” to be substances). But it is not really an independent substance; the true Ethical Substance is the universal community within which it has articulated itself as a “distinction.”

The downfall of the national self-consciousness of this community of communities has its logical origin in the split between the two laws. Male consciousness is allotted to the human law because self-assertion is primitively a male function; custom becomes “public law,” because the male consciousness breaks away from its family and tribal loyalties and “raises itself to the universal essence” of a community that is “thought-of.” It knows that the community belongs to it, because it consciously sustains this community.

Thus the myth of Oedipus expresses the conceptual difficulty that “spiritual thinghood” creates; and the story of Antigone shows what happens when the substantial continuity of the “properties” is self-consciously asserted. What Hegel says here applies to the knowledge and ignorance of both sides. But the myth of knowledge and ignorance is properly the myth of Oedipus and the Sphinx; and the tragedy of True Spirit is the tragedy of masculine authority. So we must begin there, even though it is the equal self-assertion of female knowledge and ignorance that completes the circle.²⁷

Oedipus is cut loose from his natural origins by the divine decree of the Oracle (or, in the language of thought, by conceptual necessity). He knows nothing of his family. He becomes the executive authority of Thebes, without anyone knowing that he has killed the king who was its divinely appointed natural head, and without his own knowing that the king was his father. The public authority is not (and cannot be) a “family” matter; and everyone must forget his family connections in its service. Similarly Oedipus marries the woman who was his natural mother because the public interest requires it; the family that he establishes is as much an ethical contribution to his political career as his forgetfulness of the parents who gave him life.

But the Sphinx whom he thinks he has vanquished decisively by answering her riddle with the word “Man,” and going on to exemplify the self-making of humanity as a free self-positing of “human law,” is the divine law of nature, which he necessarily had to forget in order to do what he did. The human law has violated the divinely authorized custom (which needed it in order to become *law*);

and the ethical action of voluntary commitment to the communal Self-Consciousness has unknowingly done what is absolutely unethical. The natural origin of the “free self” cannot be ignored; the contradiction between Nature and Spirit is made explicit by the attempt to forget what we naturally are. There is an ambiguity about what is ethically substantial. The ethical essence (the *Volk*) comes into conflict with the distinction of its “masses.” The dialectic of Perception repeats itself, and the “spiritual thing” collapses into an overt contradiction. The universal certainty of natural custom, and the determinacy of human law cancel one another out. Only the universal Law, understood in its intellectual abstraction, and the arbitrary will of the natural self-consciousness are left. The self-consciousness that maintained the identity of the Substance with its “singularized actuality” emerges as the only *true* actuality.

Paragraph 444 summed up the positive achievement that will be described in the following subsection (a). Paragraph 445 summarizes the motion of downfall (*Untergang*) which is described in Hegel’s subsections (b) and (c). So we are meant to apply the myth of the Sphinx to Antigone as much as to Oedipus. She is the self-consciousness that allots itself “according to its essence” to the divine law; and her project shows that it is indeed “law” even without any humanly constituted agency of enforcement. The ethical action that establishes the human laws “divides consciousness” in dividing the substance. The womenfolk do not go to war or to the Assembly; and it is natural for them to suppose that “ethical action” is not their concern. Ethically they are only supposed to be *patient*.²⁸ But the natural self exists within every singular consciousness, and its emergence is radically free (and hence unpredictable).

This natural wilfulness is a more primitive name for what is poetically represented as “ignorance” at the level of Spirit. We are dealing with a practical ignorance—i.e., with a *refusal to recognize the authority* of the opposed law. The tragedy could never happen if a “life and death struggle” were not provoked. Creon’s edict provokes Antigone certainly; but she is the first to assert her *natural* self. Neither of the opponents is ever conscious of asserting their natural selfhood; but each accuses the other of it—and both are right in what they observe. These two are the Nemesis of the Ethical Substance because that natural selfhood is supposed not to assert itself at all within the substance. “Self-Consciousness” is supposed to have been completely spiritualized.

VI A(a): The Ethical World, the Human and Divine Law, Man and Woman

The simple substance of ethical life is a permanent continuum of transience like the world of Sense-Certainty. But we must remember that “Sense certainty” is the certainty of a world of Sachen. The tribes, and even the still unorganized masses, have their identities, like the peasant wife’s cows. The tribes of Attica were there, before there was a city of Athens; and it is the primitive community of Athens (or Thebes) that is the “case of action” for the primitive lawgiver. The City of Theseus is the ethical thing that arises from ethical action.

(d) *The Spiritual Thing*

- 9./446. The immediate certainty of ethical being passes over to ethical perception and repeats the dialectic of singularity and universality at a higher level. The two laws are the universal and singular moments of the ethical thing. Both masses of lawful substance are the whole Spirit, so the moments of the Concept are not now the substance, but only a superficial antithesis.

The “thinghood” of Spirit is identical with the *political organization of tribal custom*. In Perception, Consciousness wavered back and forth, characterizing both thing and properties first as universal and then as singular; thus the essence of thinghood was revealed to be the identity of these opposite conceptual moments. Now we have a real substance—the living community of Hellas as a *Volk*—which differentiates itself into “spiritual things” that express these conceptual moments as a “superficial antithesis.” Every self-conscious Greek community perceives itself as the identity of the universal spirit of Hellas with the singular spirit of Athens or Thebes (or Sparta, or Argos and so on).

The “case of ethical action has many ethical connections”—consider, for instance, the action of Hippolytus, who by his exclusive devotion to Artemis arouses the vengeful anger of Aphrodite. If he had been married as a young prince should be, Phaedra’s passion might not have lighted upon him (or at least it might never have revealed itself); and if it did still come into the open, the whole ethical balance of things would have other than it was. What happened between Hippolytus and Theseus would certainly have been different.

But that is not a case that we are interested in. The Ethical Substance must have many of these “connections” reconciled within it. All of the shapes of consciousness are sublated in it, and it needs many poetic shapes of the Gods for that reason. But just as we did not need to be concerned with all the multifarious properties of things in order to develop the concept of the “thing,” so we do not need to concern ourselves with the whole company of the Olympians, or with all of the hero-cults—not to mention the divinities of nature, universal and singular, from the Mother and Daughter at Eleusis down to the devotion of some rural boy or girl to the dryad of the tree that shades the family hut.

The conceptual structure of the Ethical Substance can be summed up in the same antithesis that the concept of the perceptual “thing” was reduced to. The substance of Spirit is the *recognition of law*; and for the ethical perception that takes this substance to be a spiritual *thing*, the *Gegensatz* is between the law as the universal custom of the Greeks, and the law as the actual constitution of Athens (or Thebes). The antithesis is “superficial” because each side of it is “the whole spirit.” The custom of the Greeks is ordained in the constituted law of Athens; and the free authority of the communal self-consciousness is divinely ordained and recognized in the universal custom.

There is a marked contrast between paragraph 445 and paragraph 446. Each of the “masses of the Substance” (the universal custom of Greece, and the singular constitution of the self-conscious community) is “the whole Spirit”; so this is

called a “superficial *Gegensatz* here. But in paragraph 445 it was described as an inevitable split (*Spaltung*) in the substance, that would prove disastrous because it puts the two powers (*Mächte*) into contradiction (*Widerspruch*). This contrast is only an accident of perspective. Paragraph 445 surveyed the whole movement of “True Spirit” (as Concept, Experience and Result); paragraph 446 is the preamble for the exposition of the “Concept at rest.” When the Ethical World is in perfect working order, the *Gegensatz* of “spiritual thinghood” is merely apparent; the two laws are in perfect harmony because they mutually comprehend one another. Within this harmony there can be many “tragic collisions” (like those of Hippolytus, or Alcestis, or even Pentheus in the *Bacchae*). But it is only when the wisdom of Athena in the *Eumenides* is lost, that the two *origins* of what is really *one* law seen under its opposite aspects give rise to a necessary conflict.²⁹ When that happens the split in consciousness becomes a tragic life and death struggle between the two sides of the Self-Consciousness of True Spirit.

- 10./447. Singularity has here the significance of self-consciousness generally; the ethical substance is the *Volk* as a constituted community, and its actual consciousness is the citizen. The “thinghood” of Reason (par. 349) has become the truly actual Spirit.

Hegel considers first the moment of singularity in the intellectual *perception* of the “ethical thing.” Every singular consciousness is the universal self-consciousness of the Substance. What makes the community *one* is the fact that all of its conscious members recognize its law as their true selfhood. It is their *Gemeinwesen*, the essence that they all have in common. As a multiplicity of “properties” the individual citizens are the *Gegenschein* (“reflection back”) in which the spirit of the people is “for itself.” It is a “substance in itself” in that it is the source of the free life of all of them. They all know themselves to be “the people”; and each recognizes her dependence on this substantial identity.

When Hegel says that “as actual consciousness the spirit is the citizen of the *Volk*,” it is natural to remember Aristotle’s distinction between the free “citizens” as “members” of the *polis*, and the slave class as part of its “equipment.” But every native-born person is the “actual consciousness” of the *Volk*. Every Athenian, slave as well as free, knew the stories (as Hegel remarked in 1796).³⁰ Hegel assumed that everyone went to the drama festivals. The actual custom was more nearly Aristotelian; but the plays pictured a society to which Aristotle’s definition of “citizenship” is hard to apply. Creon calls the hapless guard who reports the burial of Polyneices in the darkness a “slave” (*doulos*); and the Chorus uses the same word for the Theban shepherd in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. But these two surely represent the “actual consciousness” of the *Volk* (especially the Theban shepherd, as the only character who is generally recognized by the others to know the whole story). So (with a prophetic reference to our *modern* situation) we must regard everyone who “tears up the universal [spiritual or cultural] being and takes his own share for himself from it” (par. 439) as a *Bürger des Volks* here.

But there is a more radical ambiguity in the word *Volk*. The “singular” *Volk* is “Athena’s people” (or the “children of Cadmus” as Oedipus calls the Thebans);

while on its “universal” side the *Volk* is the Hellenes, the children of Zeus. The difficulty is that (like “fruit” to use one of Hegel’s favorite logical examples) the Hellenes are a universal that occurs only in particular shapes (Athenians, Thebans, etc.). The singular *Volk* (Athens, Thebes etc.) is the “spiritual thing” that came under our observation as a result of Reason’s attempt to find itself in the “skullbone.” It is the Ethical Substance *instantiated* in the *polis* that is Reason as a perceptible “thing.” This has now emerged “in its truth *for itself* as conscious ethical essence.”

Let us now consider the crucial role of the “singular self-consciousness in general.” The Council authorizes Creon’s edict. They make it the voice of the people of Thebes. When Antigone acts in defiance of the edict she is not encountering an irrelevant and incomprehensible Necessity like Faust and Gretchen or Romeo and Juliet. In speaking for the great community of the dead she speaks for the “people of Zeus”—and that is the true *Volk*. But the particular spirit of a “child of Cadmus” preserves itself in her too; and she would be sad to see Thebes brought low by the other “children of Zeus” (as it very nearly is). She can only obey the law of Zeus by claiming burial for her brother in *Theban* earth.³¹

The ambiguity of the word *Volk*, the fact that there are no “citizens of Hellas,” is what the tragedy of the “ethical Substance” brings to light. Athena speaks with the voice of a *Gemeinwesen*; Zeus can only do that “accidentally” at Olympia. Every one of the Olympians—except Hades—is *both* a particular City-God and a universal Greek deity. Antigone’s law is the Universal, Creon’s the Singular. But also Creon’s voice is the Universal and Antigone’s voice is the Singular. This is the shifting dialectic of Perception repeating itself. Because each of them is immediately identical with the Universal, “this consciousness has its essence in simple Spirit” for both. But the certainty of *actuality* is deceptive. The “voice of the people”—which is what we are here concerned with—turns out not to be the “voice of God” after all, because Thebes is not Hellas. In the end Teiresias makes Creon see that Thebes is a *Greek* “thing” among the others, and that it must be “for itself” what it is “for them”; but by then it is too late for Antigone (or for Creon himself).

The “spirit of the people” is *actual* as the legitimacy of the government. This is how the “singularity” of the spiritual thing appears to Creon. It is his single voice that “has the significance of self-consciousness generally.” My counterpresentation of Antigone as the singular self-consciousness of Zeus is only an anticipation of what we find Creon and Antigone seeing and saying in the play. We are not concerned with that yet. The dialectic of spiritual thinghood has not yet begun.

11./448. This spirit is *human* law because it is essentially a self-conscious actuality; as universal it is well known. It is *singular* in every citizen, and *simple individuality* in the government. As valid authority it *exists* as a liberated finite being.

The actual *Gemeinwesen* is constituted by the human law, because the “spiritual thing” is a self-conscious communal will. As the spirit of a self-consciously actual substance—one that is a “subject” in the sense of being able to *act* both in relation

to other actualities like itself, and in relation to its own conscious members—the community must have a *government*.

All of the traditional ways of the *Volk* need to be humanly regulated in the political community. Thus, for instance, one is a citizen because one's parents were legally married citizens; when "the Laws" argue with Socrates, they ask him first whether he has any complaint against the law that married his parents. But much of what is enacted as "human law" was well known as the custom everywhere. It can only be *recognized* by the self-conscious community; it cannot be changed. What the human enactment affects is only the consequences of a violation.³²

As *human law*, the universal custom is validated in the singular consciousness of every citizen as the will of the general self-consciousness. The consciousness of the citizen is a *Gegenschein* of the custom. Each one "reflects the custom back" as a known law; and there is now an *actual self* that will judge and punish me if I do not observe it. So the constitutional establishment of the "government," which executes the will of the people, is the most vital moment of the "human law." This is the self-certainty of "self-consciousness in general."

The "simple individuality" of political sovereignty is represented for spiritual intuition by the poetic image of "the king." But without the *Gegenschein* of the custom in all citizens, Creon could not be "the king"; and for this mode of consciousness the image is needed. We need to *see* the "backshining of the Spirit," in order to be conscious of our law as a singular will. The City itself does not need to *have* a king. One of the functions of Antigone's tragedy (in the mind of Sophocles) was to show why the kingship had to be superseded. Even Sparta, which retained its ancestral kingship, had two royal families, and two kings at a time; at Athens the "ruler-king" (*archon basileus*) belonged to a board of nine archons. His title was a surviving vestige of what Aristotle regarded as a universal institution in the archaic communities of Hellas;³³ and for spiritual "intuition" the story of the primitive community provides the necessary image of its mature conceptual structure (as well as the explanation of why the structure could not remain in its primitive condition).

Since the myth only represents how the citizens must intuitively conceive their relation to their community, it does not matter whether the kingship of Thebes or Athens was historic, just as it does not matter whether there was once a hero called Oedipus, or one called Theseus. The dramas express the actually valid philosophy of government; and Hegel is trying to make that philosophy conceptually explicit without falsifying its actual shape. In the evolution of clear cognition we must start by facing our human lawmaking capacity in the shape of another self who is as "indivisible" as we all are. In this *Dasein*, this finite being who is "let go" or "set free," we have the immediate certainty of our substantial being, perceptible as a valid *Existenz* in the open light of day.

Dasein is a category of Being. It designates what "is there" filling a finite space for a finite time, but always in an unstable state of "becoming." It comes into "being" and passes back to "nothing." This is precisely the category of what can be *pointed at* (at the climax of Sense-Certainty). *Existenz*, on the other hand, is a category of Essence. It is the appearing, or standing forth for observation, of the inward

essence that is eternal. The sovereign authority of Thebes is necessarily as permanent as the independent community of Thebes itself; they are different logical moments of one identical “thing.”

But the form of this *Existenz*, its way of being sensibly present, can vary. In fact, it must vary since the king dies and the kingship passes to another. Even the “kingship” is only a *form*. When Antigone calls the Chorus *koiranidae* (“princes”) in her final plea for the recognition of her “piety,” she implies unmistakably that the heroic kingship has perished; it died with Eteocles and Polyneices, and she herself is “the last of the princesses.”³⁴ But the “individuality” of Thebes abides still, although it can only be *understood* (not sensibly intuited) in a senatorial Council or in the democratic Assembly that is its mature shape.

Kingship as an actual institution belongs to the pre-political world, the world of the tribe, in which all authority was “divine law.” When the “human law” is properly established, the king must go. But the memory of “kingship” remains, so that the new *polis* can know (in the consciousness of every member) what it is and how it is alive.³⁵

- 12./449. The divine law emerges to confront this public power, which has coercive authority over individual license. The inward essence is something other than this actuality.

Hegel now turns to the *divinity* of the law—its “givenness” as a law of our nature, which can be supported but not changed by any self-conscious will. That we should institute a government to clarify it and make it secure in execution is a natural (i.e. logical) imperative present in the divine law itself. The institution of the Areopagus at the climax of the *Eumenides*, signals the end of family feuding (the “bad infinite” aspect of our natural identification with the family or tribe). This institution resolves the contradiction that is involved in the kingship being regarded simply as a natural (or divinely given) authority. *That* assumption injects the justice of the feud into the family itself, with the result that the traditional conception of kingly authority as an ordinance of God comes into tragic conflict with the conception of family integrity as the goal of natural ethics. In this way the *Oresteia* (and specifically the *Eumenides*) displays for intuition the logical reason why the “divine law” had to become a human (or “self-conscious”) institution.

The “human” law is the *Existenz* of natural ethics as a *Wesen*. A self-conscious decision about what is best for the community is quite different from the gut-feeling of what I, the natural self, must do for the integrity of the family bond of blood. The instituted authority takes over my responsibility for vengeance, and my newly rational self-consciousness (that is to say, the consensual sense of what is “just”) obliges me to bury the hatchet when human justice has been done; but the sense of grievance may still persist. Injury and revenge are the “singular being for self” that we must think of here. The public authority prevents me from stealing, and protects my property from open theft. Open refusal to recognize a right of property was just the sort of occasion from which blood-feuds began. The “being-for-self” that is supplanted by the “actual universality” of human law, should be conceived *ethically*

as a will for vengeance that is seen as “taking the *law* into one’s own hands.” This is what is now ethically barred. But it is an open question how far the self-conscious (or rational) vengeance of the government can be pushed without provoking *ethical* defiance. Vengeance cannot now present itself as an ethical motive; but that is not all that is involved in the integrity of the ties of blood. On the contrary, each of the two laws (natural and instituted) contains the same “whole.”

The older obligation to maintain the custom of the *Volk* confronts the instituted law of community as the “simple and immediate essence of *Sittlichkeit*.” I recognize that I have to do what the instituted authority demands; but I still have all of my more primitive feelings about how I must behave. My ethical “knowledge” is what tells me which of these obligations is really the ethical one. The public authority has coercive power; but that cannot make it an *ethical* authority if my knowledge tells me that some primitive obligation of natural feeling still holds. The evident “actuality” of the public authority will only drive me into operating by stealth. Electra and Orestes are driven to scheme against Clytaemnestra in secret; and Antigone buries Polyneices the first time under cover of darkness.

- 13./450. The whole substance *exists* in both ways. There is the self-conscious ethical community, and the immediate substance of the Family. This is both the possibility of ethical life, and the moment of self-consciousness. It is the *element* of the People, and stands opposed to the actual ethical life that forms and maintains itself by cultural labor.

In paragraph 446 Hegel pointed out that whereas the abstract “thing” of perception was constituted by the conceptual determinations of singularity and universality, the spiritual thing is a substance, and the conceptual determinations are only a “superficial antithesis”—i.e., they are two different ways of conceiving something that constitutes itself. In paragraph 447 and paragraph 448 we looked at the substance from the side of singularity (or “self-consciousness”). We conceived it there as a singular thing. The humanly established law was the unity of the thing, and the citizens who recognized that law were its properties. The unity exists as the government, and is intuitively represented as the monarch, the self in whom every citizen can recognize the sovereignty of Self-Consciousness.

But in paragraph 448 we also began to consider the substance under the aspect of universality. The perceptual thing exists in a world of things; and it turned out that its relations with all the other things *were* its essence after all. Similarly the substance of the spiritual thing is the Divine Law that was not made by the sovereign community, but given equally to all of the spiritual things by nature (or intuitively), by the Father of the Gods, the god of kingly justice and good government. The conceptual antithesis of “essence and existence” applies to the universal aspect of the ethical substance, just as much as it did to the singular aspect; and because the fundamental antithesis of thinghood is only “superficial” every subordinate antithesis is dialectical—i.e. it can be applied in opposite ways.

From the point of view of self-conscious sovereignty as an existence that stands forth as human government, the divine law is an “inner essence.” But in the story of substantial existence the divine law was there first, because it has always existed.

It had to exist already in order for self-conscious sovereignty to come into existence. The sovereign community (*Staatsmacht*, par. 449) is the “actual self-conscious agency” of the substance; but the tribalized world of families was (and is) the subsisting potential of that agency, or the way that it “immediately is.”

(e) *The “Element” of Ethical Life*

The main problem in understanding paragraph 450 is to discover what Hegel means by saying that the family is the “*unconscious* still inward concept” of ethical life “although, on the other hand, it has the moment of self-consciousness within it just as much.” It is only “the universal possibility of ethical life *überhaupt*,” yet it is an equally complete way for the ethical substance to exist.

Thus far I have taken the “immediately subsisting” shape of the ethical substance to be the “tribe” (with its own natural head, or “king”). But even in that immediate “shape” the opposition of human and divine law is present. The king is a “self-conscious” authority, because everyone is conscious of the obligation to support his decisions. Tribal existence is not the mere “possibility” of ethical life, or its “element”; it is an actual shape of ethical life. There is no problem about seeing how it “contains the moment of self-consciousness” or how the “human” and “divine” aspects of the law implicate one another in this primitive but actual shape of society.

The *family* as such is more elementary altogether. It is a unit that cannot maintain itself in perfect independence. The “tribe” already contains a plurality of families. That is why it needs a *royal* family to hold it together. One can see why the family is the possibility (or the “element”) of ethical life, by considering how it necessarily evolves into this wider kinship group. It does so because it cannot subsist *actually* on its own account.

But how does the logically minimal family—the two parents, their children, and the “holding” from which they get their livelihood—“contain all the moments of the content of the ethical substance”? This is tantamount to the question of how it contains the two “laws” (for apart from that antithesis we do not know what the moments are). We have to see how the family is a “whole spirit” involving both of the laws.

Hegel himself tells us what the spirit is; and from that we can see how the family substantiates the “divine” law. Just as Athena is the spirit of her City as an actual human community, so the spirit of the family is the Penates—the household gods. These are really the *ancestors*. The family is an “immediate or subsisting substance” only when each generation takes itself to be the subsistence for this time of an identical being that has endured from time immemorial. The Divine Law of the family, is that every new generation must preserve the memory and the honor of those who went before. This duty and this reverence must be practised and taught. Every natural self who comes into the world must replace the selfhood of natural desire with this other spiritual self of identity with the “substance.”

The family’s Human Law is the *spiritual* sense of the relation between parents

and children. The father is, of course, a natural lord; he can make everyone in the family fear him. But then, it is not a *father's* authority that he has, and (so far as the relation to him is concerned) there is no family. The human law of the family is not "the law of the stronger," but the categorical obligation to identify one's own will with a family tradition of which the father is the living representative or mouthpiece.³⁶

Let us consider now, how the "whole spirit" that has this self-conscious identity is itself the "*bewusstlose*, still inward, *Begriff*" of the actual ethical life of the *Volk*. The inculcation of family loyalty constitutes an ideal preparation for actual membership in the ethical community, because good family members will already have gone through the experience of identification with an ethical community. But the domestic experience is not one that family members have a conscious choice about; and they do not realize that it constitutes their selfhood. In the wider community the situation is different. When the constituted society demands that the young men who are ready to leave home and start their own families should do it as ethically committed members of a constituted community with a publicly made and formally recognized law, there has to be a new kind of identification—one that is "chosen" in Aristotle's sense, even though it is rarely deliberate.³⁷

The whole complex of institutional training and service, with all of the labor of maintaining the public good, requires the "active citizens" to forget their families; and even those who are not expected (or even allowed) to do the *labor*, all join in "tearing up the universal being" and taking their share in the enjoyment of the *Werk* (par. 439). Even for the girls, their membership in the political community *sublates* the original loyalty to the elementary community to which they belong by blood-kinship. Legal marriage, and consequent participation in the founding of a new family, involves the self-conscious expression of the "self" that is formed spontaneously in the "natural ethical community."

Everyone in the City goes to the drama festivals and "enjoys the *Werk*" of political existence; but only the men have to build up a disciplined readiness to leave the natural community behind, and sacrifice their lives for the constituted one. For the womenfolk the required transition of loyalty is from the family they are born into, to the family in which they bear the children. This is another tension within the Divine Law, and there were myths (and dramas based on them) where the remembered bonds of the woman as sister or daughter come into conflict with her mature ethical loyalties as wife or mother.³⁸ But in the ethics of True Spirit, the free self-consciousness of a woman, whether natural or ethical, whether constituted by spontaneous desire, or by conscious decision, is always an identification with the "spirit" of some family.³⁹

The spontaneous identification with the Penates is "the self-conscious moment that expresses ethical life in the element of immediacy." But the universal Concept that is involved is still unconscious in the sense that there is no public expression of it, and no overt recognition is demanded and enforced. The actual community of the City is constituted in the "element" of all the voluntary labor and sacrifice that goes into family life; but only the service of the City is "labor" in the acknowledged

sense. In the virtuous citizen it may come to be just as voluntary and spontaneous as a family commitment. But it was first imposed by authority, and its spontaneity is the result of long training and discipline. That family life involves training, discipline and sacrifice, too, is implicit in its designation as an *ethical* community. But in the perspective of the harsher discipline of social duty, all of that domestic labor is over and done with. Domestic life is an “immediate or subsisting substance,” because we do not have to act to realize it. On the contrary, it gives us the substantial foundation of *character* upon which we must stand in order to be properly political agents. This is just as true for Antigone as it was for Oedipus. The difference between them is that she is not supposed to act publicly at all.

The character in whom we can see what is meant by the “*unconscious* still inward concept” of ethical life is that of Ismene. When Antigone’s deed is done, and the punishment must be faced, she shows that she has “the moment of self-consciousness” in her. She is as ready as Antigone to identify with her dead brother and her family then. But initially she has no consciousness of the “substance as actual self-conscious doing” at all. She has no sense of a *duty* to act, because she is deeply conscious that she has no ethical right to act.⁴⁰ Hegel’s use of “conscious” and “unconscious” in this paragraph is determined by the antithesis of “knowledge and ignorance”; and that refers to the awareness of what is categorically required in action.

- 14./451. It is only as spiritual (i.e. as the recognition of self in a *universal* other) that the family is ethical. The immediate identity of love (feeling) is natural. It seems that what is ethical is the relation of the single member to the Family as the whole substance. But the creation and formation of the singular agent is the purpose of this whole. Family property is only an ethical means (or a natural need and so non-spiritual). So the ethical function of the family is to sublimate family membership. It forms the virtue that must leave it behind. It may be incidentally helpful after that, but that is not an essential relation; and even education for citizenship is not a complete ethical *action*. So only the relation to this singular life as a universal Spirit can be properly ethical. Thus it is the dead Shade to which the family is ethically related.

As a community of instinctive feeling—“the concord whereof dependeth upon natural lust,” as the bachelor Hobbes so rudely put it—the family is a *natural* entity; but as one of the shapes of “True Spirit” it is a community that transcends the here and now of sensory presence. Even the mammalian species that mate for life or the social animals such as the dolphin, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee, are anticipations of “natural self-consciousness,” but not of “true Spirit.” Spirit is the “self-consciousness” that binds the living and the dead into a community.

The spirit of the family shows itself in the obligation of the vendetta; but in that aspect it is sublated by the establishment of the Human Law. When we recognize that we must establish a system of communal justice that overrides the primitive bond of blood, the ethical character of the family is transformed. In the political context, the principal function of the family is that of an ethical *means*. Its ethical

goal is to sublimate itself, by creating “citizens”—i.e. singular consciousnesses who recognize *another* consciousness as their true selves.

As we have seen, this is just as true for the female members of the family, as for the males; the girls pass from being daughters and sisters in their natural family to being wives and mothers in their ethical family. But motherhood is the most absolutely *natural* of all bonds; and the ideal of the family is to become a community of feeling that is completely unclouded by the sense of “otherness.” So none of the actually effective relations that exist in a true family (i.e. one that corresponds to its concept) can possibly be purely ethical. When Hegel is seeking to justify Antigone’s claim that her duty to her brother was peculiarly obligatory, he rightly comments that Hellenic marriage was an *ethical* bond (par. 457). Both daughters and sons were supposed to be obedient to their parents in this matter; it was the parents who decided what marriages were to be entered into, and when.⁴¹ But the relationships of mother and wife are necessarily a *mixture* of natural and ethical feeling. The bond of “love” is a natural recognition of oneself in the other; but so far as the ethical aspect of the relationship is concerned, the marriage bond is completely subject to social regulation. whenever husband and wife have the experience of *ethical* recognition in their marriage, it is as citizens who might equally well be married to other partners.

The family itself, as an ethical institution, aims to foster this experience of civic recognition. Family prosperity, which is necessarily part of its natural goal, has no ethical status at all, except in so far as it may help to produce better educated citizens, and may enable them to assume and fulfil social responsibilities that require economic resources. This use of wealth in the public service is the “merely instrumental” (*nur mittelbares*) aspect of family power and wealth in its “higher determination”—i.e. its civic aspect.

The ethical goal of the family is to create *virtuous* citizens—men and women alike. Hegel speaks as if only men were citizens, but the womenfolk have their civic duty, and their ideal of “virtue,” just as much as the men. In this process of making citizens, however, there is no truly ethical relationship—no relationship of free commitment and equal recognition. The children learn to be *obedient* to their parents; then, as maturity is reached, this obedience gives way to the ethical independence of citizens. How can the ethically independent citizen be ethically related to the family that made him (or her) independent? One may, accidentally, be able to do many things for father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son or daughter that one cannot do equally well for other citizens. But there is nothing logically necessary about any of this. Even the great task of civic education breaks up into an accidental set of services in which the part played by the family is strictly finite and has a “limited content.” It is really the political community and its “laws” that educates the citizen to virtue (see pars. 352, 425).

The whole story of Oedipus, from the moment when his mother gives him to the Theban shepherd, after his father has pinned his feet together, to the moment about eighteen years later when he reappears as a stranger in Thebes demonstrably fitted for the kingship, illustrates Hegel’s claim that everything the family does is

either an *accidental* benefit for the individual, or produces him as a *work*. In the limit case of Oedipus, both propositions are true; and it seems likely that Hegel is actually thinking of the two shepherds saving Oedipus when he says that the “content of the ethical action” must not be thought of as “help in time of need, through which in truth, the single [family member] is saved as a whole; for this help is itself an entirely contingent deed.” The only action in the story of Oedipus that has its intended effect is the saving deed of the Theban shepherd. But that was not dictated by custom at all. The salvation of Oedipus, and the way in which he did receive in another city the domestic and civic education that would properly have belonged to him in his native Thebes, illustrates how what might appear to be the essential civic function of the family is only an accidental series of services, rendered not to the self as a “whole,” but only to the natural consciousness. Oedipus soon discovered that he was a foundling; he did not belong either to the civic community of Corinth, or to the ancestral “universality” of its Royal Family.

The adoptive parents of Oedipus did everything that they could for his education, under the general *Vorstellung* that he was going to be the prince and eventually the King of Corinth. But they could not make that *Vorstellung* true; and everything that they did for his happiness, served in the end only to make him unhappy. It does not, and cannot, belong to the family to make the singular agent happy (in accordance with virtue) while she is alive.

“Call no man happy until he is dead,” said Solon. The happiness that the family can bring to its mature single member in its truly ethical relation to him (or her) can only come when she looks back on life and makes its accidental sequence into a whole of sorts, as death approaches. Here again, Hegel’s language directs us to the case of Oedipus: the “One Shaping gathered together complete out of the long series of his scattered thereness” surely refers to the old man resting in the grove of the Furies at Colonus, and refusing to move because he knows that his wandering has at last come to its terminus. The tragic aspect of Sophocles’ drama about the reconciliation of Oedipus with fate is precisely that Oedipus wants to be reconciled with Thebes in his death, and to be buried on Theban soil; Creon refuses this in the name of the Theban Council. At that point Eteocles is the King of the embattled City; and when Polyneices, the leader of the attackers, seeks his father’s blessing, Oedipus assails him furiously because the two brothers had combined to have him exiled, and thus made him a homeless wanderer again in his old age. The two girls, Antigone and Ismene, are with him still (though Ismene does not share his wanderings). But only Theseus, King of Athens, witnesses his death, and weds his body to Athenian earth. This makes Athens the third City to be involved essentially in the “One *Gestaltung*,” and provides us with an anticipatory image of the reconciled universality of the Ethical Substance as the triad of Home (Thebes), Estrangement (Corinth and Thebes unrecognized), and Homecoming (Athens for Thebes, with the Furies turning their “kindly” face, and Theseus as the King who comprehends the *universality* of the *Dike* of Zeus). It is in Colonus, the homeplace of Sophocles, that the cult-memory of the Theban tragic hero is maintained, when there is no family at all left to maintain it. But it is only the dying hero who comes

home to the family of Zeus; and it is only the “one who is *not actual*, only the pithless shade,” who is happy.

- 15./452. Death happens naturally. The right of consciousness has to be asserted. The peace of self-consciousness is different from the natural cutting off of life. The individual lives and dies for the community, and this must be recognized. Consolation and reconciliation must come from a public action. Burial by the family takes over what happens naturally and makes it an action. This makes the purely singular being into a universal individuality [i.e., a spirit]. The family makes him one of the community of the earth, and its dead, which is mightier than the rain, the dogs, and the birds.

The natural death of living things is an aspect of the “Infinity” of the Understanding. Death is the universal fate of living things; to be alive is to be mortal. The Infinite of Understanding is a perpetual motion. When Hegel calls it “the soul of the World or the universal blood” (par. 162) he is indicating the transition from mechanism to the concept of Life. But he is also indicating the fact that all natural life is sustained by the cyclic Infinite of Understanding, and returns into it.

The free rational consciousness knows that death is not just part of a natural cycle of perpetual repetition. The record of a rationally active life is eternal but *unique*. Burial as a conscious act performed by the family (which is itself a moment in the “circulation of the universal blood”) completes the record of a life of free rational activity with an act of recognition. That nature should appear to put an end to what is free is unfitting; the truth that the free life belongs to a continuing community of freedom must be upheld. As a material thing, the dead body returns by its own natural motion of dissolution and putrefaction to the universal order of inorganic Being. But the resting universality of the Spirit is something quite different, so that those who are conscious of themselves in the Spirit cannot let it appear to be produced by Nature; they must make the truth visible.

The death and burial of Oedipus (in *Oedipus at Colonus*) shows us positively how absolute this obligation is (and how it falls upon the Ethical Substance as a whole to fulfil it, if it does not happen in the ordinary way. Oedipus received an oracle, which declared that he would be a “blessing” to the City that received him, and buried him in its territory. Thebes would not receive him, so the oracle was carried out by Theseus, and he was supposedly buried at Colonus (where Sophocles himself was born). This presents for our intuitive understanding the spiritual truth that although the fact of death appears to have no necessary connection with the public good, the recognition of death in the ceremony of burial is vitally important. The Oracle makes the death of Oedipus, far from home and family, into a “return of consciousness into itself”; and Theseus, the paradigm of the wise king, understands what Apollo’s declaration means.

The death and burial of Oedipus’ two sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, makes the significance of burial plain, by showing what happens when the blessing is denied, and becomes a curse. The two brothers kill one another—and so stand before us plainly as the paradigm *Gestalt* of the “struggle for recognition.” They were fighting for the Kingship—which belonged by natural right to Polyneices (so he

thought). He was the King's first son, and he had made an honorable agreement to share the royal inheritance. But the Kingship belonged to Eteocles by the recognition of the community (for he could never have exiled Polyneices without that).⁴² The judgment of Zeus (as delivered in the battle) was that it belonged to neither; and the result of the subsequent attempt by the communal self-consciousness to accept one dead hero, and reject the other, showed that Zeus is indeed wiser than mere men.

The community could easily have buried its chosen King and left the royal daughters (Antigone and Ismene) to bury Polyneices privately. But in life and death situations, passions run high. The edict of Creon, supported by the Council, that those who died attacking the City should go unburied is not without parallel in the wars of the Cities.⁴³ But its application against a member of the royal house was the most explicit challenge possible to the older kinship-basis of community-membership. Worse still, it involved the claim that the community could freely define family membership. It is clear that Sophocles (like Plato) felt that the community should not dishonor its dead (or even the dead of a hostile army). In the case of Oedipus, he makes Creon propose burial just outside the boundaries of Thebes. This would have allowed the family its rights; and since Oedipus had polluted the most fundamental ethical bonds of the family, one could argue that in this case the community was defending its own foundation in the piety of kinship. But from the way that Theseus treats the alien wanderer Oedipus, we can see that this is not how *he* would have decided Creon's problem about Polyneices. The piety that triumphed even over Achilles' wrath, ought to be absolutely paramount. Had Theseus been the Theban King, Oedipus would have received burial within the borders, and both of his sons would have rested with him. Other Theban supporters of Polyneices would have gone to their family graves, and the alien bodies would have been buried or returned to their families for burial. This was what the *Dike* of Zeus required; and since Hegel identifies *that* as the "Ethical Substance" he agrees with the verdict of Sophocles and Plato. But the knowledge of Good and Evil comes only by disobedience.

The case of Oedipus in death is like that of Orestes in life. It illustrates how the Ethical Substance *can* overcome the most disastrous consequences of the contingency that attaches to human freedom. It displays for intuition the spirit that inspired the Athenians after the battle of Marathon. They buried not only their own dead, but the Persian dead, too, believing (so Pausanias tells us) "that it was in every way holy to cover a man's corpse with earth."⁴⁴

At this stage of the argument Hegel simply wants us to grasp the absoluteness of the burial obligation. So although his references to the "forces of abstract stuffs" and to "the lower living things" (or "every base, irrational individuality") are deliberately intended to connect "Force and Understanding" with the rain, the dogs and the birds attacking the unburied dead, it is the horror of Antigone and the prophetic wrath of Teiresias that he wants us to remember. The Chorus says to Creon that it is his prerogative to dispose of the dead in his law, just as he does of the living.⁴⁵ But they are mistaken.

The completion of a free existence must be recognized; and this recognition makes the free self into a "spirit," by identifying it with the universal community, to which it naturally belonged—the family. The ethical requirement that this recognition must be accorded in all circumstances, by whoever is able to give it, in case the living relatives are absent, shows forth the identity of the singular family-spirit with the universal substance of "True Spirit." Formal burial recognizes the dead individual as a child of the Earth, the universal Mother, and a member of the total community for which our Earth is "home." Death will soon reappear in the character of the "absolute Lord" in which we first met him (par. 194—cf. par. 455). But now it is his community that "consoles and reconciles" the departed spirit and overpowers natural life.

Natural death is the "side of the *Entzweiung*" because organic life does not make a proper circle. Birth and death remain separate. The burial completes the circle of the True Infinite by returning the body to the womb of all animal life. Mother Earth is the "elementary individuality that does not pass away." But the burial is only the beginning of the remembrance that is essential. From his reading of Book XI of the *Odyssey* Hegel knew that the disembodied "Shades" in the Underworld had only the palest shadow of a real existence. In particular, they had little or no consciousness or memory. Odysseus restores this to them by allowing them to drink the life-blood of a fresh sacrifice. Goethe dramatized the Homeric conception in his *Iphigenia* by letting Orestes discover that all the agents and victims of the ancestral curse had forgotten their crimes and sufferings. The significance of the image is clear. It is the poet who supplies the life-giving blood.⁴⁶

The "universal" life of the shade is in the memory of those who maintain the cult; but the remembering of how a self-conscious agent completed his or her "work" by dying, is the forming of a thought with a singular referent—the *Vorstellung*, the setting forth, of a uniquely individual essence in its eternal significance. To remember the dead being is to make it into a "being-for-self," i.e. an independent member of our living community of Self-Consciousness. So it is in the communal respect for the family cult of the dead that the Ethical Substance—the universal community of Zeus—actually exists. If the cities do not all respect the brotherhood of the dead in their Human Law, then the Substance will have no self-consciousness at all, not even the shadowy existence of the dead heroes in Homer. The universal community of the Underworld must always remain a vividly present aspect of this world (in which it is the inevitable destiny of the living to fight one another to the death).

- 16./453. Burial fulfils the divine law. Otherwise every *duty* to the single human is part of human law. Human law seems to have all of the actual power, but this is not the case. The Earth is on the side of the dead, and it pulls even the City back into it.

To say that burial is the *divine* law is to say that so far as the dead are concerned no humanly constituted authority ought to interfere with the way that immemorial custom has structured the feelings that exist as recognized bonds of kinship.⁴⁷

The interesting thing about Hegel's doctrine is that the right to customary burial is the *only* aspect of custom that he takes to be beyond the range of self-conscious human regulation. The natural—or subethical—bond of the family is one of *love* (not fear). So the human law must regulate family-relations. For instance, the absolute authority of the family-father over his children has to be subject to legal limitations.

What the law leaves to the free play of feeling is just what helps to create the “self-consciousness” of the community—i.e. whatever has a natural tendency to elevate the actual consciousness of the single family member above the pursuit of private family goods and interests. Education for communal life is the essential function of the family itself with respect to its living members; but only the ethical community can perform the function properly. The contribution of the family, although essential, is never adequate; yet we find here the rather surprising statement that as *actual* beings we belong to the natural community of the family.⁴⁸ This has the important consequence that the nurturing activity of womenfolk is recognized as a significant contribution to the universal *Werk*; the “actualizing” of the single agent as ethical (or virtuous) is identical with his or her sublation out of the bondage of nature. The Family as *ethical* is the free motion that sublates it as a natural community.

“The actual ethical substance, the whole *Volk*” belongs within the scope of the human law. How can this “whole *Volk*” make itself *actual* as a Spirit? It reveals itself in experience as a universal *Macht* that comes from “the *elementary* individual.” The reference to the Earth is plain enough. But the meaning of what is said about it is not so obvious: “his might [the dead man's] is the *abstract*, pure *universal*; the *elementary* individual, which equally wrests back the individuality . . . , into the pure abstraction as into its essence, because it [the elementary individual] is the ground [of the individuality].” The Earth, our mother, is also our common grave; she has the *might* of death, which prevails even over our communities.

In Sophocles' play we can see that Thebes is in danger of being wiped out; a particular City may perish, but life goes on.⁴⁹ But Hegel means more than this. The Earth will eventually swallow the whole world of the Cities; and it will be the assertive self-consciousness of the royal prince who emerges from the grave to which the Ethical Substance is consigned.

We shall see later on “how this might displays itself in the people itself.” For Thebes the avenging Fury of the unburied dead comes (through the pollution of their altars) from the other Cities (par. 474). The play gives a perfectly rational account of this vengeance. Both in Aeschylus and in Sophocles the Furies represent the Underworld of family-kinship. Hegel only makes the *universality* of the Hellenic family plain, by calling Mother Earth the avenger.

Hegel's interpretation has the advantage of connecting birth and death. When he called himself a “son of Earth” in the “Resolution” poem of 1801, he certainly meant to underline both his identity with all of humanity, and the boundary of his conception of human destiny. All of the vistas of spiritual immortality and infinity must finally be interpreted in terms of our existence here on the Earth which is our

home. There is no “Beyond”; this life on Earth is the place of homecoming for our spiritual Odyssey. The womb of the Earth, “the elementary individuality,” is the true Infinity of natural life; and it is in that character that the Earth is the place of the Furies. The free human spirit “steps forth from the Earth” in the first *Philosophy of Spirit* (1804).⁵⁰ This is the “natural selfhood” of the Life and Death Struggle; and this “natural humanity” is the agent of tribal vengeance.

There is also a deliberate ambiguity in the use of the word *elementary* here. The Earth is an *element* brought to life (made fertile) by the cycle of the other elements; but it is the *family* that is “the moment of self-consciousness that expresses ethical life in the *element* of immediacy or being.” When the family is ethically injured, and needs vengeance, it throws up just that “elementary individual” whom we met at the beginning of chapter IV. The “might” of this individual is his consciousness of absolute freedom; and that is the “*abstract, pure universal*” which wrests the “spiritual thing” back into “the pure abstraction” that is its essence. Human freedom creates “the spiritual thing”; and human freedom destroys it again. The City is not the simple substance that it takes itself to be. The perceptual “thing” was a substance that contradicted itself; and so is the *polis*.

(f) *The Organic Body of Ethical Life*

- 17./454. There are *distinctions* and *stages* in both laws, because they involve consciousness. Hence they are actively connected and pass into one another.

This paragraph contains a programmatic statement only. What the “distinctions” in the two laws are, we shall see in paragraphs 455–456. The “stages” are the moments in the motion of the two laws at which the “distinctions” emerge. We have just seen how the human law of the community absorbs the ethical activity of the family completely except for the burial of the body that has no *actual* life. But we were also reminded that the actuality thus absorbed comes from the family in the first place. The motion of human law is in the male experience; and that of the divine law in female experience; and when the motion of the two laws is complete we shall see why the Divine Law is just as important as the Human Law.

- 18./455. The community is executively individuated in the government, which lets the essence articulate itself. Government is actively self-conscious spirit, the independence of parts is Spirit’s real *Dasein*, and the family is the element of this finite reality. But government is the negative unity of the parts, and as such it makes them feel their dependence on the whole. It lets families acquire property, and labor organize itself in craft-guilds. But all belong to the Assembly where these differences are negated. By making wars, government liquefies them all. Individuals are reminded of the lordship of death, so that they do not become rooted in their economic identities, and fall away from their ethical identity. Thus the ethical community depends upon the Lord of Death and upon the Divine Law.

Hegel's brief account of how the two laws cohere and pass into one another begins with the general awareness of the political community as self-governing.⁵¹ As a sovereign power, the government is "the simple *self* of the whole ethical substance"; that is why it is represented as a singular self in the drama. Opposed to it is the moment of the "essence"—the articulated and extended "body" of the social self (i.e. all the different modes of ethical life). Since "the family" is the "element" of this reality it is legitimate to interpret the "articulation of the essence" as the spontaneous development of many kinds of family, and of family-activity; different tribes and demes, farmers, craftsmen, citizen families, metics and serfs etc.

Every Greek city was tribally organized, although in historic times the blood-kinship of the tribe was entirely mythical.⁵² It is certainly correct to say that "kinship" was the "element" of this political articulation. Tribal origins were influential in the effective distribution of land; but the division of labor into family-crafts was also of great significance for the mature political community.

Some families were rich and owned property (including slaves); so the system of personal and property law enters as one of the "distinctions" of the Human Law. But also a civil law of economic association was needed; crafts had to be legally regulated. In many cities alien residents supplied craft-skills; and this is a moment of "true" Spirit, because all were Greeks together. All of them were "children of Zeus"; but from the point of view of "human law," the metics foreshadow the phenomenon of "estrangement," because all articulations, political and economic, ought properly to be dissolved in the Assembly (where the aliens cannot appear). The Assembly has legislative sovereignty. It is the "general will," as opposed to the singular executive will of government. The tragedy enacted by Creon and Antigone represents the tension in the Ethical Substance between this finite "objective spirit" of the political community, and the infinite Spirit of the religious community.

Primitively it is the power of government to make *war* that dissolves all of the articulations of the essence. This power belongs to the executive with the support of the Assembly. "War" is voted by the Assembly, before the executive can start uprooting citizens from their systems of articulation. It obliges the citizens to recognize that they owe the City a death; and so reveals the absolute authority of Hades in his kingdom (par. 452). This sovereign right of the Human Law to require the sacrifice of life, has its "truth and enforcing" in the essence of the Divine Law. As life and death sovereignty the Human Law "coheres with and passes over into the Divine Law." The stages that Hegel referred to, seem therefore to be: tribal monarchy, self-regulating civil and economic order, democratic sovereignty,⁵³ war. War is the appeal to divine justice, in which the universal Spirit (of life and death) becomes manifest.⁵⁴

19./456. The distinctions in the Divine Law are family-*relationships*. The Husband/Wife relation is immediate cognition of mutual recognition; it is realized in the children, and disappears in their coming to manhood (parents grow old and children begin to look after them). All this is a mixture of natural and ethical relation (ethically guaranteed by the *Volk*), because all parties *feel* the continuity and the separation involved.

The corresponding phenomenology of the Divine Law is a logical analysis of the Greek family. The distinctions in the family are the three relations distinguished by Aristotle in the nuclear family (and the *stages* are easily recognized).⁵⁵ First, there is husband and wife, joined by the marriage law in an ethical bond; then there are parents and children joined by love in unequal recognition. Finally, after the parents die, there are the adult brothers and sisters. The maturity of the family is dealt with here (and the control of human law is bracketed, so to speak). This ethical theory of the family gives us Antigone's conception of how her life ought to work out.

The husband/wife relation is one of *natural* recognition. They are the sides of the natural genus (see par. 171 and commentary). Their recognition and (carnal) knowledge of one another has its natural reality in the child they conceive. The spiritual actuality of the family consists in their being effective parents to the children by educating them for citizenship. But the successful achievement of the spiritual relationship necessarily brings about its dissolution: the children become properly educated adults, and the parents get old and die (under the care of the children). Reference to the *Volk* with its public law is necessary here, because it is the legal security of this transition that gives the family its permanently recognized status.

Although it is ethically regulated, the whole process is emotional in its substance. It ought to be a bond of *love*; and it is, in any case, a bond of reciprocal responsibility determined by the natural flow of time. The bonding of husband and wife is partly one of sexual desire; but it evolves into responsibility for the children. The natural basis for this is living identification with them: "The piety of the parents towards their children is emotionally affected by the consciousness of having their own actuality in those others, and seeing being-for-self coming to be in them, without being able to get it back; on the contrary, it remains an alien actuality, all its own."

For the children, on the other hand, the movement of time is the inevitability of separation: "The piety of the children toward the parents is emotionally affected by having the coming to be of themselves—or the *Ansich*—implicit in another that is disappearing, and by attaining being for self and self-consciousness of their own, only through separation from their source." The "piety" of parents toward children is controlled by respect for life, and that of children for parents by respect for death. This double-sided sense of having to separate reflects the necessary passage from family to City, or from the Divine to the Human Law.

- 20./457. No ethical equality is possible. Only brother/sister is an *unmixed* ethical relationship—the sexual relation being barred here. So it is as sister that the woman has the supreme presentiment of the ethical essence. Consciousness of ethical actuality she does not reach. Her relation with her parents is transient and unequal; and she perceives her roles as wife and mother ethically. The ethical aspect overrides the natural, because these bonds are all the life she has. For the man the natural and the ethical separate, and because he is ethical as citizen, he can freely enjoy his family. Only the sister's relation to her brother is *purely* ethical and when he dies her duty is absolute. [See *Antigone*, lines 904–928.]

The equal “ethical relation” is properly the recognition of the other as identical with the same community with which I am identical. The relation of husband and wife is an instinctive recognition that each is the opposite complement required for the identity of the “genus”; they are essentially an “identity of difference,” not an “identity of equals.” The same is true in a different way of parents and children; here the difference is more complex, being temporal and self-inverting. First our parents care for us; then we care for them. Hegel ignores the relation between brothers here. The consequences of their *natural* equality as exhibited for intuition in the myth are potentially disastrous.⁵⁶ Within the family it is the ethical equality of brother and sister that is important to us, because they are naturally allotted to different laws. Consequently it is in the role of sister that woman has her highest *Ahnung* of the ethical essence.

This paragraph is mainly a mistaken attempt on Hegel’s part, to make Antigone’s last long speech into an accurate account of Greek ethics. In fact that speech was *not* an accurate account of the ethical piety of the Greek family, and Sophocles did not mean it in that way.⁵⁷ Antigone says that she would never do for husband and son what she has done for her brother; but at this point she is still unmarried, and if she is ever allowed to marry after this speech (which is in effect her last throw) then the social situation will be different. The time of the ancestral Royal Family will be over. Antigone will never *need* to do for a husband or son what she has done for her brother; and the situation that made Polyneices a declared traitor can never recur. The bargain she offers is a sophistical one, which has *no* clear ethical implications.

But Hegel wants to establish that there is a necessary *ethical* relation between brother and sister. They are equals, and the natural relation of sexual recognition is barred between them. The bar itself is “ethical”—for in all traditions we find exemplary stories of how sexual attraction has led to its violation. There is a *negative* ethical relation between brother and sister that is immediately and primitively recognized as “necessary”—i.e. God-given. Hegel wants to argue that precisely because of this, the *purely* ethical bond of the family is necessarily felt *positively* by a sister towards her brother. For a woman who perceives her own situation in life in a strictly ethical perspective, he claims, the religious duty of burying her brother is the highest and purest.

In the Ethical Substance, woman’s whole life is ideally characterized by the natural emotion of love. She must do as her parents think best in the matter of marriage. But she *desires* a husband, and the wedded couple ought to *please* one another. Ismene explicitly asserts that the betrothal of Antigone to Haemon is a love-match.⁵⁸ So the ethical aspect of family life is all “intimations” (*Ahnungen*) except in cases (like that of poor Phaedra) where the self-conscious unity of the family is ruptured, so that feeling and duty become separated. In a normal case, only the natural breach caused by death can bring the ethical *Ahnung* to clear consciousness. Thus—according to Hegel’s interpretation—Antigone’s speech expresses the Divine Law at the point where it has to show itself as a Law.

This is because her brother is “her other half” not naturally but rationally. The

two are *equal but different*, and their mutual recognition is the rational recognition, the theoretical intuition of human nature as such. Hegel takes Antigone to be claiming that the affection of sister for brother is both *ethical* and *absolute*, because its natural expression is ethically barred, and no public duty can ever intervene to override it. Civic duty can easily make it unethical for brothers to follow the impulse of natural affection. One can imagine, for example, that there were cases of one brother drowning and the other surviving at the battle of Arginusae, where public indignation led the Athenian Assembly to condemn and execute six of the victorious generals for not stopping to pick up drowning men (or at least their bodies for burial) in the heat of the battle.⁵⁹

On the other side family duty (to husband or children) may conflict with, and ethically override the natural affection of sisters. So it is only the affection of sister for brother which is both ethical in itself (because of the incest taboo) and contains no implicit potential for an ethical conflict. So the sister-brother relation can be seen as an *ethical* anticipation in the natural family of the supreme mode of *morality* in the *universal* family of Reason—the relationship of charity.⁶⁰ We can readily understand, therefore, why Hegel's attention was caught by this aspect of Antigone's action, and particularly by her last speech in justification of it.

Goethe found this speech quite repugnant to his moral feelings, and inconsistent with what he thought of as the rationally conscientious character of Antigone's general behavior and argument up to this climactic point. He suggested that the speech was an actor's interpolation unworthy both of Sophocles and of his brilliantly conceived and realized heroine. It is clear that Hegel wanted to show, on the contrary, that Antigone's last long speech is entirely consistent both with her character and with the "ethical" context of action in her society. I believe that he is demonstrably right against Goethe, about the consistency of Antigone's character—which is not at all "Kantian."⁶¹ But it is certain beyond dispute that he is wrong about the "ethical" context, both in the archaic and in the historical period. Antigone's argument belongs to the generation of Sophocles and the major Sophists. Hegel has let himself be misled into inventing a "substantial" foundation for one of the most brilliant strokes of *subjective* characterization that Sophocles ever achieved in the mature style which he himself called "most expressive of character (*ethikotaton*) and best."⁶²

That there was no peculiar bond of duty binding a sister to bury a brother, or to maintain his memory in particular in her family-cult, hardly needs argument. The nearest analogy offered is the story of Althaea's revenge on her son Meleager, for the death of her brothers. But that is a case of conflicting family loyalties in a feud, and there is no sign of an "Unwritten Law" here at all.⁶³

Against the claim that there was *any* normal ethical duty binding a sister to bury a brother, we can cite two indubitable "ethical" facts. First, marriage must often have deprived a woman of the opportunity to participate actively in the cult of her birth-family at all; and her brother's duty as a soldier would often have resulted in death away from home (whether her home or his).⁶⁴ Secondly, the right of parents could, *in extremis*, extend to the *selling* of girl-children. For Sophocles' own time

(though not for the pre-war world in which the *Antigone* was presented) this is vividly portrayed in the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes. One can fairly argue, of course, that Aristophanes was dramatizing the desperation that overrides *all* ethical ties. But the implications of this case for the archaic world before Solon abolished debt-bondage seem to me to be clear; and the existence of a recognized ethical bond between sister and brother in that world must surely be ruled out. The married sister had more urgent *living* obligations; the unmarried sister had no status upon which any obligation could be founded except that of filial obedience.

- 21./458. The brother is what the family produces for the *Volk*. His task is to create self-conscious ethical life.

That sister and brother must be lost to one another in life is logically required by Hegel's own view that the family produces a young man who is an ethical individualization of the City, a consciousness that accepts its divine self-consciousness as his own rational Self; and its Laws and custom are the concrete *Sache selbst* which is the rational standard for all of his activity. When Hegel calls the adult brother "the side on which the family-spirit comes to individuality" we understand that as a *living* individual he identifies with the universal consciousness of the City. The *custom* of the individual City follows logically in the series of the *Gestalten* of consciousness, because the "universal consciousness" of the City is the "individuality" of Active Reason. It is not the Ethical Substance as such that is the actual *Gestalt* of True Spirit. We shall only come to the Substance in its properly universal shape in the *Art-Religion*. For the moment we are dealing with the relation of a spiritual property to its thing; but this "thing" is conscious of itself as an individual, because its "property" is an individual self-consciousness. So the family that educated him into this universal selfhood, must maintain him in it when he returns to them at death. Otherwise, the spiritual thing itself will collapse back into the flux of Life.

Without the establishment of the communal memory it would be wrong to call the Universal established by the sacrifice of natural self-consciousness a *true* self-consciousness. It would only be the "universal light" of Reason, and not a "self" at all. The community of the free selves is a "self" because it recognizes itself in them, and they recognize themselves in it. If it is a True Spirit, then it must make them spirits likewise; they cannot recognize themselves in it, if the death that it requires of them cuts them off from it. They are capable of this feat of recognition and self-sacrifice, because the family that produces and educates them is already a non-conscious (or natural) Spirit which remembers (and avenges) its dead.

- 22./459. The sister's destiny is at home, *presiding* over family life and cult. This is the ethical significance of sex-distinction; the distinction of public and private life has a natural foundation (as it must in immediate ethical life). This is what showed as the original nature in the spiritual animal kingdom.

If Hegel is serious when he ascribes to the adult "sister" the *Vorstand des Hauses*, then he has not read his texts properly. Ismene makes it very clear that in

the archaic world as Sophocles envisaged it, an unmarried girl was not the *Vorstand* of anything; and this was certainly true in Sophocles' own world just as it was in the world that he pictured. A wife (particularly a queen in Homer) might exercise a lot of household authority; and Aristotle thought it both right, and distinctive of the Hellenes, that a wife should have her own sphere of proper authority.⁶⁵ It must be Aristotle's doctrine that Hegel is depending upon. The young man, unmarried, leaves a sister behind when he goes for his civic (essentially military) training; the sister becomes the wife of another, and the trained brother marries his own wife. The wife it is, who is left behind when the young soldier is on campaign. So, in both cases it is the wife who "becomes or remains head of the household."

But even if we grant the most generous interpretation of the Aristotelian household we cannot justify the title "*Bewahrerin* of the divine law" for the wife (or for any woman). Hegel knows perfectly well that it is Cephalus, the grandfather, who goes out to supervise the household rites in the first book of the *Republic*; and no one who reads the *Antigone* with passionate concern (as Hegel certainly did) can fail to understand that Antigone is stepping out of her place in assuming the responsibility for her brother's burial. From Aristophanes, Hegel knew that there were important religious festivals that were the communal concern of the women alone; and he may reasonably have supposed that there were domestic rites that were their responsibility likewise. But he certainly knew that they did not supervise any religious activities in which their menfolk were involved.

Since Antigone is Hegel's clearly identified model we can properly infer that what he means is that the family cult has a clear priority in the consciousness of the women. So we must take it that *bewahren* here means "putting this thing *first*" (which is what Antigone does with the divine law). Also we can see how the remembering of the family dead is directly continuous with those concerns of family life that Aristotle regards as the wife's proper sphere of responsibility. But the two spheres of life and death, of family maintenance and religious cult, are distinct; and it is not necessary to Hegel's argument that women should generally be more concerned about family memorials than men. Antigone is a logical ideal; her concern reveals the *natural* foundation of spiritual life; and her story displays the boundary situation where the temptation for a woman to emerge out of her normally subordinate role must arise.

Hegel's expression "*naturally* distinct *self-consciousness*," needs careful interpretation. "Self-consciousness" refers to a spiritual level of conscious identification with a community that is one's true Self. We can properly speak of a *sexually* distinct self-consciousness in so far as there are segregated religious activities; and there were some all-female festivals. They are, in fact, more prominent and obvious than the all-male religious observances (except for the Games). But religious segregation is not what Hegel is talking about. "Self-consciousness" always means a communal consciousness in which *both sexes share*. The "natural distinction" is introduced by the practical life of which the cult is the self-consciousness. The public cult in the temples of the city, where men and women participate together,⁶⁶

was the general self-consciousness of the *City*, for which the men alone made the laws. The domestic cult, where both sexes again participate together, was the self-consciousness of the Family, which the women were kindly allowed by their rational husbands to run. There is a Zeus of the Hearth (as one would expect, since their hearths are the first altars that the menfolk fight for). But marriage and child-birth were presided over by Hera, the Queen of Olympus; and Hestia, who is both the hearth and its divine spirit, is feminine. Aristotle's philosophy of the family is a direct conceptualization of what is portrayed by the religious imagination of the *Volk*. These *Vorstellungen* are "the immediate unity of the substance with self-consciousness"; and the two *necessary* forms of religious cult, public and private, express in this immediate form the recognition of the natural organic difference upon which spiritual life is necessarily founded.

The unhistorical idealizations of sexual specialization in this paragraph are violations of Hegel's observational method. So we are bound to ask whether they are backward projections of his "systematic" ideal. Hegel, like Aristotle (and unlike Plato), regarded gender as the "original determination of nature" that Reason *must* accept. For Plato sex and reproduction was only a given element in the "spiritual animal kingdom"; Reason could and should organize the whole realm freely in accordance with the talents and interests that experiment and observation revealed. We cannot deny—and certainly Plato did not deny—that sex was the "original determination of nature" that lay at the foundation of the customary ethics of his own immediately given spiritual community, the community of the Hellenes. But equally, Hegel cannot deny that rational nature, which is "originally determined" as gender in the immediate ethical order becomes quite indeterminate and freely plastic in the world of universal Reason. When he says that "this moment loses the indeterminacy that it still has there," we cannot fail to note that this "loss of indeterminacy" is a benefit for theoretical cognition, but not for practical freedom. It is still the modern Enlightenment that exhibits the developed shape of Reason. Hegel's idealized picture of the woman's role was appropriate for his own time. But the implication of his theory for us is that women should enjoy rational freedom of self-expression in the universal community just as much as men. Hegel was not a progressive when it came to the abolition of the sexual division between private and public life in his own world. But the only rational basis for his conservatism, was the fact that it is not the philosopher's business to be "better than the world." This has no bearing on the logical truth that the fully rational relation between Spirit and Nature is Christian-Platonic not Hellenic-Aristotelian.

- 23./460. The family depends on the public order to which it sends the husband; conversely the public order needs the family as its raw material—and depends on family piety for its strength and confirmation. Each law depends on the other. Validity comes from the unseen world, conscious recognition and effective existence from this one.

We come now to the "coherence and transition into one another" of the two laws; and by speaking explicitly of the husband here, Hegel admits implicitly that it

is the wife (not the sister) who represents the unity of substance from the side of the family. The unity of the Substance depends on, and is expressed by, the cyclic dependence of life and death, and of the two laws. The husband finds “his self-conscious essence” in the community. His identification with Athena (who is the “self-conscious essence” referred to in the case of Sophocles or Socrates) gives a “universal substance and permanence” to the family of the citizen. We can readily see what the *Bestehen* is here, since it was the defence of the family that the *polis* was established for; the “universal substance” is what is immediately portrayed in the general lordship of Zeus. Zeus is the Father, the god of the hearth, as well as the King, the god of the political community. In the old tribal world, family piety could only give rise to feuds—and in the feud the family itself might perish. Now Zeus is effectively the god of every hearth, and the father of all the families; the law of the City guarantees this.

On the other hand, the public community has the “formal element of its actuality” in the family. I think that *formale Element* here means the *element in which it is formed*, i.e. the raw material. We have to go back to paragraph 455 to see what “the force and confirmation” are, which the community has in the Divine Law. This will be further explicated in what follows, but just by considering that the Divine Law is the law about death and the dead, we can see that all public recognition of the citizen’s self-sacrifice must fall under it.

The two laws cannot be separated. Human law is instituted in order to preserve and maintain the family; and it is in the family that boys and girls alike are taught the universal unwritten law of Zeus. The public law depends on that foundation. Without the sense and awareness of that immediate authority, and without the experience of immediate identification in feeling, both the recognition of an authority mediated by rational discussion and communal decision, and a conscious identification with the public will, once the decision has been reached, would be impossible.

Human Law springs from and returns to the Divine Law; there is a cyclic relation between them in which Divine Law, the conscious recognition of what is unconsciously given and immediately felt, is fundamental, because it is the necessary first and last moment. It gives birth to human law (in the spontaneous formation of the original natural monarchies mentioned by Aristotle)⁶⁷ because *Dike* must come forth from the Underworld and be exercised and maintained by Zeus. Zeus becomes the father of a *tribe* of Gods, because we find that family justice destroys both itself and the family in feuding. We arrive at Human Law, when there is a “universal assembly” through which the community governs itself. Thebes has reached the point of transition in the *Antigone*. The City has *chosen* its King. It has been driven to become the arbiter of *Dike*. But now the King must remember that the *Dike* of Zeus, the only authority universal enough to maintain the public law, has her home in the Underworld. Without him the public law would not be effective; but without her, the spirit of Zeus would not be *bewährt*, confirmed in its *truth*. Public authority would be mere *Gewalt* (or violence)—not *Kraft*, which is the inward Force that *utters* itself.

(g) *The Syllogisms of Marriage*

- 24./461. Thus there are two ethical essences: the universal substance and the singular consciousness. They are universally actual in *Volk* and family; and actively individuated as selves in man and woman. Reason's object has become self-conscious, truth has become actual. What is given is *Sitte*, which has to be interpreted (as law). Singular consciousness enjoys its *pleasure* in the family, and is reconciled with the *necessities* of the *Volk* and citizenship. The *law of the heart* is the *Sitte* itself; and *virtue* brings its own real reward—it does what it aims at. The community is the real *Sache selbst*; the laws (above and below) tell us what to do; and we can tell what is good and what is base.

Both of “the universal ethical essences” are what the poets portray as Zeus; so the “Substance as universal” is the Hellenes as the *Volk*, for whom Zeus is the “Father and King of Gods and men.” But the singular (or natural) self-consciousness knows Zeus initially as the god of its own hearth and home. The husband is the natural agent in this singular moment through which the goal of purely subjective Reason is achieved. The *Sache selbst*, the objectivity that was first a non-conscious order, and then an abstraction for subjective Reason, becomes both an animate agent, and a concretely present and recognized real authority. The human nature that Reason observed has become the self-conscious human community; and the abstract Category has become the actual custom of rational life.

Hegel claims, without any restriction, that the “goals that the preceding shapes of consciousness set for themselves are here achieved.”⁶⁸ But he does not actually go back beyond the first form of Reason. For Observing Reason, the object was the “law of nature,” which was simply *found* to be operative everywhere. The ethical custom of the *Volk* has that same sort of immediate validity; but it is only actual as the act of the agent who recognizes it. Of course, if some singular subject fails to actualize it, others who know what to do will do what custom dictates (for putting things right) without any hesitation.

Active Reason has its Pleasure in the mutual enjoyment of husband and wife (and we may note that Hegel is right to take the *Antigone* as a love-story, for everyone, even the Chorus, knows that Haemon and Antigone are in love, and Haemon acts out the part of Romeo to the end); that Pleasure coincides with Necessity in the duties of civil discipline, and the pains of child-bearing. Everyone (not just the male citizens on whom Hegel concentrates our attention) knows that the ethical custom to which she is wholeheartedly devoted is the “law of all hearts.” But there is an implicit ambiguity about the community of the Heart, so that Antigone and Creon will accuse one another of the Frenzy of Self-Conceit; and both of them are guilty of it. It is the implicit presence of the Heart in Greek Virtue that brings True Spirit to grief.

The “consciousness of the self” is known as “the universal order” in the shape of one of the Olympians. It may be Zeus, himself (at Olympia for instance); but even Zeus, in this recognition, is only one of the Twelve, not the “Father and King of all.” It is only the humbler and gentler virtues of womanhood and family life that are directly the universal service of Zeus in every City. The warlike virtue of man-

hood only properly becomes the service of Zeus in the universal piety of burial. To die for the community is a *virtue*, and (as the Athenians showed after Marathon) this death is regarded with ethical *respect* even by those whom one dies trying to kill. Death is the “essence” that must be brought into “actual presence”; and it is rational recognition of death as part of life that defines the “universal life” of rational virtue.

Finally the rational consciousness of the *Sache selbst* is satisfied here. The *polis* as a self-conscious community realizes Reason as the Category. This is a Kantian way of expressing what Aristotle means when he says that only the *polis* is self-sufficient. The *polis* is the human community that makes the good life present as a possibility, and supplies all the active opportunities and material resources that enable rational humans to actualize it. The *Dike* of Zeus (both in Heaven and in the Underworld), dictates the concrete laws that Law-Giving Reason could not supply abstractly; and *Dike* is a rational standard that can be applied in every situation, because when we want to “give to each his (or her) due”—the best abstract definition of “Justice”—our custom will tell us what is due to everyone, both communally and severally.

- 25./462. This perfect equilibrium must have injustice to overcome. But the justice of human law replaces the “state of nature,” by a governing consensus in society, and personal recognition in case of injury. The spirit of the corpse is his own Fury [*Antigone*, lines 94, 256]. It is directed against Nature which has done the wrong; and the kindred repairs the wrong by making natural death into an act.

The ethical *whole* here is the universal family of the Hellenes, the divine and human family of Zeus. Its proper parts are the members of that divine family, or each of the human families that exist together in the freedom of the “good life” which the universal justice of Zeus makes possible. Hegel says “Every part is an *einheimischer Geist*.” This can refer either to the “household Gods” or to the Olympian God of the City at home in its temple. I believe we should take it to refer indifferently to both. For the citizen families are the proper parts of the City; and the Olympian Gods have each of them both a home-City, and a temple-home in each City. It is certain that Hegel is now discussing the whole Hellenic community, and that war is here regarded as the “justice of Zeus” (not as the climax of human “pol-icy” as it was in par. 455).

Hegel agrees with Plato rather than Heracleitus: it is peace that comprehends war, not vice versa.⁶⁹ But the “comprehension” of war must be an active and an actual comprehension; so there have to be wars, in order that they may be resolved in the dynamic equilibrium of justice. It is Justice that Zeus stands for; and Justice as the totality of active virtue is displayed by death in defence of the City. So *Dike* in the Underworld is the vital link upon which the wholeness of the moving equilibrium of life and death depends.

Without the City and its public daylight authority, there can only be what Bacon called the “wild justice” of revenge. Drama offers to the intuitively rational consciousness many images of the world as it would be without Zeus and his *Dike*. Cly-

taemnestra treacherously kills Agamemnon when she has him naked and helpless in the bath. Her own children Orestes and Electra scheme secretly to revenge their father, and Orestes kills Clytaemnestra. This is not the Justice of Zeus. That comes to birth only when Orestes comes before the Areopagus, and Athena (being herself unmothered as she says) gives the casting vote that frees Orestes from his matricidal guilt.⁷⁰

Before the human law is established, the law of revenge is all that exists in the daylight world; and the operation of *Dike* in the Underworld is even worse. The daylight paradigm is Orestes; Oedipus is the tragic victim of the darkness. Hegel seems to have both cases in mind, but his principal concern is with Oedipus. Oedipus acts unconsciously, not knowing who he is killing or who he is marrying; and the occasions for his actions are accidental and fortuitous. It just *happens* that he meets his father on the way to Delphi, and that he arrives at Thebes when it is being plagued by the Sphinx. Apollo's Oracle is in control of everything, and it executes "justice"—but it is only a chapter of accidents as far as human volition and purpose is concerned. The "court" of the Oracle is always like that. The world (and the religion) of the Oracle is pre-political. It is only the establishment of *political* justice that makes human history into the "justice of Zeus"; and the "judgment of God" is not simply what *happens* (even if a community decrees it). The principle of Creon's decree was the old law of revenge. It is Antigone who speaks with the voice of Father Zeus when she says: "It was not enemies but friends that I was born to share."⁷¹ In the archaic age Sparta *enslaved* the Messenians; and the Spartans lived always in the presence of that *Gegensatz*. When the vengeful Athenians asserted their imperial will by slaughtering the men of Melos, the Ethical Substance was near to death. History does *not* prove that "might is right"; rather it proves the opposite. But above all, it proves that only *human recognition* of "divine justice" can produce any justice at all.

The horrible "tricks" (*Tücke*) of Atreus and Thyestes, the "treachery" of Clytaemnestra, and the "ingratitude" of Orestes are clearly sublated by the advent of human law. But Athena's wisdom in that settlement consisted in the incorporation of the Furies, the old blind piety of kinship, into the new order. The Fury of the dead man is the old spirit of family feud. This can be appeased by a proper reverence for the dead. There is no divine vengeance in the Beyond; but there is the living family here and now who must be reconciled with public justice. Otherwise the "self-conscious will of all" will not exist. The public court must speak both for Zeus and for the Furies; so no one must be pursued by justice beyond death. The piety of wedding the dead man's body with the earth is a crucial part of the justice of Zeus. The community of the living must recognize both its natural dependence on the Earth, and its own spiritual continuity with the community of the dead. That is how the Fury of the blood can be reconciled into the kindness of the Eumenides. The enemy is not death itself, but the blankness of inanimate being. The dead body has passed from one state of Nature to another; but the living individual did not belong to Nature. The funeral ceremony acknowledges that she has passed from one part of the spiritual community to the other.

What Hegel says about the *injury* of natural death, and the vengeance for it, seems to fly in the face of the facts. It is Nature that does the wrong; and "in dissolving the wrong the singularity is directed not against the communal universal, but against the abstract universal of being." This is odd, because in our paradigm case, it is certainly the community that suffers. But the protest *is* against natural oblivion; and the wrong *can* be mended by the "consciousness" that still survives. In the "state of Nature" the "family individuality" would be the "Fury"; but in political society, the family burial dissolves the wrong by taking the singular self out of Nature and over into the universal community. The particular political community should not be involved at all.⁷²

There is one novelty in this paragraph. When Hegel says that "the *Gerechtigkeit* of the *human Recht* brings the independence of the estates and individuals back into the universal" he is not thinking of the private economic interests that are shaken up by war in paragraph 455. He is making a new point; for we can recognize here a probable reference to the work of Solon who created social harmony in a community that was on the verge of class war. But the claim that this human justice is "the government of the *Volk*" contains the ambiguity revealed by Antigone's protest. As a *universal Volk* the Greeks had only a *divine* government; in the relations of the communities, what Heracleitus said was *outwardly* true: "War is the Father and King of all." Not even Plato, writing after the catastrophe of the Peloponnesian War, could go beyond the conception of a City without imperialist ambitions, and supremely well able to defend itself against imperialism. The Olympian community is a quarrelsome *family*; and the myths show us just how terrible the working of family feelings can be. The Divine Law remains fundamental, and the Human Law can only triumph in an imperialist form that destroys the *truth* of Substance. The "whole" is not a "peaceful" (*ruhig*) equilibrium on earth as it is in heaven. There is *not* as yet a "present individuality of the universal essence," or a *constitutional* "will of all." The cities are the real Olympians; but there is no real court of Zeus; only a blind Fate presides over them.

- 26./463. Thus the immaculate harmony of the ethical world is preserved without a split. Each law confirms the truth of the other. In the marriage of free citizens the self-conscious spirit (Reason, Law) is united with unconscious Spirit (natural self-consciousness). Man and woman as self-conscious are each the middle term of a syllogism. The universal self-consciousness requires the willing sacrifice of natural life (man's syllogism). The spirit of the single life that is sacrificed must be raised to self-consciousness again (woman's syllogism). Marriage unites the two syllogisms.

As we come to the end of this first moment of Spirit as the "shape of a world" we must notice that the emphasis on the forward motion of the Concept has changed. The Concept that we have before us has its own *self-sustaining* motion. In the next section this stable cycle will become unstable, and pass into the movement of "experience," where the observed Concept becomes a moment in the motion of a more comprehensive Concept. But there is nothing false or self-deceitful about the internal motion by which True Spirit maintains itself as a *Gestalt*. The movement that is

unfolded and imaginatively presented in the *Oresteia* is as “necessary” as the one that is unfolded in the Theban trilogy of Sophocles. The *Oresteia* shows how the Divine Law comes to its proper fulfilment in the Human Law. The Theban plays show how the Human Law should continue to sustain the Divine Law upon which it is founded. Sophocles shows this *dynamically* by portraying the inevitable downfall of the Divine Law in its immediate form. Historically, this downfall is the beginning of the “biography of God,” through which a self-conscious harmony of human and divine law is finally established at a higher level. We can now see clearly that the Divine Law depends for all of its *ethical* character upon human recognition of, and absolute respect for, the community of humanity as one family.

Further explanatory commentary on paragraph 463 is hardly necessary because the argument has been exhaustively expounded already. Each of the Olympian *Gestalten* has its “self-conscious” and its “unconscious” (or natural) aspect. But the *Dike* of each side confirms the other in its truth. The man comes home from the law-making of the universal assembly to his wife and family. This is the real interpenetration of the free Spirit with its foundation in nature. The drive of biological and economic life is the “extreme” of Spirit which is “without consciousness” (*bewusstlos*). This “unconscious” spirit has *Dasein* in the wife and mother, and becomes actual through her. The course of the argument has shown that this extreme (which is “without consciousness”) becomes in the end the *absolute* consciousness. The woman bears the child—and what is born is just a “non-conscious” (and certainly a *non-rational*) *Dasein*; and what the mother thinks and speaks of is natural need. But when she preserves the memory of the dead then what is “non-conscious” in the most obvious sense becomes conscious.

The masculine syllogism is the establishment of the universal spiritual self-consciousness through the voluntary sacrifice of the singular, natural living self. The feminine syllogism is the raising of that singular natural living self out of the unconsciousness of life (at one end) and death (at the other) into the spiritual community of memory.⁷³ As an agent self I am a self-conscious *body*; but the significance of my agency does not depend upon my body at all. Hence my freedom as a Spirit can be absolute. The natural genesis of the agent-self depends on the mother. The father is only necessary as a starting-impulse; and the raising of his natural force into agency (self-conscious fatherhood) requires the institution of marriage as a structure of general social recognition. A political community in which the men are to die for the preservation of their children requires that the women, at least, must be monogamous. The eventual emergence of a community of *equal* recognition will follow more readily if monogamy is socially required of both sexes; and only in that case will the evolution of the ideal of rational recognition be circular (so that the community of memory can finally become perfect, and be unstained by any residual bitterness).

Seen in this perspective, the Greek ideal of True Spirit is where the *actuality* of Reason logically begins; and the *Antigone* illuminates why nature (feeling) and freedom (logic) must (and can) move in harmony, even under the most extreme stress (i.e. when one side recognizes only strict logic, and the other side only natural feel-

ing). The syllogisms of “man” and “woman” express what will be categorical for a virtuous man and a virtuous woman when they are *driven* to make choices.

Virtue is a spiritual thing (i.e. a creation of the social self-consciousness). Antigone and Creon act as they have been taught; and it is perfectly obvious that the social self-consciousness is *free*. The *Antigone* portrays “what naturally happens”; but it shows us precisely why that ought not to be allowed to happen. The moral is clear. Political and domestic responsibility cannot be sexually segregated without disastrous consequences. It is easy to document Hegel’s life-long admiration for Antigone. But he would have to have been as blind as Creon not to notice that hers was a *political* act. He idealized her, because she did not want to intervene in politics; and he agreed with Sophocles that when political life was properly conceived and organized she would not be driven to do so.⁷⁴

Notes

1. It is worth remarking here that the two appearances of Kant’s Practical Reason in the *Phenomenology* (at the climax of chapters V and VI) give us the key to all of the apparent paradoxes and contradictions in Hegel’s different discussions of *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität*. In the case of *Sittlichkeit* we must distinguish between the ancient (or unselfconscious) and the modern (or selfconscious) form; in that of *Moralität*, between the abstract and the concrete interpretation of the concept. There is a copious recent literature on this topic (mostly focussed on the *Philosophy of Right*): D. Henrich and R.-P. Horstmann (eds.) (1982); D. Lamb and L. S. Stepelevich (eds.) (1983); W. Kuhlmann (ed.) (1986); and the *Hegel-Jahrbuch* (1987). These volumes will provide many further references. The best overall discussion of Hegel’s “ethics” in English is that of A. W. Wood (1990); and A. W. Wood (1991) provides a very good summary account of his interpretation of Hegel.

We may remark, tangentially, that J. Heinrichs (1974, 265) is right in claiming that at this point we move from the “logic” to the “metaphysics” of the Concept (of Reason); and by the same token R. Aschenberg (1976, 279–280) is right in saying that we have now arrived at the “correct” Concept (i.e. the Category as *Sache selbst*) and can proceed to the demonstration of its “truth.” But those are matters best studied after one has comprehended the “Science of Experience” as a whole. Discussions like that of G. Krüger (1970, I, 285–303) appear to be based on my understanding of Hegel’s purpose.

2. If we place it there, we can see that the discussion of Kant’s Practical Reason becomes more or less continuous.

3. This is not very clear in Miller’s translation because he has garbled the outline of “Lawtesting Reason.” An accurate rendering of the relevant sentence would be: “It [the consciousness of the spiritual essence] is still in fact distinct from the substance as a singular consciousness, and either gives arbitrary laws, or fancies that it has the laws as they are in and for themselves in its own knowing as such; and considers itself to be the power that passes judgment upon them.”

4. As Antigone insists, the consciousness of God’s law is *ageless*. It becomes a moment of self-conscious Spirit when it comes into conflict with real human law-giving. It is important that Antigone’s “ageless” law is the bond of natural feeling; for that is still with us in the world of “Law-Testing Reason,” whereas Creon’s law of the City has long vanished. The sense of something as *sittlich* is a feeling of having *no choice*. The obligation of *Sittlichkeit* is

the sense of what it means to be a member of this community. See C. Taylor [1978] with the helpful comments of S. Avineri.

5. The most literal translation I can contrive of the lines from which Hegel's first reference to the *Antigone* comes is as follows: "For it was not Zeus who proclaimed these things [i.e. Creon's edict] to me/ nor the *Dike* who shares the home of the Gods below,/ who defined the laws that hold among men./ Nor did I consider that your proclamations had such strength/ That they could run beyond the unwritten and unshakeable/ Decrees of the Gods, being mortal as they are./ For it is not for today and tomorrow, but forever/ That these divine decrees live. And no one knows from whence they appeared." (lines 450–457 translated from the text published at Frankfurt in 1544).

6. The relations between this section (VI A a) and Hegel's other writings (both earlier and later) are well brought out by D. Janicaud (1975, Part 2, chapter III).

7. Plato, *Protagoras* 328a.

8. Flay (1984, 348, n. 12) sets up an interesting opposition between E. Bloch (1962, 95) and R. Garaudy (1966, 53). From the standpoint of "Spirit" we can see that Bloch is right in arguing for the primacy of our social activity. Objective Spirit forms the real context of all subjective Desire. But the satisfaction of Desire has a certain priority, not as "subjective" but as the cycle of "Life." Flay is right to insist on "reciprocity" (whether between individual and community or between Spirit and Nature). But the sense in which both authors are *right* is at least as important as that in which they are both wrong.

9. Although it makes problems for us, we should notice that Hegel's insistence on the *Hellenic* origin of Stoicism and Scepticism here is another argument against interpreters like Solomon, who believe that only *Roman* Stoicism and its critics are important for the *Phenomenology*—compare Solomon (1983, 459).

10. *Politics* I, ii, 15 (1253a).

11. *Politics* I, ii, 14; cf. 15–16 (1253a).

12. Hegel identifies both "Pleasure" and "Necessity," but then passes over the *antitheses* of the "Heart's Law" and "Virtue." In the case of the "World's Way," the reason is obvious. The antithesis of concrete civic virtue is simple vice. This is familiar to everyone in the world of True Spirit; and the Old Comedy is full of intuitive presentations of it. For the "Frenzy of Self-Conceit" we must look to Tragedy. We can see the intuitive image of it in Aeschylus when Prometheus defies Zeus as a tyrant. In the *Prometheus Bound* the life of virtue is pictured as a life of *suffering*, and the supreme Lawgiver as a tyrant. But we do not know what the "ethical" resolution of that paradox was; so it is wiser perhaps to study the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, where Neoptolemus reconciles the embittered "heart" of Philoctetes with its true substance, but avoids the conspiratorial cunning of Odysseus. This play seems to me to set up the antithesis between the "lawful" and the "conceited" Heart correctly; and one could not ask for a more prominent (or more generally *admired*) model of "self-conceit" than Odysseus. So the place of this moment in True Spirit is securely established. The "conspiracy theory of history" was actually invented by the Sophists—and specifically by Critias. See the fragment of his drama *Sisyphus* cited by Sextus Empiricus IX, 54. Hegel read Sextus fairly thoroughly so he probably knew this clear case. Aetius and Aelian both quote the play as by Euripides, and from the quality of the poetry I surmise that this is right (see D.-K., 88 B 25). But there is no doubt whose the ideas were; and the thesis that a cunning ruler *invented* the Gods to back up his own authority is the Hellenic form of D'Holbach's view.

13. When Hegel began lecturing in 1801 he spoke of Solon as a philosophical lawgiver for the Athenians (Rosenkranz, 189–190; Harris, *Night Thoughts*, 193). But in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* he denies that Solon's work was a genuine "law-giving" (*Vorlesungen* VII, 11).

14. G. Severino (1971, 98–99) says that Socrates plays the same role in the history of philosophy as Antigone; and indeed, he does "test the laws" only as "something done." But the difference is at least as important as the resemblance.

15. See *Politics* III, 5 (1278a) and VII, 8 (1328ab). (For a commonsensical account of how free Greek citizens differed from Real Individuals see M. Hardimon, 1994, 151–153.)

16. Sparta generally would not allow the Sophists to operate in the City. Hippias boasts of being an exception (see Plato, *Hippias Major*, 283b–286a).

17. *Politics* I, 2 (1252b).

18. It is not clear just what Hegel wants to say about the consciousness that *has* Reason. But some such hypothesis as the one in the text is needed in any case. The English, French and Italian translators all construe the sentence as follows: "But as immediate consciousness of the being that is *in and for itself*, as unity of consciousness and self-consciousness, it [*er* = Spirit] is the consciousness that *has Reason*—the consciousness which, as the *having* indicates, has the object as determined rationally *in itself*, or by the value of the category, but in such a way that for the consciousness of the same, it [*er* now refers to *der Gegenstand*] still does not have the value of the category. It [*er* now means once more *der Geist*, the spirit as 'Reason'] is the consciousness that we have just now finished considering."

This reading makes good sense, because "the category" is the transcendental Ego; and the whole "experience" of Reason is precisely that the object does not have the "value" of the Self. But Hegel probably uses the pronoun *er* to refer to *Spirit* all through his summary. So the intended sense may be that "Spirit" is the "object," which the rational consciousness has, but which does not have categorical value for it. In that case it is objective Spirit that "still does not have the value of the Category" (while "subjective spirit" is directly experienced *as* the category).

As we have seen, the passage is difficult either way because chapter V begins with the clear assertion that "Reason" *is* "the certainty of being all reality," and that it *is* "the Category." The present summary indicates that the rational consciousness *has* that (subjective) certainty, but that it only *is* that certainty when it becomes "true Spirit" and intuites itself as the object, or as ethical actuality. Only then does "it" (whether it is "the object" or "Spirit") properly "have the value of the category." The "Reason" of chapter V has only a *formal* certainty of "being all reality," because it cannot *find* itself as "the object," or as "its own world."

19. That was why, when we wanted to identify the previous Shapes dancing out of the substance and returning back to it, we had to look at the tragedies, rather than at Greek history or philosophy. History and philosophy will show us an "advance" that transcends "intuition" and does not return to it.

20. *Phaedrus*, 250a. (The "aesthetic ladder" to the Form of the Good is supplied by Diotima's speech in the *Symposium* 210–211.)

21. On the contribution of J. J. Winckelmann, see M. Baur (forthcoming).

22. The attentive reader of Schelling's *Philosophy of Art* will soon perceive that this is an overstatement. But Hegel did radically *transform* the Platonic thought-materials that were common ground for all of the early Romantics.

23. But, alas, Hegel's analysis is not often studied with the text of Sophocles himself at hand. Even George Steiner studies Hegel's text less closely and carefully than he has exam-

ined both Sophocles and Hölderlin. But his discussion can be heartily recommended to all who wish to investigate the truth of my claim about the reciprocal influence of Hölderlin and Hegel in more detail (see G. Steiner, 1984, chapter I).

24. As soon as the Ethical Substance perishes, we are in the sphere of Judgment. Hegel mentions only one side of Judgment, and it is always the one that is *new*. He expects *us* to supply the one that we already know about. “Formal legality” is Stoicism; so it *needs* the concrete aspect of Scepticism. *Bildung* is the concrete world of the Unhappy Consciousness as Devotion. The missing complement of “Faith” is obvious. But having called the singular *Gestalt* Reason, Hegel will call the moving concept “Insight.” This is because Reason is both the beginning and the end of the whole movement from chapters V to VIII. *Instinctive Reason*—the Reason that instinctively (i.e. inductively) finds itself as a self-preservative organism in the thing-world, appears with Bacon and Descartes; but Reason only comes to our own critical awareness of itself as the universal “Category” in Fichte.

25. *Antigone*, line 575.

26. For “an [inwardly] distinguished ethical essence” Miller substitutes “distinct ethical substances.” This is an outrageous mistranslation.

27. The question why Hegel deals with “True Spirit” through Sophoclean Tragedy has not been adequately answered. D. Janicaud (1975, 177) says this is where the *tension* of the ethical substance is revealed. O. Pöggeler (1964) may have inspired this thesis. Most authors—e.g. Lauer (1976, 182), Taylor (1975, 173)—take the use of tragedy to be a simple matter of convenience. Hyppolite (1974, 335) does a little better. Royce (1919, 203)—rightly speaking of “an *ideal* commonwealth”—makes the paradox explicit. See further note 53 below.

28. This view is clearly expressed by Ismene at the beginning of the *Antigone*; and Creon reiterates continually that women must not “rule.”

29. The “kingship” of Thebes or Athens was a *customary* institution. But the ground of this customary status was ambiguous. This ambiguity is clarified perfectly in the *Eumenides*. The climax of the trilogy is reached when Athena—the wisdom of Zeus—establishes the supreme authority of a human court: the Areopagus. Apollo and the Furies are content to appear, and to have their dispute settled, by that court; and the court itself, although it is established at Athens, has the universal jurisdiction of father Zeus, for it mediates the quarrel between the two universal powers (of the daylight and the darkness) about the ancestral kingship of another city altogether. (Orestes was the natural heir to the throne of Argos.)

30. *Politics*, III, 5 (1278ab); *Jedes Volk hat ihm*, Nohl, 216; Knox, 147–148. The properly *universal* conception of communal Self-Consciousness contains the logical imperative for the political liberation of woman even more evidently than it implies the liberation of the slaves. L. Irigaray (1988, 98) offers us a half-truth: “Hegel a une conception esthétique de la société, de l’Etat. Cette conception masque bien des horreurs.” What this reading masks is the *logic* of the Concept.

31. The problem of *where* Oedipus is to be buried is the focal question of the *Oedipus at Colonus*. Sophocles uses “Theseus” to make him an honorary citizen of Athens.

32. For the marriage law see *Crito*, 50d. The most striking example of the human law as a sanction of burial custom is the trial of the generals after the naval victory at Arginusae (Xenophon, *Hellenica*, I, 6–7).

33. *Politics*, I, 2, 6 (1252b).

34. *Antigone*, lines 940–941.

35. The situation of a modern nation is different. The argument for “monarchy” in the *Philosophy of Right* can only be a “phenomenological” reading of the rationality of what is “actual” in Hegel’s own time, and for his own *Volk*. There cannot be an *absolute* form of government. To read Hegel’s “real” philosophy as an “absolute” ideal, degrades it into the kind of abstract “Ought” that he explicitly condemns in his own Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*. Of course, the actual constitution described in that book is a *mixed* one; and the general principle of “mixture” certainly has a more nearly absolute status than any particular mixture.

36. The view of P. A. Simpson (forthcoming, chapter 4, section 1), that the *family* is the institutional expression of the Divine Law, is a bit oversimplified because the Human Law is sublated in it. Also mothers can sometimes be the voice of family authority; but the actual evolution of political authority in our tradition has masculine family authority in the background. Plato’s *Republic* shows that there is nothing *logical* about that.

H. M. Ravven (1988, 163, n. 5) says Hegel “*fails* to see that phenomenon [lordship/bondage] as arising in the social structure of the family.” On the contrary, his view is that it is present but sublated. Even in the community, the natural drive for lordship is sublated in “ethical obedience” to the City. (Of course, the system of sublation is unstable, and it is the natural drive for lordship that smashes it.)

37. See the *Nicomachean Ethics* III, 1–5 for Aristotle’s distinctions between “voluntary,” “chosen” and “deliberate.”

38. One of the clearest is the story of Althaea, who brought death on her son, Meleager, because he killed her two brothers.

39. Even Alcestis dies (in Euripides) for her *husband* (though he is a king, and there may be some undisclosed political reason why his death was required); and although Clytaemnestra presents clearly the ethical anomaly of a regnant queen, the declared motive for her assassination of Agamemnon is the avenging of Iphigenia. Jocasta illustrates the political *influence* that a woman can have in True Spirit; but the primacy of her family-commitment is evident in everything that she says and does. Only in Comedy is the hypothesis of a “woman ruling” (which Ismene and Creon both regard as ethically impossible) seriously proposed (*Lysistrata*).

40. As her later conduct shows, Ismene’s initial position is to be attributed to her “virtue” not her “nature”. She is naturally gentle and kind, just as Antigone is naturally self-willed and rather unkind; but like Antigone, Ismene acts *ethically*. Critics who call her “timid” are misreading her in the very same way that Creon misreads Antigone.

41. This is plain enough in the exchanges between Creon, Ismene and the Chorus regarding the betrothal of Antigone and Haemon (*Antigone*, lines 567–576). But it is also made clear that that engagement was, in fact, a love match.

42. Compare the sarcastic comment of Polyneices in Sophocles (*Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 1295–1298).

43. The great debate about the burial of Ajax (in Sophocles’ play) may have been inspired by the controversy about the burial of Themistocles. His relatives defied the decree that forbade burial in home territory (Plutarch, Themistocles 23). There are several other cases of “traitors” having to be buried outside home borders—see C. M. Bowra, *Sophoclean Tragedy* (Oxford, 1944, 48–51).

44. Pausanias I, 32, 5. (We must remember that the enemy dead would have included many Ionian Greeks.)

45. *Antigone* lines 29–30 (her horror); 213–214 (Creon’s supposed discretion); 998–1032 and 1064–1083 (the prophecies of Teiresias—note especially lines 1072–1073: “These things [burial rites] are not your concern, nor that of the Gods above, but you have interfered by force of your own will.”)

46. The need for an “actual and external deed” in the “ethical life of Spirit in its immediate truth” is interpreted in a very high enlightened fashion in this paragraph. It is as if Hegel believed that the poets literally *created* the haunting spirits and the Furies. But he seems to know better when he speaks of the “Fury” of Polyneices later (par. 462, compare par. 474). Obviously “consolation and reconciliation” are of the first importance if men are to go to war (and women are to send them) voluntarily (and even with enthusiasm).

47. Compare the *Ajax* of Sophocles, and the argument about the Argive dead in Euripides’ *Suppliants*; also the comment of Teiresias quoted in note 45.

48. In place of Miller’s “the natural community to which he in his [natural] existence belongs,” we should read “the natural community to which he belongs as *actual*.”

49. In the *Antigone*, the fate of Thebes remains in suspense, but it suits Hegel’s use of the myth to let the tragedy play itself right out.

50. *G.W.* VI, 269; Harris and Knox, 207–208 (note 8). For “Resolution” see *Dok.* 388.

51. Miller’s translation contains two mistakes. “Das obere Gesetz” is not the *superior* law, but the law of the Overworld (as opposed to the Underworld); and the “simple power [of the Government] allows the essence [not “the Family”] to expand into the articulation.”

52. It seems probable that the effective democratic constitution of Athens was mainly the achievement of Cleisthenes (archon, 525[?] B.C.), who created a completely artificial system of tribes (after the expulsion of the Peisistratids in 510 B.C.). But we hear little of him in Athenian tradition; and this may partly be because he was skilful in directing attention backwards and away from himself. For instance, he may be largely responsible for the *reconciliatory* version of the myth of Theseus (cf. R. Graves, *Greek Myths* I, and the conflicting versions of the myth that he summarizes). In the Aeschylean vision the Athenian constitution itself becomes a thing “immemorial”—the work of the Goddess.

53. Hegel’s analysis seems to agree with Aristotle in ascribing conceptual *actuality* to the Athenian model of democracy. His argument requires the granting of this “ideal” status to the democratic principle, because the final model of the universal moral community of Reason—within which Absolute Knowledge dawns—is the Lutheran congregation. Respect for the singular moral conscience is the principle of Kantian practical Reason, without which Hegel’s concept of Reason as a true Infinite would become self-contradictory in a vicious sense. (Hegel did not regard even universal male suffrage as the “standard” towards which the modern “community of nations” was moving. But that proved to be the case—and we can fairly say that the “judgment of God” upon this masculine-militarist foundation of modern democracy has been as categorical as the judgment upon the original “ethical substance.”)

R. C. Solomon (1983, 495) says that “the omission of Athens at the height of its development should show once and for all that this [the movement of ‘Spirit’ in chapter VI] is in no literal sense history for Hegel.” A logical transition of some sort from a Sophoclean Tragedy to the world of Stoicism and Roman Law is certainly not ordinary “history.” But it may be “philosophy of history.” As for “the omission of Athens,” Solomon had better ask himself what is more *gloriously* Athenian than Sophocles; and then look again at Hegel’s paragraph 455. (The *proper* question is “Why is the City State presented to us only through the work of the Athenian tragedians?” And the answer is that “True Spirit” is an *aesthetic* mode of con-

sciousness, with an “Art-Religion.” It is not yet “philosophical”; the philosophers are its grave-diggers.)

54. Hegel incorporated this same conception of the function of war into his “real-philosophical” theory of the relations of modern national states. S. Avineri (1972, 196–199) presents it in a properly balanced light; J. D’Hondt (1967) gives it a “progressive” turn by claiming that Hegel only justifies modern wars as productive of advance towards popular sovereignty (which is perhaps what Hegel ought to say, but not what he usually does say). V. Hölsle (1987, 217–223) fails to take account of the circle-closing function of war in Hegel’s politics. R. Dohrmann and C. Stein (1984/1985) understand this and draw the correct consequences for the theory of international relations. But, of course, the transformation of war into “total war” in our century (and even the stalemate of “trench-war” in 1914–1918) has “sublated” the whole Hegelian theory. “Real philosophy” must follow the evolution of the “real world.” (M. Tunick [1992, 88–92] has understood how the evolution of *war* had made it impossible even in Hegel’s time to be politically nostalgic for the Hellenic world—as J. N. Shklar thinks Hegel was.)

S. Avineri (1972, 206) summarizes Hegel’s view of modern *national* war neatly as follows:

Thus even war itself, with all its negativity, does finally receive a meaning within the wider scheme of things. Out of the vortex of clashes characterizing international relations, an inner order emerges and reason appears in history not as something given *a priori*—as an axiomatic system of norms—but as the end product of a long, arduous and sometimes seemingly meaningless process.

But what was true of war between the Greek Cities, and even between the sovereign European nations of Hegel’s time, ceased to be true of the *world-wars* that began in 1914.

55. For the Aristotelian background of Hegel’s theory see C. Despotopoulos (1984/1985) and T. J. Gerald (1984/1985).

56. Ethically, the brother-sister relation ought to be sublated into the universal brotherhood of the City; and there is no ethical relation between sisters after they marry. It is clear enough that the *model* relations between siblings are *naturally* loving in Greek ethics. This is obvious in Sophocles, and it becomes explicit both in Plato’s *Republic* and in Aristotle’s criticisms. But all such relations are necessarily *mixed*. The *ethical* freedom of Antigone’s act of burying Polyneices is demonstrated by the fact that Ismene—who certainly loved him just as much—does nothing. But equally, the presence of *natural* self-consciousness in Antigone’s decision is shown by the way she loses her temper with her sister.

57. A lot of effort has been put into the psychoanalytic diagnosis of this mistake of Hegel’s; and since it certainly is an error, the psychological approach to it is legitimate (see for instance J. Derrida, 1986). R. C. Solomon [1983, 545] says that “most commentators agree [that Hegel’s claims] can be traced to his own emotional relationship with his sister Christiane.” But he may be exaggerating, for he cites only two others. Inquiries into Hegel’s personal psychology are of no systematic philosophical interest; but for those who are interested in Hegel’s relations with his sister, the essays of H.-C. Lucas (1984/1985, 1988) can be recommended.

C. Mancina (1991, 156) notices how paradoxical it is for Hegel to give first place to the brother/sister relation in his family ethics—he never does this anywhere else. Unlike A. Elsigan (1972, 153–160) she has understood that the paradox arises from Hegel’s view of the developmental relationship between the classical and the Christian family. (Hegel refers

back to this passage only once—in the *Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft* course of 1817/1818, see *Vorlesungen* Bd. 1, 111, lines 981–986).

J. B. Elshtain (1981, 176) thinks that Hegel's "ethical" analysis of Antigone's speech expresses his own view of *modern* marriage. This is a bad mistake. Everything he says about the ideal of marriage in the Christian-German world coheres with his position in the famous fragment on "Love" (*T.W.-A.* 1, 244–250). G. J. Hayim avoids Elshtain's error (1990, 9). But otherwise her account of the family in modern society is confused (and far removed from Hegel's own thought).

58. See *Antigone*, lines 566ff.

59. This is one of the most astounding examples of the conflict of "ethical" imperatives in Athenian history; and the triumph of Antigone's view in the mind of the community has great relevance to Hegel's analysis of the downfall of the Ethical Substance, since the victory at Arginusae represented an almost miraculous recovery by Athens in the dark days at the end of the War. Socrates regarded the condemnation of the generals as quite unconstitutional, and refused to put the matter to the vote when the Presidency fell to him by lot. We can hardly doubt that he was right. But not even the wisdom of Theseus can always overcome the *unwisdom* of *Dike* in the Underworld. See Xenophon, *Hellenica* I, 6–7 for the battle and the trial; Plato, *Apology* 32b, for Socrates' part and his attitude.

60. This validates S. M. Easton's image of Antigone as a heroine of "love" (1987, 37–38). But that is a dangerously loose way of characterizing what Antigone represents. Her ideal is not the rational "Law of the Heart," but the recognition of the ties of *blood* as holy, and therefore as the basis of ethical duties—compare note 63 below.

61. See his *Conversations with Eckermann*, 28 March 1827. (He made the comment incidentally in a discussion of the Hegelian view as expounded by H.W.F. Hinrichs.) G. Severino (1971, 93) recognized that Hegel was interpreting Antigone's last speech; but he agreed with Goethe. Similarly P. Furth (1984/1985, 23) agrees with Goethe about Creon. (On that view Creon and Antigone cannot represent "equal rights.")

62. This quotation is found in Plutarch, *De profectibus in Virtute* 7.

63. The Fates told Althaea that her baby boy Meleager would die when the burning brand in the fire was consumed. She snatched it out and locked it away. Meleager first killed two of his mother's brothers after the hunt for the Calydonian boar (his mother *curse*d him for that). He withdrew from the feud between the other brothers and his father until his wife Cleopatra persuaded him to join in. Then he killed the other two brothers—and Althaea put the brand back into the fire. So there *is* the analogy that Althaea lost *all* of her brothers before she acted. After her action (which was commanded by "the Furies") both she and Cleopatra committed suicide. The conflict of Althaea's sisterly love with her status as wife and mother is clear. But it does not appear that anyone ever thought that a proper resolution for it was *ethically* dictated. The story tells *against* Antigone's argument rather than for it.

64. Hegel probably believed that Antigone's argument that she had an absolutely overriding duty to bury her brother, was grounded in the fact that, in the course of nature, a sister would often be the dead man's closest surviving relative. But, quite apart from his wife and children, the assumption that a *woman* would normally be charged with such a responsibility is certainly mistaken. In the primitive tribal structure of Greek society the minimal units were the *phratries*. These were all-male brotherhoods into which the youth was solemnly inducted upon reaching military age. Homer knew them (though the heroic world he was singing about did not) as the normal units of military organization. It fell upon the *phratry* at Athens to negotiate the settlement if a man without close male relatives was accidentally

killed by someone else. The *phratry* was often invited to a wedding. Clearly the *phrateres* would bury a man slain on a distant battlefield; and I cannot help thinking that they would take charge of the funeral of anyone without close surviving adult male kin.

The word *phrater* is very old. It is not the normal Greek word for a brother. We cannot doubt that originally a *phratría* was a kinship group. But it seems to me that the rather sceptical view of phratries as they existed in historic Greece that has been proposed by Andrewes should be accepted—see A. Andrewes, *The Greeks*, chapter 5 (New York, Knopf, 1967); and Homer, *Iliad* II, 362.

65. See *Politics* I, ii, 3–4 (1252ab); xii, 1 (1259ab); *Ethics* VIII, x, 5 (1160b).

66. Priestesses were important in the communal religious life as well as priests—think for example of the Pythia at Delphi who is a focal point of the whole Ethical Substance.

67. *Politics* I, i, 6–7 (1252a).

68. We have shown in some detail that this is true (in the commentary on par. 440 above). Much of the necessary commentary on paragraph 461 has been given there. Simple repetition has been avoided here.

69. Compare Heracleitus (D.-K. 22 B 53); and *Laws*, Book I.

70. Athena's comment that she herself had no mother (*Eumenides*, line 737) was dismissed by Jebb as a "quaint subtlety" of Aeschylus. But, of course, Athena is both the "wisdom" of Zeus, and the "self-consciousness" of her City. Her argument expresses the necessity which Socrates and Plato recognized: that the *Polis* (who is feminine) must be recognized as the true spiritual "mother" of all her citizens. She has to be the *first* in that capacity.

71. *Antigone*, line 523. (Nevertheless L. Irigaray [1985, 216–226] is right to insist that Antigone is only an intermediary between the battlefield and the grave. The universal Greek family—the family of Zeus—is beyond death).

72. In our paradigm case, it is because a conflict of communities is involved, that the vengeance falls upon Thebes itself—compare the commentary on paragraphs 473–474 below. The tribal background of paragraph 462 is well brought out by M. Tunick (1992, 78–80). But he abstracts it from the developed context of "human justice." He does not comprehend the *universality* of "ethical life" properly. His work, like that of Allen Wood (1990) shows us how the theory of objective *finite* Spirit can be abstracted from its infinite context, so that reference to "Spirit" can be dispensed with. (All the same, he offers some insightful criticisms of Solomon's more simple-minded "humanism" [see 1992, 12, 84–86, 90].)

73. We cannot hope to understand the argument of paragraph 463 if we do not distinguish the "individuality" of the man, who works for the community in supporting his family, from his "singularity" as a mortal living organism. But Miller has translated *die Individualität des Mannes* and *der bewusstlose Geist des Einzelnen* as if "individual" was present in both cases.

74. S. Swindle (1992) has connected paragraph 463 with the Lordship and Bondage relation in order to argue that modern feminists ought to appreciate the significance of the *Phenomenology* more positively. Hegel himself would not like this because (already in the ethics of True Spirit) he distinguished (like Aristotle) between wives and slaves. At Berlin, he commented on the fact that "love" could sublimate the bondage of a female slave (see M. J. Petry, 1988). But in his theory of the modern family there is tension between Aristotelian "ethics" and Christian "morality" because "love" is a relation of "equal recognition." (The debate between Swindle, P. J. Mills and H. M. Ravven illustrates the usefulness of Hegelian ideas, but does not contribute positively to the understanding either of Hegel's own world-inter-

pretation, or of his “System.” The running discussion of this theme in A. Cutrofello [1995], which was partly stimulated by this exchange, is well worthy of attention.)

Joanna Hodge (1987) says Hegel is inconsistent on the position of women. What is correct in this claim is that Hegel’s logic of “selfhood” (in the *Phenomenology* and in the theory of Absolute Spirit) is Platonic-egalitarian; while his theory of family and State (in the Real Philosophy) is—necessarily—Aristotelian. I say *necessarily* because the real world whose rationality he was uncovering was Aristotelian; and it is not the task of philosophy to prescribe to the world how it ought to be. It is also the case that Hegel subjectively agreed with Aristotle, and his own real world. But that is not of any philosophical importance *to us*.)

In her book (1987, chapter 1), P. J. Mills offers a clear discussion of Hegel’s different views of the significance of Antigone in classical *Sittlichkeit* (the *Phenomenology*) and in his own society (the *Philosophy of Right, Aesthetics*). But in her critical evaluation she fails (like Hodge) to take proper account of the fact that “philosophy is *its own time* apprehended in thoughts.” Thus when she says that “his system does not permit woman to be viewed as fully human” or “Hegel’s universal is necessarily male,” she ought to say that “his *world* (as he interprets its rational structure) did not permit this (or it required that). It is not the business of *philosophy* to permit or require anything—though it can show us why some things we dream of (a “just society,” a world without war, the brother/sisterhood of humanity realized as a political system, etc.) *cannot* actually come to pass. Within these logical limits, things like the human significance of gender, or “free universality” must be settled by history (and all that philosophy can say is that *no* settlement will be absolutely permanent).

The “syllogism of marriage” gives Hegel’s theory of *Sittlichkeit* a sexual foundation. This abides undisturbed in the downfall of the *polis*, and the evolution of “national morality.” But it was always clearly destined for transformation—compare D. O. Dahlstrom (1987). T. O’Hagan (1984/1985) provides an instructive analysis of how difficult it is to achieve the point of view (and mode of expression) of a pure “observer” on problems of this kind.

The essay of H.-C. Lucas (1984/1985) is full of valuable insights into Hegel’s discussions of Antigone—which, if O. Pöggeler (1987) is correct, began in the “Spirit of Christianity” manuscript at Frankfurt. For a good survey of the critical reception of Hegel’s *Antigone* interpretation see M. Donougho (1989).

Chapter 4

The Expulsion from the Garden

VI A(b): Ethical Action, Human and Divine Knowledge, Guilt and Destiny

Hegel understands Greek Tragedy as the political means through which the perfect balance of the spiritual truth was maintained. Thus the Antigone is a political parable about what happens when the “true” relation of the sexes is violated. We can find in it, therefore, both the truth of the Greek polis and the logic of Greek political history. “The Ethical World” showed us the first (the Concept at rest). “Ethical Action” will show us the second (the Concept in motion, or the “experience” of natural Sittlichkeit). Ethical certainty inverts itself, and in the comprehensive result the new truth of positive law replaces the truth of custom. The Antigone itself shows us the inversion, and why the transition to a world in which positive law is necessary must follow.

The “Concept at rest” sublates the motion that is involved in its own living concreteness by spinning on the axis that is provided by the “syllogism of marriage.” What upsets that balance is the imperative that the two parties to a marriage must each be ethically blind to the commitment of the other—and in that sense ignorant of what the other one knows. The “ignorance” and “knowledge” are not of any ordinary kind; for the whole knowledge (God’s knowledge) of the situation is portrayed by the tragic poet. The Theban trilogy of Sophocles displays it all. Through Sophocles, the community recollects the whole syllogism of marriage. For them, it is a warning; but for us it reveals the logic of history, because of the contradiction between the intuitive aesthetic awareness of the whole, and the divided practical knowledge of what is imperative for individual action. Even the aesthetic intuition of “God’s knowledge” came too late. Sophocles lived and wrote during the period of Athenian imperialism and the Peloponnesian War.

This second section is where the motion of “experience” takes place. In the first section there was perfect unity and harmony throughout, and the “motion”—foreshadowed in the antithetic headings—was only the unfolding of the concept of Dike, the justice of Zeus. But here, in the second section, it is all judgment, all division—and the new sequence of headings prepares us for this.

(a) *Action as a Judgment*

- 1./464. The antithesis of the two laws in true spirit is such that singular individuality has not entered into its rights. The *actual* self expresses itself in its action. Its freedom sets the two laws against each other; they fall together into the abyss of *destiny*; and pass over into the singular self-consciousness.

In the first section of chapter VI A, we were shown the harmonious ethical world of the Cities, contending with each other in their wars. This was a kind of serious playing for the Gods in which the meaning of life is revealed; and the dead are remembered gloriously, like Leonidas and his Three Hundred who fought to the last man at Thermopylae. Now we shall be the audience for a single ethical action, which by distinguishing between the fates of two who have fallen, sunders the two laws. This sundering is possible, because although the two laws circle into one another to make the unity of the ethical world, they are not known to human agents in the way that they are known to Zeus. Human and divine law are one, but human and divine knowledge of them are not the same. For this reason the union of man and woman becomes the conflict of two ethical views. The male decision, which differentiates the fate of the dead men, is answered by a defiant female action which restores equality. Both parties are “guilty,” and in the collision both laws perish in the “simplicity” of natural death. All that survives is the singular selfhood that makes itself known in Antigone’s defiance. In the Truth of Spirit singular selfhood belongs only to the realm of the dead; but in the person of Antigone the singular individual emerges and does an “ethical deed” (other than the incomplete deed of dying). This upsets the balance of custom. The beautiful order of justice which the political artists of human nature have put in the place of the “law of nature” comes crashing down. Antigone destroys not only what she was consciously opposed to, but what she was trying to defend. Hence it is the singular self (in all its mortality) that comes to light as the positive shape of that “eternal necessity of fearful *destiny*” which even Zeus cannot fight against. True Spirit is the paradigm of a finite community whose Pleasure turns over into the harshest shape of Necessity.

The Ethical Substance is a complex mass of *custom* which human *art* has put in the place of the spontaneous natural reactions dictated by kinship. Before the Ethical Substance came into existence, the kinship-group was the only “individuality” that existed. It made manifest the fact that it was indivisible by avenging harm done to any of its “members.” The founding-hero of the *polis* put a communal justice system—the “individuality” of a *universal will*—in the place of the vengeance of the blood. Nothing done in accordance with civic justice counts as a “deed” (*Tat*). Everything customary is authorized by the “universal will” and is part of the “peaceful organization and movement of the ethical world.” It is not Creon who acts, but only the ethical world that moves when the edict is published.

Antigone *acts*. Hers is an *ethical* action, because she does what is customary; but she does it in knowing and open defiance of the edict; and the edict was (in the most explicit way) the expression of the *universal will*. This is the obvious com-

monsense view, and it was put to Antigone very plainly by her sister Ismene before she did anything at all—even before she performed the secretive action that was typical of the older order of the law of nature.¹

- 2./465. In the ethical realm the ethical consciousness is intent on its duty; and it knows exactly what its duty is. There is no room for choices or conflicts of duty. Collision of duties in non-substantial consciousness is comic, because the contradiction reduces the Absolute to a nullity that is. In the ethical substance everything is immediately, i.e. naturally, decided.

It is within True Spirit that the concept of “duty” first emerges properly. As the ethical consciousness of the objective *Sache selbst*, the singular self-consciousness is duty. There is nothing to argue about; one knows what one’s duty is. The duty of a man is to the City that made him, and whose self-conscious will he helps to make (in the Assembly); the duty of a woman is first to the Family that made her, and then to the one she grounds. These duties are given by the determination of Nature. The Ethical Substance could never have come into existence if it did not recognize and accept the structure of the “state of nature” from which it originated.

In the rational conscience that makes its own laws, or at least tests its own maxims, there can be “collisions.” The collision between duty and interest (or duty and passion) is not significant for our purposes because it can occur anywhere. But the “collision of duties” that can occur in our world, but not in True Spirit, is a moral *comedy*. When Hegel says that as far as its content is concerned, this collision of duties is the same as a collision of duty and passionate inclination, he is anticipating the doctrine of Conscience that he will put forward in due course. But his doctrine was logically prepared for when we were shown that Lawtesting Reason can find a universal maxim to cover any non-criminal action that we actually desire to do. The collisions in the empty Absolute of subjective Reason are comic because they show up the fact that the *Sache selbst* (the Category that produces “categorical imperatives”) is not a “real Thing” at all. This formal Absolute can contradict itself without any serious consequences; its very “collisions” only show up the fact that it is always empty. In contrast, the only possible “collision of duties” in the Ethical Substance is tragic because a *real* Absolute perishes. The whole civic order—the Justice of Zeus—is swept away.

- 3./466. The ethical consciousness acknowledges one law as its character, but is aware of the other as a power opposed to it. Each is actual in the singular self, so in self-consciousness they are “for themselves,” whereas they are only implicit in the ethical realm. The unacknowledged law is seen only as tyrannical caprice or self-willed disobedience.

The word *Charakter* in German is borrowed directly from the Greek (as the spelling itself shows). It does not seem to have taken over with it the active senses of “engraver” or “stamping die.” But it has kept all of the predominant passive senses, both literal and metaphorical, that it had in Greek. Keeping as close as we can to the primitive literal sense, we can read Hegel’s doctrine thus: each of the two

sexes is *stamped with* the mark or *character* of the law to which it naturally belongs. In other ways individuals may differ; but all have received the indelible impression of one of the two natural types. Thus, the two sisters, Antigone and Ismene, are very different examples of womanhood; but the ethical *character* of womanhood has been deeply impressed upon them both. How this happens Hegel does not say here, but from paragraph 451 we can readily infer that the impression comes from everything that is said and done to the child by the community. All we are concerned with is the way the free consciousness identifies with (and so takes the “impress” of) one side or the other of the general custom of life. “I am a boy” or “I am a girl” is the fundamental consciousness that determines the direction of all of the child’s active efforts. Thus his mother Thetis can hide the young Achilles among the girls; but it does not take Odysseus long to find him out, because Odysseus knows some acid tests for the mark of ethical manhood.

But this account is too simple to be an adequate description of the categorical stamping of sexual ethics. The “will of singularity” plays a crucial role. Antigone is not just a woman, but an exceptional one. Her sister is both of those things too; but they are exceptional in quite opposite ways. Antigone has her father’s imperious temper and impatience. That is not how a woman is supposed to be, according to the custom. Hegel cannot have failed to see that Ismene is the sister who feels and behaves in the way that a woman was supposed to. But the tragedy needed a woman in whom the impress of the Divine Law would lead to a decision to act on her own.

The tragedy really is an *action*; it springs from an ethical *initiative*. Sophocles shows us that Antigone could have persuaded others to protest in a way that Creon would have to heed (as he does eventually have to heed them). But that would not be “ethical action.” Antigone’s drive to act, her sense of being-for-self, comes from nature. She buries her brother *twice*—once by secretly outwitting the public authority, like her mother, and then again by the open assertion of her will, like her father.² The point is, that for her the unwritten law is immediately authoritative; and her duty to her dead brother is simple obedience to Zeus, while the rest (her proper feminine role for instance) is just obedience to men. Hegel showed in paragraph 453 why the duty of burial is the only aspect of the natural law that is not affected by the advent of political justice. Antigone’s clash with Creon is important because they find God in different places. He finds God in the “universal will”; she finds God in the “blood of the Family.” So she is a *rebel*, and he is a *tyrant*.

- 4./467. Ethical consciousness is afflicted, therefore, with the antithesis between what it knows and what it does not know; and from this arises a conflict between the absolute right of the self, and the divine right of “essence.” For Consciousness, what is actual has “essence.” But it is one-sided without knowing it. It has forgotten its own being-for-self, and it follows a law that is absolute. Action is the immediate self-expression of the Substance. So the action is just what the ethical knower knows it to be.

The difficult mode of expression in this paragraph conceals a fairly simple argument. Hegel wants to make clear the difference between ethical self-consciousness

and simple consciousness on one side; and between ethical action and subjectively rational action on the other.

Within the Substance there necessarily arises the *Gegensatz* between what is conscious (the universal will) and what is not conscious (natural instinct). Within the ethical consciousness there arises in the same way the *Gegensatz* between what it is aware of as authoritative, and what it is not aware of (in that way). In the myth of Oedipus the two antitheses are directly parallel. So for him the conflict between the “absolute right” of Freedom, and the “divine right” of Nature is the discovery that biological Nature has a right that he has violated. For Antigone, on the other hand, her ethical agency comes into conflict with the “divine right” of *ethical* Nature. She fails to recognize the *divine* authorization of the political *Wesen* that is “natural” to humanity.

In order to make this point about ethical agency and human nature (in its double aspect, as “given,” and as “made”) Hegel feels it necessary to give us an elementary lesson on the evolving use of the word *Wesen*. We may well think that this is not necessary. But we ought to attend carefully; for the tendency to confuse “self-conscious” and “divine” *right*, with Human and Divine *law* has had disastrous consequences.

The lesson is actually a simple one. Simple Consciousness takes what it is objectively aware of as fact, to have an “essence.” Sense-Certainty moves to thing-perception on this basis. But Self-Consciousness knows that the thing-world has no essential status at all; and simple Consciousness is substantially Self-Consciousness. “According to its substance” Self-Consciousness is “the unity of itself and this opposite,” i.e. the thing-object of consciousness; and the ethical self-consciousness is precisely the one that is immediately (or intuitively aware of its own Substance. It does not have to tumble over its own objectivity, in all the ways in which the singular self-consciousness has to struggle with the antithesis of freedom and life, and all of the subsequent shapes that the opposition between subjective freedom and objective fact assumes until we reach the rational Category that claims to give, or to test, laws. The ethical self-consciousness *is* that Category realized as a *universal thing*; it is the custom as a universal will.

This ethical selfhood of custom has put aside all of the subjective one-sidedness of action as rational self-expression. When it acts, it knows exactly what it is doing (like subjective Reason); but unlike the *Werk* of subjective Reason what it does cannot be inverted. Anyone who (obstinately) misinterprets what the ethical self does must be ethically in the wrong. The ethical agent can prove this by appealing to the “universal essence.” This is not a formal principle of Lawtesting Reason (the easiest of all things to invert); it is the absolute *Macht*, the might of God. Antigone *knows* that she has done the will of God; the decree she has defied is only “accidental human *violence*.” But she does not know that the will of God has another necessary shape under which Creon can know that the decree is the will of God, and that her action is “the *disobedience* of inward being-for-self” (par. 466). Hegel has already applied the word *Frevel* (sacrilege, profanation) to the defiance of the government’s commands; so it is Antigone (rather than Oedipus)

whose “absolute right comes into conflict with the divine right” at the beginning of paragraph 467.

The mistake of the ethical self can be characterized logically as failing to recognize that the spiritual “thing” which is the Substance of its own self-conscious identity has two equally essential sides. Antigone identifies (as she feels) with the essential unity of the whole. Creon and the Theban Council are expressing only the manifest aspect of sense-certain transience. On the other side, Creon, being the representative of Thebes, speaks for a manifest God; and Antigone is a transient self-will speaking only for another natural self that has already passed away. The customary right to which she appeals is only valid *within* the discretion of the political will. Everyone knows that in its independence, that customary right brought intolerable evils into the world (cf. par. 462).

- 5./468. The ethical essence is split into two laws, and consciousness, as unsundered, is allotted to just one. The essence has a right to be doubled, and it is the essence of self-consciousness in that double shape. The setting of one shape against the other is the ethical *deed*, for which the essence in the other shape becomes external actuality. The deed violates the other shape and is *guilty*; but innocence is impossible. Ethical action *transgresses* because the sexual allotment of the laws is not sublated. This transgression is not the act of the single agent, but of the ethical species. Self-consciousness in the ethical substance is specified but not singularly individuated; and action is founded on secure trust in the whole.

As unhesitatingly dutiful (or “virtuous”) the ethical consciousness is naturally allotted to one law. The virtuous woman thinks only of her family duties, the man only of his civic duties (which do include the raising of a family). But duty itself is one and indivisible; and because its essence is spirit, it exists nowhere except within the ethical consciousness. The lightning bolt is only a *Vorstellung*. The ethical consciousness is not controlled by fear; it knows that divine Justice is its own essence. Its own knowing and doing of the Right is the being of the Right as it is in itself. Unluckily for the agent, however, the divine self-consciousness that is her or his “true self” has an unknown side. Because the ethical consciousness is identified with this Substance of custom, this unrecognized aspect is her or his *unconscious* side.

The custom is rightfully doubled. It has one shape for men, another for women; and everyone will say that it is right that things should be so. So the custom as one substantial whole can “take its stand upon its right to be doubled in reality.” This doubling is, indeed, the most fundamental “reality” in it. And everyone whose substance it is must know that it has this doubled shape; no one could act rightly otherwise, since the activities of men and women cohere and interweave in so many ways. Each side needs the other, and will bend all efforts to support the other. So the “right to be doubled” is not like the right of the Christian world-substance to demand faith in “Heaven *and* earth.” The doubled reality of the ethical custom is all here on earth; the whole of it is “the very being of self-consciousness.” But the fundamental “deed” (*Tat*) that it demands of the ethical self-consciousness is “to

be a virtuous man” or “to be a virtuous woman.” Hence my most fundamental act of being what nature made me sets up of a *Gegensatz* in the ethical substance. I must know the whole, but the fundamental thing that I know is that the whole is categorical for me in the *male* shape (or the *female* shape) according to Nature’s decree. *This* is what I am responsible for; and there is another sphere that I am not responsible for. But when, in accordance with my naturally given responsibility, I deny responsibility for the other side, my responsibility becomes “guilt” (the German *Schuld(ig)* means both). For that denial is the expression of my “not knowing.” Hegel uses “known” and “not known” in the sense of “known or not known as categorical (or absolute).” Everyone is responsible for the whole substance; but no one can be responsible except as man or woman. So there is a transgression (*Verbrechen*) involved in the act that sets up the *Gegensatz*; and the transgression becomes explicit when obedience to custom in one of its shapes involves violation of it in the other.

This is Hegel’s reading of “original sin.” In the Biblical story the disobedience of Adam and Eve is made to appear contingent and gratuitous. But actually this sin is logically involved in the first statement of the creation of “man”: “In his own image created he *him*; male and female created he *them*.” This is exactly what is *known* in the Ethical Substance; so not even a child can be “innocent.” Ethical action *must* transgress; until the transgression occurs the recognition of the *unity* of humanity as God’s image is impossible. Hegel himself says that “according to its content the ethical *action* has the moment of transgression in it, because it does not sublimate the natural distribution of the two laws to the two sexes.” So he holds the sublation of sexual distinction to be in *some* sense *necessary*. The heaven of Reason knows nothing of “marrying and giving in marriage.” In effect, he is complaining that Antigone performed a political act, without recognizing that it *was* political; she denied the validity of the political realm altogether.³

“The ethical action” as Hegel explains it here is *not* the act of “the singular individual.” Polyneices, Antigone, Haemon, Creon’s wife Eurydice, these are “singular individuals” at the end of the action (i.e. at the end of the play) because they are dead. But the agent who *does* the action is “the woman.”⁴ The burial of Polyneices is the ethical act of “the Family” which is directed at “the single individual” (pars. 451–453). The dead man is a “*whole* singular” (par. 451) because his life is whole and complete. He has paid his last debt to the community by dying. In the case of someone who dies in bed it is not evident that he *has* paid a debt; if he dies far from home like Oedipus, the family cannot make this explicit by acting for him; but the case of Polyneices is the most extreme problem, because he died fighting against his City. It was *Greek womanhood*, in the person of Antigone, who recognized his membership as a complete singular individual in the community of the “children of Zeus.” This is how Antigone saw her action (which she repeatedly describes as her “piety”).

Against this pious ethical action of “womanhood” stands the execution of “justice” on the part of “manhood.” Creon carries out the judgment of the political community upon the “transgressor”; and he is very conscious that this is not an

ordinary crime. In its *ordinary* aspect it was peculiarly heinous because it gave aid and comfort to a traitor; even when the transgressor was still unknown, it already appeared to Creon to be simple human justice to execute the guard whose negligence allowed it to happen. But when Antigone commits the offence again in daylight it is the radically *unethical* character of her action that distresses Creon most: a *girl* has no business meddling in this matter at all.

As ethical agents, neither of them want to express their singular selfhood. They are simply expressing the ethical meaning of being a man and a woman. That is as far as “ethical self-consciousness” goes. The ethical self is necessarily *particular*—i.e., its duty is one part (or species) of the whole (or genus)—but it does not want to exclude anything in the ethical universal. It has “a sure trust in the whole.” Zeus is both the universal King and the universal Father. But ethically, one has to relate to Zeus as King if one is a virtuous man, and as Father if one is a virtuous woman.

Creon’s “justice” is a transgression against the “whole” too. But it not *his* “action” in any perspective. It is the action of Thebes, and the penalty for the transgression falls upon the real transgressor. The other Cities come against the City that has allowed the altars of the Gods to be defiled.

The action as a whole is Antigone’s, not just because she dies for it, and becomes, ethically speaking, a singular individual through it. In that perspective she is not the agent; she has to be buried by someone else like any other natural self. But in its *unethical* aspect—the very aspect in which we can see that not Creon, but Thebes, is the transgressor on the other side—the action belongs to Antigone as a singular individual. If she would admit that it *is* a political act, that Creon’s view of it is as valid as her own, she would indeed be “positing an excluding self, an actuality that is negative towards itself.” For in acting politically she would be “excluding” her own womanhood, negating the very actuality that is the foundation of her *ethical* status.⁵ She never does verbally acknowledge that her action is an ethical transgression, but it is the first thing that Sophocles makes clear (through the mouth of her sister, who is ethically committed enough to be ready to die with her). If we allow both of the perspectives to be valid then we can recognize that Antigone asserts herself as the *whole* of Reason (the complete image of God). She “sublates the natural distribution of the two laws to the two sexes” and becomes a Real Individual. That is not what she wanted to be, or what Sophocles wanted us to see in her; but the Hegelian perspective on the Ethical Substance does make clear why *we* feel bound to admire what Sophocles saw as the operation of a divine *curse*.

(b) *Ethical Ignorance* (“In suffering is learning”)

Hegel was no doubt attracted to the *Antigone* because the woman is the ethical “sinner” here. But it is more important that in this myth the *Gegensatz* of “the known” and “the unknown” is *ethical*. Nothing that Creon says is a surprise to Antigone. She simply “does not know” (i.e. she ethically refuses to admit) that it is valid. At this level of consciousness (the tragedy of what is ethically “known” and “not known”) the sinner must be the woman; because the self-made community of

“human nature” is an assembly of men. But if we go down to the more primitive level of the “conscious and the unconscious” (the free and the natural, the made and the given, the chosen and the felt) then the man becomes the sinner, because he makes the community.

The mythic *Vorstellung* of this male experience is Oedipus. When he receives the Oracle he cuts himself off from the family that is ethically his. But already he does not know who his natural family is; and so he pollutes it. This “not knowing” of father and mother is an ethically necessary “guilt” of civic existence. The story of Oedipus turns it into seemingly accidental crimes; but Hegel’s claim is that the myth of Oedipus only makes explicit what is inevitable, not accidental at all. The man who is truly devoted to the City cannot help violating family piety. The Oedipus story is an explanatory image for the knowledge of good and evil. What is done because it is good, makes itself known to us afterwards in its evil aspect; so no one who acts, however ethically, can be “innocent.” Innocence belongs only to stones: beings that do not know, or choose, or act at all.

The inevitability of the original sin of ethical knowledge comes to light necessarily when custom decrees one way of life for the true man, and another for the true woman. Humanity is not *individuated* in the *Volk* as the Ethical Substance; it is only *specified* into the two sexes. Oedipus and Antigone are Adam and Eve, the first human *individuals*, because their peculiar situations lead them to learn from their actions, the aspect of evil that is involved in action itself. Oedipus is unconsciously set against the *Dike* in the Underworld; Antigone consciously sets herself against the *Dike* of the daylight community. It is what *happens* that shows them both that they are “guilty.”

- 6./469. The experience of transgression develops in effective action whichever law it is devoted to. It calls up a hostile essence seeking revenge. This is the *hidden* side of the ethical resolution. Oedipus (devoted to the daylight God) does not know father or mother. But he cannot deny *guilt* when the deed shows its hidden side afterwards.

In paragraph 468, Hegel only argues that ethical action is inevitably guilty because it is one-sided; this *metaphysical* guilt attaches to the most innocent (and customary) activity. Every child is “guilty,” because only a stone could be innocent.⁶ The purpose of the drama was *cautionary*; the Sophoclean moral in the *Antigone* is: Do not put absolute trust in your own arguments. Creon and Antigone are both guilty of setting their own *logoi* too high. The story has to be told because this lesson has to be inculcated; and Hegel now runs through it as a whole starting with Oedipus, the good King, who transgressed the Divine Law. The story is set up so that we can see that Oedipus could not *avoid* his guilt; in the story, wisdom will not help him, because his ignorance is literal not ethical. But the literal accidents represent ethical necessity; what the myth says, is that all action that is effective (and makes a difference) has a hidden side. The terrible fate of Oedipus represents the price of the masculine commitment. We learn by doing, and one necessary aspect of learning is the discovery of violation and loss. To make something, nature must be sacrificed; when what we make is the City, all those bonds of felt identity that

made the tribe flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, must be wilfully broken, in the sense that the new political authority has sovereign discretion to decide what wrongs will be avenged and how. Those who set up the public law must identify with it, even when their own feelings are crying out. The burden of “guilt” may be appalling, the price to be paid may be terrible, and the day of reckoning may be long delayed. The consciousness of being “just” will not help us; and the day of reckoning must come. That is what the Oedipus story shows.

Oedipus is the perfect intuitive model of the Human Law. He is not the son of a God, but “of Chance” as he tells the Chorus;⁷ he comes to his own City as a stranger. He is chosen by the people, and he is a good King. But then this sovereign is found to be guilty of the worst imaginable sins against natural feeling. If we read “the sovereign City” for the poetic intuition of “Kingship” in this myth, we can recognize Aristotle’s complaints against Plato’s *Republic*. The City of Reason must “kill its father” by wiping out whatever constitution has been established by custom; and incest is inevitable if no citizen knows his or her natural siblings. But this only helps us to understand Hegel’s view that the *Republic* expresses Greek *Sittlichkeit*.⁸ In Hegel’s reading parricide and incest are poetic metaphors for what human nature does to itself (logically) when it becomes *political*.

- 7./470. The ethical agent may not even be aware of the divine right he is violating. But guilt is purer when the divinity of human law is challenged because the law is known. Antigone aims to actualize the ethical custom; but she learns by experience that her right was not a true right.

Hegel takes the story of Oedipus as an intuitive presentation of the terrible problem that the civic authority faces. The “state of nature” can be experienced as so awful, that ruthlessness seems to be the only possible response; and even when that is not the case, the political authority may not realize that there is anything “holy,” anything that needs to be revered, in bonds that can express themselves so strangely. Thus the British in India stamped out the “Thug” cultists (who worshipped Kali by ritual murder) quite successfully; but *sati* still survives marginally as an ethical problem for the present Indian government itself; and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 was occasioned by a simple failure to attend to the religious significance of cows and pigs for the different communities from which the Indian Army was recruited. Similarly Creon sees nothing “wrong” in the prohibition of burial for traitors and public enemies.

Ethical blindness is different from the *moral* blindness of the Law of the Heart. Antigone takes herself to be defending the actual custom, and Creon to be a “conceited” tyrant. But her single heart must learn that the Custom is what is actual on both sides; and that the opposed actuality cannot be condemned and inverted, without a corresponding inversion of the Law of the Heart itself.

Thus if Antigone declares that the public authority is tyranny, then the power that maintains legitimate marriage and children is cast into the same pit. That is what the play shows. “In suffering, is learning” (Aeschylus). Antigone dies by her own hand; and by killing herself, she acknowledges that she *has* erred.⁹ But Creon

loses wife and child too. Both parties are “guilty”; and for us the *real* “suffering and learning” is when Thebes is threatened with destruction. We can all clearly see what Creon himself learns then: that the forbidding of burial violated the Divine Law. But when, in the light of that, we compare what Antigone wanted but did not get, with what Creon had that was taken from him, we see that the judgment of Zeus is that the “divine right” was violated by the “absolute right” on both sides equally. The whole substance is the true *actuality* of both sides.

- 8/.471. Accepting her fate sublates the dissension between Antigone and the actual divine right. But this means surrendering the ethical character (as immediate identity with substance). Character now becomes *disposition* not action. This loss of immediate identity is impossible for true ethical individuality.

In paragraphs 471 and 472 the interpretation of Antigone’s own verdict on her tragic fate continues. Her recognition of the justice of her tragic suffering expresses the fact that the split between her ethical goal and the supposedly tyrannical actuality has been overcome. If the Gods allow her to be sent to her tomb, then she must accept her fate. Zeus has given judgment, and a properly formed ethical disposition must submit. The ethical *Gesinnung* (Aristotle’s *ethos*) has two sides: action and *pathos*. Ismene argued that when a political decree is given, the woman’s part is all *pathos*. But Antigone thought that Zeus had given a higher decree, and that she must act. Now she accepts the judgment of the actual authority as the will of Zeus. But this judgment means that she, who acted, must surrender her character and the actual side of her “self.”

After Antigone’s great protest on behalf of Zeus and the *Dike* in the world below, Creon becomes so far sensitive to family piety that he says she is not to be put to death, but imprisoned in a dark cave with minimal life-support. It is she herself who translates this living death into simple natural death. Deprived by the civil law of her “character” as a young woman destined to become a wife and mother, and of the actual side of her civil existence, she follows the example of her mother and hangs herself. The community, represented by the Chorus, can change its mind, but Antigone has taken the penalty upon herself already. Since it was she who said “having suffered, we would agree that we have erred,” Hegel holds that her action *is* her agreement.¹⁰ She exacts the penalty decreed originally. Antigone’s very being is “to belong to her ethical law as her substance.” Just staying alive is ethically irrelevant. “Belonging to her substance” means (actively) the founding of her own family, and the raising of children for the City; and (passively) submission to her husband, the City, and the Gods. All of that has been taken from her. Her future husband told Creon that everyone secretly agrees that what she did was right; but nothing came of that, except a compromise that sends her living to the house of Hades. If she lives upon these terms she will be *nothing* but “ethical disposition.”

Ethical “disposition” (like “character”) embraces both action and submission. But “disposition” is the ethical whole regarded as submission, just as “character” is

the whole regarded as active self-expression. Creon calls the penalty he proposes “praying to Hades, whom alone she reverences among the Gods, for the luck of not dying.”¹¹ The fate that would leave Antigone clinging to life in the dark (like her father) maintaining her own innocence and the rightness of her “disposition,” is properly anticipatory of the Unhappy Consciousness in the age of Reason—and particularly of the “ethics” of Fichte.¹² Fichte holds that we must all live always in and for “the ethical disposition: that nothing counts except the Right.” Antigone would have to do that, if she accepted the verdict of the Human Law; and the verdict of the Human Law upon Antigone expresses, mythically, but therefore *vividly*, just what the life of the Fichtean righteous conscience amounts to: living in the dark, unable to do anything, except to maintain the moral will, the pure respect for what *ought* to be, but never *is*.

Antigone rejects that fate. She refuses to be just “disposition”; when she is reduced to that, she *acts* still, and pays her last debt to the Substance. She will not accept to be, and to live as, the very *Gesinnung* which we (beginning with Goethe) all *are*, the disposition with which we all read her tragedy (or watch it) and say: “She was right. Her fate was wrong. It *ought* not to have happened.” She herself says, on the contrary, “It did happen. So it is the will of Zeus, and I accept it.”

Antigone is a woman. That is what God (or Nature) made her. It is her *pathos*—she suffers it at the hand of Zeus or *Dike*. It is stamped upon her by nature, and she suffers the educational imprint of her domestic and civic education to form her “disposition” and teach her what being a woman means. The problem is that she is not submissive by nature. We can be sure that her active individuality “stood over” this suffering process of formation all the way. The impression which she accepted as a natural and cultural *pathos*, she affirmed as *herself* with vigorous insistence. Natural submissiveness she did not have; her sister Ismene had all too much of it. Ismene thinks they must do nothing, and pray to Polyneices for forgiveness.¹³

There is no weakness in Ismene’s “character,” for when Antigone does act, Ismene identifies with the action and wants to die with her. In their choices we can see how they individuate themselves—and hence how “individuality brings the substance to life and stands above it.” Antigone’s own decision is to act; and it is consistent with her hyperactive character, that she does not passively accept the verdict of the Human Law. She identifies actively with her character as a woman, and when her destiny in that role is brought to nothing by the “downfall” of the Divine Law into the Underworld,¹⁴ she “cannot survive it.”

Antigone cannot think about herself and her action in the dispositional way in which we think about it. This inability is just what Sophocles chooses to found her actual tragedy upon. Had she been able to accept life as an “ethical disposition,” she would, in fact, have triumphed in the end, since even Creon finally admits that she was right. But by the time the City had buried Polyneices publicly, it was too late to release Antigone, because she had taken her law, the law of death, into her own hands. She “stands above” substance as her *pathos*; and that means that she immediately asserts the *pathos* as her character. She cannot stand still and raise her hands to pray. Even to submit, she must act.

- 9/.472. Antigone dies with the certainty that the other side must suffer equally. In the ethical tragedy both go down together (for neither is more essential than the other). A character, as a naturally imposed *pathos*, belongs to one side only; but both characters are split into conscious and unconscious knowledge; and through action each becomes guilty of its own ignorance. So neither side can triumph. The ethical substance emerges as *Destiny*.

In accepting her fate Antigone has the certainty that “the individuality whose pathos is the opposite power *suffers no greater evil than it does*.” Just as he has already treated Antigone’s conditional acknowledgement of error as confirmed by her suicide, so Hegel treats her wish that “these men may suffer no greater evils than they are unjustly doing to me” as a prophetic certainty that the actual individual (Creon) who has authorized her living death will lose as much as she is losing.¹⁵ The play authorizes this interpretation because Antigone’s wish comes true. Creon’s own son Haemon attacks his father (like Oedipus, but knowingly) before falling on his own sword; and Creon’s wife Eurydice follows her son’s example by plunging a knife into herself when she hears of his death. Thus the blindness of Creon to the Divine law turns out to be violence against his own family ties (and we have an example of how the divinely imposed ignorance of Oedipus really works in a normal case).

These two agents, Antigone and Creon, set the two aspects of the divine Justice that is the substance of True Spirit in motion against one another. The motion has reached its true End only when both sides have suffered the same downfall. How much is meant by the downfall of the two “sides” is ambiguous. In the play it is Antigone and Creon who suffer the same loss to Hades. But the two *Mächte* (meaning the Family and the City of Thebes) also go down to the same ruin when Hegel tells his version of the myth a bit further on (par. 474). Since he began paragraph 472 by citing Antigone’s *wish*, we should probably think only of the two shapes of consciousness for the moment. The two *Mächte* need to bring their conscious partisans to grief. For they are equally essential, and that is the “divine right” that is the “essence of self-consciousness” (par. 468). The essence is properly “selfless.” The two powers “are there as self-essence in the *deed*, but one that is at variance [with itself], which contradicts the unity of the self.”

When the two worlds of ethical substance (the men’s world and the women’s) are working in harmony, the harmony is not “self-conscious” at all. There is one “self” in the Assembly, the courts etc., and another in the home, with the children etc. But there is no self of the whole. When some conflict arises between the spheres, there is a “self-essence,” because they can communicate with each other, but it is *verschieden*, i.e. it is *discordant*, the selfhood is at variance with itself, because they do not hear each other properly. This is where “the deed” occurs. The spheres try to act on one another; but the only act they can perform is to destroy one another, because neither is the self of the whole.

The self of the whole is a deceased (*verschieden*) self.¹⁶ It exists only in the great family of the *Underworld*, where all the disagreements are forgotten. Each charac-

ter has been stamped by the substance in one way. To be male or female is its *pathos*. Each knows about the sphere of the other, but cannot have a categorical intuition of it. If they did, the stamp of Nature would not be an ethically defining “character,” but only a “disposition.” If the character is perfectly stamped, and no singular self-hood “stands above it”—if we have only a submissive woman like Ismene faced with the edict—then the wrong is done, and the guilt incurred, only on one side. That is tragic, but it is an “uncompleted work.” The characters must both be active; each must “call forth the *Gegensatz*,” make the not knowing of the other’s imperative its own “work,” and incur the guilt of violating it. Then *Destiny* appears (or in our own theological language it becomes apparent that Zeus is the “Lord of Nature,” but not the “Lord of History”).

In empirical terms, it is unrealistic to say that “character” is an absolutely categorical stamp. Empirically, Aristotle is right; “character” is a *hexis*, a mere disposition to behave in a certain way. But Greek Tragedy sets up the *ideal* that Aristotle himself would agree with. The good citizen should become absolutely reliable, or “identical” with virtue.¹⁷ But then our choices become categorical, and an absolute conflict of imperatives ensues. Thus the tragic conflict between Oedipus and Jocasta is about what ought to be “known,” and what ought not. The *political* imperative is that “everybody should know everything.” But Oedipus does not know everything himself—as Jocasta does after he tells his story. So this collision is an “uncompleted” work, like the triumph of “self-consciousness” at the point where Antigone leaves the stage in her own tragedy. But the *Antigone* completes the tragic climax. It “proceeds unhaltingly to the equilibrium of both powers.” Oedipus was finally defeated by the divine Underworldly power of the Sphinx—whom he thought he had vanquished in gaining the kingship. What triumphs in the *Antigone* is “the ethical substance as the negative might . . . or almighty and righteous *Destiny*.”

(c) *The Destined Downfall*

- 10./473. This conceptually necessary tragedy takes determinate shape in the myth. Nature (which has a Right of its own) produces *two* royal heirs. Naturally speaking, they have equal right; but society requires *one* monarch. So they kill one another fighting for the throne. By human law, the outside attacker is the traitor (that he was betrayed first is a mere private matter). That they both died is the justice of nature, but that traitors must be dishonored to the last, is humanly just.

Hegel’s retelling of the story is interesting in several ways. First he says that “unconscious nature has a *Recht* against *Sittlichkeit* and self-consciousness because the latter is only the *true* Spirit, [or] only in *immediate* unity with its substance.” True Spirit presupposes a perfect harmony with nature. But unconscious life displays its freedom as contingency of all kinds (pars. 295–297). It has a Divine Right against the self-conscious designs of Spirit, because it is Nature that determines how what is ethically right is to be embodied. That *two* brothers should be born in

the royal family is an accident of organic life; and Hegel clearly holds that the order of birth cannot create a *natural* right. Many communities have thought that it does create a right (including Sophoclean Thebes—for both Ismene and Polyneices tell the story of the strife between the brothers as originating in the failure of Eteocles to recognize the right of primogeniture as he ought to).¹⁸ The rationale of Hegel's view is just that in principle, this is the point where the "absolute right of Self-Consciousness" takes over. The *Volk* can choose. Primogeniture can be canonized as the "will of all." But it need not be. The polluted state of the *natural* claim of Oedipus *represents* the implicit sovereign right of the *Volk*.

The only "right" that is purely "natural" is the right of fair combat; and the disorder produced by that right (feuds within the family) is one of the factors that leads the *Volk* to recognize its own ethical sovereignty, so that True Spirit is born. Hegel follows the version offered by Sophocles in the *Oedipus at Colonus* (which is what we should expect).¹⁹ According to the statements of Polyneices and Oedipus there, Polyneices, as the elder son, took the kingship first. But about the necessary expulsion of Oedipus, at least, there was an agreement between the brothers, because when Polyneices banished Oedipus, Oedipus blamed both of his sons, and cursed them both. In due course, Eteocles persuaded the City to exercise its right of choice (as it had done in the case of Oedipus); and then, of course, he banished Polyneices.

It is clear that Eteocles wanted to rule as a constitutional monarch, and it seems certain that Polyneices would not accept that change in status. The constitutional right that springs from Eteocles' "persuasion" of the City is the "absolute right of self-consciousness." Polyneices was "relieved" (*abgelöst*) of his responsibility for the community. His brother then expelled (*vertrieb*) him as a mere private citizen (*Einzelne*). Eteocles "knew how to get hold of him" this way—"having persuaded the City" as Polyneices says. Polyneices distinguishes that "persuasion" from "being victorious in *logos*," as well as from "proceeding to the trial by combat or deed," so he does not consider that the City was a competent court of appeal.²⁰ But in Hegel's view, whatever wrong was done to Polyneices in the pre-constitutional frame of reference that he took to be the frame of "natural justice," was now a private matter.²¹ The community supported Eteocles. So in terms of human law Eteocles was in the right.

Polyneices left the City in a great rage. He went to Argos, married the king's daughter and returned with an Argive army led by seven champions. Outside the walls he proclaimed that he would lay waste the City.²² The judgment of Zeus, now that Polyneices had forced his brother to face it, went against both of them. But the judgment of the City naturally went against him. It is axiomatic that Zeus is "right"; but so is the City.

11./473. These royal brothers are the highest tip of the social pyramid. But the socially dishonored dead man has a divine force behind him. Nature, the family, is essential and cannot be destroyed. It gives way outwardly, but there is a backlash. *All* the cities whose dead have been dishonored and altars defiled, come against *this* city [Thebes] (and the community itself is destroyed).

Whatever the character of the dispute in which he was banished may have been, it is clear that when Polyneices came with the army of his father-in-law, Adrastus King of Argos, he was asserting his *family* right to the kingship of Thebes. The City on the other hand had *chosen* Eteocles. So in declaring Polyneices to be a traitor, and refusing to let him be buried, the new-born "Universal" (the City as a self-conscious community that makes its own law) is expressing its victory over "the rebellious principle of singularity, the Family." The City "lightly brushes away the pure tip of its pyramid" (the tribal monarchy). It is "the Universal," i.e. "the highest Spirit of consciousness, or of the commune" which does this, even though its agent is "the restored simplicity of the self of the community." There were two naturally given kings, and the community "restored simplicity" by simply choosing one. Then Zeus removed them both, and the community entrusted Creon with the kingship. Here it became perfectly clear that the "restoration of simplicity" is the direct act of "the Universal."

Creon issued the edict as the "government" of the City, appointed by the City. But he was a stupid man, and it was a stupid edict. Simple obstinacy and wise flexibility happen just as naturally as passivity and activity do. But the inevitable "selflessness" of the whole becomes visible when an ethically *simple* man is faced by an ethically *active* woman. The edict violated the fundamental principle of the piety that belongs to "human nature" as the unconscious form of spirit; and the newborn self-conscious Spirit is only called "true" because it expresses consciously the truth of that unconscious nature. Nature cannot be abolished; so its truth is there still, even when it is denied. The "spiritual thing" ought to express that truth immediately. But as a selfless "essence" (a whole that is without self-knowledge) it is an automatic system of action and reaction. Everyone (meaning everyone in the *linguistic* community) shares its blood-ties. When the *polis* is founded, we must "forget" all that, in order to escape from all the horrors of the world where blood-ties came first. To return to that world now would be madness. But the Gods themselves swore their most holy oath by the Styx. Even when we drown all of the ties of nature in the river Lethe we must still remember the Stygian "oath" of obedience to the "unwritten law."

What has to be forgotten in life must be remembered in death. That is the immediate (or natural) way in which the Underworld of our biological nature can be both Lethe and Styx at the same time.²³ The City can exist as the self-conscious expression of the justice of Zeus, only as long as it remembers that the "truth of its oath" is a debt of justice that it owes to all Greeks. Polyneices with his Argive army was a traitor to Thebes; but even if he was no longer a true Theban, he was a Greek, and so were all the Argive enemies who fell with him. Adrastus, King of Argos, can find support in every City when he cries out at the pollution of their altars, by all the dogs and birds dragging the dead remains everywhere. To leave the dead unburied is unGreek, barbaric. It puts shame on the Gods whom all Greeks worship. So the natural operation of nature, with the weather and all the living creatures doing what comes naturally, returns human relations to the old law of vengeance automatically. This is the message that finally gets through to Creon

from the mouth of Teiresias.²⁴ Sophocles lets Creon be converted, and survive equally punished with Antigone, but choosing the life of empty “ethical disposition” that Zeus has left him. Dramatically, this leaves Antigone alone at the centre of her own tragedy; ethically, it shows us that the edict was only Creon’s action *as the King*.²⁵ The fate of the City, the male “power” of the “human law,” Sophocles does not make explicit. Hegel reads him *prophetically* and assumes that Thebes was sacked; the poets told the story differently. Euripides gave it an “Athenian” shape—in his *Suppliants* it is Theseus who supports the cause of the dead, and he spares the City itself.²⁶

- 12./475. In the myth it all looks accidental. These people *felt* this way so the city was destroyed. But what is emerging is the logical principle of singularity (the inwardly divine law). This is actual not just in the Underworld, but as family ambition, intrigue and faction in the community. The community’s activity of self-maintenance (and disciplining of family selfishness) creates this oppressed inner enemy that it cannot do without. Woman presides over the family; so she is the supporter of the inner enemy. But the dependence of the City on family spirit emerges in its wars. Here is it apparent that the ethical order survives by luck. In principle it is mortal; a universal/singular order must replace the universal/specific one.

In this myth everything happens because of how the agents felt. What they had to do imposed itself upon them as a *pathos* of personal feeling. Theseus would never have issued the edict; and Ismene would never have defied it. But the accident of Creon and Antigone colliding, reveals the inevitability of a rebellion of natural feelings against any harmony of ethical commitments. The primitive principle of natural self-assertion which “stands above” the ethical *pathos* of them both, is normally disciplined into “identity” in life, and granted its natural right of recognition in death. The Underworld is a poetic metaphor for the natural feelings. To the government this inner feeling is the proper matter of social discipline; so the ceremony of burial appears to be just an external actuality, which can be allowed or denied.

But the “divine law” does not just have this “underworldly, or in its *Dasein* outward effectiveness.” It is quite as actual in the *Volk*’s life as the sovereign power of the Assembly. This public actuality is what we recognize when we comprehend the drama. What emerges nakedly into the daylight in the life and death struggle of the two brothers is the “principle of singularity generally.” The new-born community, governed by its own law, must sublimate this; no single family should get free from the governmental control. But the domestic cult, recognized as Divine Law, guarantees that families will keep their independent consciousness; and the City itself needs this, because it needs men who will fight and die for it.²⁷ And, since ours is the rational species, none of us fight and die for anything, unless we were willing to fight and die to get our own way, to have our own will prevail “in a state of nature.” Primitively death is only accepted for the sake of *lordship*. So in the “state of nature” (as a form of society with “natural justice”) the battle of Eteocles and Polyneices must forever recur; it is a battle about Divine Right. But when the political community is firmly established and universally recognized, this life and

death struggle becomes a faction-fight for *political* lordship. "Through intrigue the universal purpose of the government is turned into a private purpose, the universal activity of the government is transformed into a work of this determinate individual, and the universal property of the State is overturned into a possession and ornament of the family." We can see this already in the story of Polyneices. He goes off to Argos and forms a family-alliance in order to get his family-property back; and as long as there was an aristocracy in the Greek cities, there was perpetual faction.²⁸

Hegel expresses this very sound insight into Greek history in terms of the "intuitive universals" of Greek mythology as we find them in the poets. "Womanhood presides over the family," he says again. Therefore "the community . . . begets for itself in what it oppresses, and what is at the same time essential to it, in womanhood its own internal enemy." It is womanhood, therefore, which intrigues, and actively turns, transforms and overturns the communal goal, activity and property into a family goal, activity and property. Thus although Hegel puts the ultimate blame firmly on the all-male assembly, we are now asked to see every wife as Eve, whispering the promise of the serpent in Adam's ear, and dangling the apple under his nose.

Except for the bit about the City oppressing what is essential to it, this is certainly not historical fact. The wife "presided" over very little, and there are not many cases where we can show (or plausibly suspect) that a wife was the main-spring of faction or personal ambition in Greek history. There was no woman behind Alcibiades for example; Olympias, wife of Philip II of Macedon, and mother of Alexander, is an exception, but then Macedon had remained a kingdom, and was not politicized into "communities." So she does not belong to the pattern that Hegel is speaking of here; Olympias was only carrying on the struggle of family politics that belongs mythically to the world of Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra. The tragic poets of the War period (Euripides as well as Sophocles) support Aristophanes' image of woman as the peacemaker.²⁹

Hegel's parable is only understood in its poetic "truth" when we read it as the story of Public Spirit and Private Interest in the political community. If we want to take it as history at all, we must put "life" in the place of "womanhood"; and "self-consciousness" in the place of "manhood" in this new myth of the Fall. The Family is the spiritualized form of "life"; and the Community is the rationalized mode of "self-consciousness."

But we must first validate Hegel's claims in his own "intuitive" terms—i.e. we must find his argument in the Greek poetic tradition. He offers us several character sketches, that are quite plausibly identifiable. The first of them is almost certainly Helen. She certainly perverted everything, and turned the ethical world upside down; but it was not because she was a political intriguer. She did not care for politics at all. She turned men's heads; and she certainly turned "the earnest wisdom of ripe age to ridicule." She personifies "pleasure and enjoyment"; and Paris, whom she chose, was a good example of the "frivolity of immaturity." She represents perfectly the *temptation* of youthful lightheartedness (which is what this

first long clause seems to be about). But intriguing for power was not Helen's thing; and Paris was not notable for *Kraft* of any kind; so the second half of Hegel's sentence with its triad of distinct "shapes" must be considered separately.

"In general, woman exalts the force [*Kraft*] of youth into what counts." Under this heading Hegel distinguishes the three family relations of son, brother and husband; and his first case is mythically unmistakable. "The son, in whom the mother has borne her lord"—this is Oedipus and Jocasta. The "policy" of Jocasta in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is quite plain. She knows the truth, and she is desperately anxious to prevent it from coming out. What motivated her to let the situation arise and continue, puzzles the Chorus, and should therefore puzzle us; but we cannot be concerned with that here. Jocasta's motive in trying to persuade Oedipus not to drive the truth into the open, is plainly the salvation of her family. Apollo is a God whom she has every reason to hate, and she plainly says that she cares nothing for him, or for his oracles; when she makes her offerings later on, it is clear that she has been driven to it, partly by the reaction of the Chorus, but mainly by simple desperation about the behavior of Oedipus.³⁰

Because it is Jocasta who personifies the secret wisdom of the Sphinx in the Sophoclean story of Oedipus, we are bound to think of Antigone as the sister who finds an equal in her brother, and the young woman who will become an independent family founder through marriage with Haemon. Antigone is an intriguer against the City, since the *first* burial of Polyneices is done secretly during the night. She only did it again openly when she realized that unless she was taken in the act, the deed itself would be concealed (and others would suffer for it). She never does achieve the "independence" of wifehood, but Haemon attacks his father and kills himself on her account. So she fits the pattern in an ambiguous way even though her brother is dead, and she herself dies unwed. But unlike Jocasta she does not in any way pervert the end, activity or property of the community into a purely family concern.

A much clearer sister-model of what Hegel says about womanhood as "the eternal irony of the community" is offered by Electra and her mother in Sophocles' play *Electra*. Here we find Electra waiting anxiously for her brother Orestes to do the deed of vengeance upon Clytaemnestra. That her father's throne is now occupied by the younger man Aegisthus is what she is obsessed about; she rejects her mother's claims about avenging the death of Iphigenia, and insists that Clytaemnestra's only effective motive was her desire to make her paramour into her husband and King. The importance of Aegisthus in Sophocles' play is in striking contrast to his subordinate role in the *Agamemnon* and *Choephoroi* of Aeschylus; and Electra, though she dominates all the females by whom she is surrounded, feels herself to be helpless until her brother arrives. Antigone is unique because she emerges plainly into the daylight; the heroines of the *Oedipus* and the *Electra* remain, Sphinxlike, in the shadows.

The Deianira of Sophocles' *Trachiniae* is perhaps the young wife who wants to keep her husband at home, instead of letting him pursue the public good. But the Sphinx is the proper mythical image of what Hegel is talking about. Here we can

recognize “the cunning of Reason” as it exists in the immediate world of “true Spirit.” Only the rigorous exclusion of women from public life justifies Hegel’s allegorical identification of the Sphinx with “womanhood.” What is “oppressed” by the Community is the Family—to which all citizens, male and female, belong. Youth is “oppressed” by the “earnest wisdom of ripe age.” The Real Individuality of True Spirit is the *polis*. The Hellenic *Volk* is an assemblage of these spiritual individuals. Like the natural self-consciousness, they have to go to war in order to confirm the absolute freedom of their rational selfhood. War was essential to the existence of the Ethical Substance (which is Zeus and Justice, not any lesser God) as free self-consciousness. Unlike Eteocles and Polyneices, the spiritual individuals cannot kill one another; but the young men must die for them. This is the real life that produced Greek Tragedy; and by the same token it is the rebellious desire for “pleasure” that lies at the foundation of Comedy.

Hegel is not concerned with Comedy yet; and he admits the one-sidedness of the metaphor of “womanhood” when he says that the spirit of singularity “would not be able to do anything were it not that the community itself recognizes the force of youth as the *force* of the whole.” Greek virtue (*arete*) was “force” (*Kraft*) before it became ethical goodness.

Except for the Spartans, the Greeks were not in fact militarists. Hegel clearly understands and says that war is only a necessary “moment” of the Ethical Substance. He sees the oppressive aspects of Greek society clearly, and he identifies the military origin, both of slavery and of female segregation. This was quite explicit in his analysis of the origin of servitude; and it is explicit here in the analysis of the “enmity” between “womanhood” and the City. But it is essential to realize that the military ethics according to which the “pursuit of happiness” is “weak and womanly” is not Greek but Roman. Antigone sees the happiness of life in the community to be what is worth seeking. She is no intriguer for private peace and selfish prosperity; she seeks only to keep warfare in its subordinate place.

Hegel wants to show us, through her tragedy, why the principle of youthful aggression could not remain a mere “moment” in the justice of Zeus. For that purpose he has to concentrate attention on the uncontrollability of human aggression; and the mythology of the family feuds imposes itself as the content of the discussion, because the natural law of family obligation is the immediate shape of the *Sache selbst*, the objective standard for rational life which nature itself provides.

The story of Oedipus and Jocasta (rather than that of Antigone and Creon) is the ultimate symbol of the impossibility of “true Spirit” as an immediate harmony of Spirit with nature. It is this quite unique “marriage” that we must think of when we want to interpret Hegel’s symbolic use of “*der Mann und das Weib*.” The Greek City, as a face to face community of families which aims to establish a rational system of “justice,” is this “marriage” of Mother Nature to self-defining Political Freedom. When the truth comes to light, the *polis* must fall. For the truth is that everything turns upon the survival of the City in its wars. This is where the story of Eteocles and Polyneices becomes crucial, for this story of the sons is the resolution that is not contained in the story of Oedipus himself.

The story of the emergence of the deceased natural self from the Underworld, as the “thinking self” of Stoicism, does not express the whole truth of Greek ethical life as Hegel understood it. For that we must wait until chapter VII. Nor does Sophocles’ Theban trilogy express Hegel’s own philosophy of sexual relations. The *piety* of Antigone (her attitude to her dead brother) anticipates his Christian conception of the universal rational community of Absolute Spirit; and her ethics (her attitude and expectations about her proper destiny) anticipates the ideal of the family for his own time. But the “selfless” community of natural *Sittlichkeit* is only the training ground that makes the natural self into a formally universal self-consciousness. Hegel’s own ethics of sex and the family is Christian not Greek. The “result” of tragic ethics is a militarist ideology in which “woman” symbolizes the pleasures of peace; she is a distraction—something that can properly be enjoyed only as the prize of victory after the battle.

For the Greek Cities, victory was a matter of luck, and defeat was an encounter with incomprehensible necessity. But when a social power emerged for which Conquest was God, and *Fortuna* was the handmaid of the City itself, the “*living folk-spirits* pass away because of their individuality—they go to the gound in a *universal* community, whose *simple universality* is spiritless and dead, and whose vitality is the *single individual qua singular*.”

This is the first inversion of True Spirit. True Spirit cannot be *philosophical*, because only a thinking self who identifies with the truth of her own individual thinking can do philosophy. True Spirit knows only *particular* powers. In Hegel’s reading of the *Antigone*, womanhood is seen as the preserving and reconciling power that presides over the ending of our life, because it must naturally and necessarily “preside” over the beginning of it; in the world of immediate or true spirit, the singular biological organism that comes forth from the womb remains a natural, or singular, personality for the womenfolk, because they are ethically prevented from living with anyone on any other terms. Hence, quite without any regard to the normal empirical arrangements about funerals and sacrifices, the womenfolk have to be conceived as achieving their *spiritual* self-consciousness in the family cult of the dead, because the family-cult is for them the way in which the enmity between the life-giver and the life-taker can be reconciled and healed. As long as war can be seen simply as the necessary moment by which the life of the community as a self-maintaining “individuality” is preserved, there is no “enmity” between Family and City. But the story of Eteocles and Polyneices shows how the wars between the Cities are bound up with the continued existence of feud and faction within the Cities. They united once against an imperial power that was not itself a City. But against a City that makes Empire its absolute goal they are helpless, because they never could unite properly; and they did finally teach their citizens to be “individuals.” In the inversion that follows as a result, the universal community of singular natural individuals in the Underworld becomes the real community of the daylight on earth; and the “folk-spirits” perfectly realized in the “spiritual individualities” of the Hellenic Cities, the “folk” of Zeus, pass into the realm of death and spiritual memory.

- 13./476. The downfall of the ethical substance arises from the fact that ethical consciousness is not *mediated*. Nature itself determines the structure of ethical activity, and this natural commitment is the seed of disaster. For the ethical *Volk* has a naturally given limit; it must die. With this death the living consciousness of substance is lost. Substance is replaced by the formal universality of a legal order of self-conscious points.

Antigone's Divine Law is naturally given. The *Dike* of Zeus is something immediately felt, whether in daylight or in the night-time. The *Iliad*, which ends with Achilles surrendering the body of Hector for burial, begins with Athena taking him by the hair when he is moved in his warrior's wrath to strike the High King, Agamemnon. The custom, whether of public or of private life, is all consistent; but it is a face to face world—everything is customary. Achilles would have done what Oedipus did at the place where three ways met; that is why Oedipus is visibly proud of it. But Agamemnon comes to his death because he sacrificed his family to the communal need, or alternatively because his wife fell in love with a younger man—the unstable relation of Spirit and Nature is visible, whichever way we interpret the story.

The political consciousness regards nature as wayward and unstable, while the customary consciousness is stable. Hegel speaks of nature as “unconscious rest” (with no conscious decisions and actions) and of spirit as “consciously unresting rest” because he wants to distinguish the kinds of *immediate stability* they can achieve. The law of custom is what is stable in both views. Clytaemnestra says she is avenging Iphigenia; but the Sophoclean Electra claims that she is falling below the justice of Zeus, in order to gratify desire. So according to the custom, she must be killed in her turn. This is the ambiguity of the two kinds of immediacy, the ambiguity involved in being “determined by nature.” Hegel holds that a case like this is symbolic of the stress that made the Greek Cities mortal entities, and not immortals as they took themselves to be. They solved the problem of family feud by establishing universally recognized constitutions. But they continued to be a warring family among themselves; and every city was a self-polluted family, the family of Oedipus.

The beautiful balance between daylight justice, and the pious memory of family ties, could not be maintained; the community involved was too small and too local. It necessarily existed in a wider community of others like itself; and in the nature of things the Cities could destroy one another. The harmonic opposition between public law and natural custom (to give the “absolute right” and the “divine right” their universal scientific names) was bound to be replaced by a “formal universality.” This would be the work of a self-consciousness that was not local, and cared nothing for the many living harmonies that self-consciousness had created within the total community of the Hellenes. The Hellenes thought of themselves as an immortal *family*, with many different forms of public law. The Romans had the same consciousness of their law as their own living substance. But for them there was only Rome, the Universal City. They did not see themselves as part of a family; so for them there was no division between the public law of the community and the general custom of the nation. It is poetically apt that Creon survives at the end of

the *Antigone*; his pigheaded blindness to the existence of the wider community of Nature is prototypically Roman.

But, of course, change came about gradually, and the Ethical Substance matured over a long period. Sophocles was presenting the intuitive image of a wisdom that can avoid the disastrous clash of categorical imperatives. When that wisdom of feeling exists, the whole is not really “selfless.” But the self who has comprehended the whole can readily pass from one “spiritual thing” to another. Plato can go hopefully to Syracuse and waste his substantial ethical wisdom on “the *singular* individual *qua* singular.” Aristotle can come from Macedon to acquire that wisdom and teach it (less wastefully but for its own doom) to Alexander; and every wise man in Alexander’s world knows that the subjection of his native City is a matter of no great moment. It is no great marvel that the Cities who taught this higher philosophical wisdom, could not defend themselves against a City which had no such dangerous knowledge; but it was they who made the Empire into a “universal community” quite different from the world of “subject peoples” that the Roman Republicans supposed it to be.

VI A(c): Condition of Right

The Rome that Hegel is interested in is Hellenistic Rome, the Imperial power that already controls an Empire, and is forced to give up its old balance of aristocratic and popular institutions in favor of an executive who is King in all but name. In fact, the family name of Caesar eventually became the title of other personal authorities who ruled over a plurality of “nations”: the Kaiser, and the Tsar, or Czar. In the languages that were more directly indebted to Latin it was his title that passed down: Imperator, he who commands. In Hegel’s own world the new Emperor of France was on the verge of abolishing the German Kaiser’s title, which was only fictionally connected with Rome in the first place, and had long ceased to have any commanding power (as Hegel showed in his essay on the “Constitution of Germany”). This was another sign that Hegel’s book was “comprehending its time.”³¹

(d) The Rule of Law

- 14./477. The formal universal unity is a spiritless community of atomic individuals, who are all equally *persons*. In the ethical community they enjoyed this singular independence only after death. The ethical substance was true *spirit*; but now it is supplanted by personal *certainty*. The individual is the substance as positive law, but as an effective agent he is a universally negative *self*. The ethical powers were the victims of Destiny. Now we can recognize the Ego of self-consciousness as Destiny.

The Empire to which the Romans brought their Peace was a “spiritless” community. Every different community in it did what the Roman masters told them (or else—in a case like that of the Jews—the Romans wiped them out). The Romans themselves did not identify with Rome as the Universal City in the old way; not

even Rome was self-governing, and hence spiritually “self-conscious.” The new community was spiritless, but not “selfless” in the way that the “spiritual thing” had to be. It was not a “substance without self-consciousness.”³² The Roman Universal was itself a “personality”; it was the Emperor’s head that was on the coins (and not, for example, Athena’s owl). Everyone was a citizen—although, initially, it was a high privilege to be a *Roman* citizen. Caesar was both the first citizen and a God. In the West he moved from the human to the divine status at death; but even in the West he was always revered as the son of a God. It is the Western custom that Hegel renders (poetically) by calling the new universal unity “this dead Spirit.” The Stoic philosophers taught that the universal spirit was everywhere *alive*—but they were free selves who could not exercise any actual freedom.

In the natural (sub-ethical) order of custom, the single consciousness was not a *persona*, a voice of the Universal. That was what Antigone became in the Ethical Order. She was only a family member, a conscious living link in the chain of blood; but she spoke for the personality of the dead. Creon was logical in reducing her to the living voice of Hades. Now Creon’s voice, the mortal voice of the *Volk*, becomes the voice of an absolute authority. The Ethical Substance withdraws into the certainty of a living self. The Ethical Order becomes a real universal Empire, everywhere pacified; and its actuality is a universal self of the personal kind. The single individual who was properly only “a selfless departed spirit” (because in life he was completely given over to the community) advances out of his unactuality to become the recognized principle of actuality. The law gives every citizen his rights (and even hers, though in a lesser measure);³³ and the jurists teach that “what pleases the Prince has the force of law.” In place of the blind chance of natural and political fortune, into which the “shapes” of Family and City, and the “powers” of City Law and universal custom collapsed, we now have “what pleases the Prince.” Nothing is uncertain; there is no fate, to which even Zeus is subject. Fate is here in the open. It is a “self” like us; the Emperor’s decision is final. The singular self-consciousness is lord of the World.

- 15./478. Persons are *recognized* as beings-in-and-for-themselves. Each is a legally rigid, abstract self not dissolved in the substance.

We have entered the world of independent self-conscious wills. Everyone is a separate person with her own legal rights. In their own private lives they are bound to be family members (and they may be as firmly committed to some community of blood as Antigone was). They may also think of themselves as mortal members of their own “community”; and they may be ethically “dissolved” in the will of that community. But that is a matter of “disposition” and arbitrary choice. It is what they are “in the eyes of the Law” that matters; and whatever differences of status the law may recognize between them—including their being members of their different families and communities, the logical fact is that each of them is a separate being.³⁴

We ought to admit, perhaps, that it is only full citizens who are “essences subsisting in and for themselves.” The rigid “abstract self” is the one whose *will* is

valid in the eyes of the Law. Slaves, minors, and even adult women who cannot dispose of themselves and their property legally, are not properly recognized as legal selves. But although they have no substantiality of their own, they are not “dissolved in the Substance.” Their being is phenomenal, but each one is still exactly what she is separately recognized to be. Since they cannot dispose of themselves they are not legal selves; but they are at the legal disposition of some other fully recognized self.

As we shall see, the introduction of this relative perspective in which “some animals are more equal than others” has a dialectically revolutionary effect. Since “what pleases the Prince has the force of law” every “self” is ultimately at the disposal of this absolutely recognized Self. That is the visible face that “Destiny” has acquired. But, at the other extreme, the law does protect the life of everyone against arbitrary violence. Even “what pleases the Prince” must have the form of law in order to be law.

- 16./479. This independence of personality is the actualization of Stoic theory. True spirit was at once the lordship and the bondage of the self; now we have the thought of independence realized as *legal right*. Stoic thought and legal right are both independent of all commitments and all greater goals.

This legal theory, according to which everyone is a “rigid self,” is now imposed upon the world of the Ethical Substance in which all selfhood was supposedly “dissolved.” The living custom of the “inhabited world,” as the apologists for the Roman Peace called the Empire, pretending that there were no civilized humans beyond its borders, was immensely various. Onto this variety of custom the law of the Roman administration was imposed, with whatever Creonlike rigidity was typical of the particular administrator. The universality of the law, and of justice, was necessarily “abstract” precisely because it was Roman. In other words, it came from elsewhere; the procedure and guiding principles of this universal system of legal recognition grew out of the practice of a small City in central Italy. The Roman administrators adapted it as best they could (and none of them had much license to bend it, especially in cases that were serious enough to be subject to appeal) to Britons, Spaniards, Gauls, Germans, Rumanians, Africans, Egyptians and Jews; as well as to the Hellenized world of the Eastern Mediterranean. To do this, the Romans had to create the army and administration itself—a great mass of “rigid selves” founded upon military discipline.

The self that really counts as the “essence subsisting in and for itself” is this disciplined and largely militarized self. When we are looking for the selfhood of Destiny, i.e., of this universal imposition, we must not let our minds be distracted by the megalomaniac personality of the Emperor, which first appears in Gaius Caligula, and reappears several times (notably in Elagabalus). That is a symptom of illness, a sign of the movement that leads on to the next stage. The “self-consciousness” into which Spirit has now returned, contains all the rationality of the Ethical Substance peacefully sublated. Gibbon chose to begin his account of the *Decline*

*and Fall of the Roman Empire*³⁵ with the reign of Commodus, because in his opinion: "If a man were called upon to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus."³⁶

In this aspect, the Roman Peace is what Hegel called "the boredom of the World."³⁷ He was much struck by the fact that Gibbon detected the working of "a slow and secret poison" in this age of ideal peace and prosperity:

This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated. [The natives of Europe were brave and robust] . . . personal valour remained, but they no longer possessed that public courage which is nourished by the love of independence, the sense of national honor, the presence of danger, and the habit of command. They received laws and governors from the will of their sovereign . . . The posterity of their boldest leaders was contented with the rank of citizens and subjects. The most aspiring spirits resorted to the standard of the emperors; and the deserted provinces, deprived of political strength or union, insensibly sank into the languid indifference of private life.³⁸

This "slow and secret poison" is the *universal* experience of the "Unhappy Consciousness" in its "first relationship" (where the Unchangeable appears as "pure consciousness," i.e. as Right or Law—see par. 214). But we are not concerned with that yet. The making of the "rigid" self is expressed as an abstract theory by Stoicism. Stoicism at Rome was the philosophical platform for Senatorial opposition to the Emperors. But this "opposition" was strictly theoretical. The Stoics set themselves above and apart from the universal division of the world into Lordship and Bondage. The key figure is Seneca, who was Nero's tutor and for several years his most influential adviser, but who committed suicide as a good Stoic when the Emperor decided that it was time for him to go.

As Hegel says, the "spiritless independence" that "was for Stoicism the *Ansich* only in abstraction, is now *actual* world." The actual world lives under one universal law. In theory the Stoic lives under the dominion of the one universal Reason—but only by "loving fate" and surrendering all active control of what happens. The fact that everyone, even a slave, can be a Stoic shows how everyone is a "rigid self" that "subsists in and for itself." Stoicism is the *theory* of the universal Law; and, as such, it was also very influential in the codification of the great body of decisions known as the Praetor's Edict, carried out by Salvius Julianus on the instructions of Hadrian in the year A.D. 129. When we come to the climax of the "boredom of the world" we find the whole imperial apparatus being administered by the Stoic Marcus Aurelius. Here the opposition of "actual world" and "formal freedom of thought" is completely reconciled. Marcus is the *Gestalt* of the *Rechtzustand* as a concept; and since we must remember that the "shapes" of Spirit are "shapes of a world" I will quote Gibbon's verdict again: "The united reigns [of Antoninus Pius

and Marcus Aurelius] are possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government.”³⁹

One point of detail that needs comment is the passage “just as that [Stoic Self-Consciousness] issued from Lordship and Bondage, so too Personality has issued from the Immediate Spirit, which is the universally sovereign will of all, and equally their subservient obedience.” This is a parallel in which the fact that the “shapes of Spirit” are “shapes of a world” is of crucial importance. “Lordship and Bondage” is a *personal* relationship. But there was no personal “Lord” in the Ethical Substance.⁴⁰ The emergence of the “world of Persons” from the “world of True Spirit” is quite distinct from the sublation of Lordship and Bondage in Stoicism. It is in the world of legal Persons that we can recognize all of the “shapes of natural Self-Consciousness” just as we met them in chapter IV. Only the *movement* of Unhappy Consciousness belongs to the *next* world, that of “self-estranged Spirit.”⁴¹

So it is in the Roman world, not in True Spirit, that we can see the *universal* shape of Lordship and Bondage. The whole world is in bondage to the “abstract Self” of the Law. Stoic “freedom” is precisely the freedom that arrives at the *thought* of its “independence” within this universal servitude. Antigone certainly feels that she is being treated like a slave; but that is not how things ought to be in her world, and she refuses to be either a slave or a Stoic. Her suicide is not free self-assertion but “ethical obedience,” or the “self-dissolving” acceptance of divine Justice. The “issuing of Personality from Immediate Spirit” is the movement from a “universal law” that is unwritten to one that is written; the move from Lordship and Bondage to Stoicism is the move from “the law of the stronger” to “rational autonomy.” Hegel’s analogy is a bad one; it commonly tends to support a Marxian conception of the Greek *polis*; and, however correct that may be, it was not what Hegel found significant. *He* wanted to emphasize the contrast between “being dissolved in the Substance” and “not being dissolved in it.”

- 17./480. Thus we shall now have a repetition of the actualization of Stoicism. The accidental babble of Scepticism will now be realized in the world of Right. Legal Status, like Scepticism, is the contradictory unity of independence and dependence of consciousness. The “absolute essence” is a legal fiction. But the substance is real life, and in the absence of ethical constraints life becomes an absolute anarchy. Human fortunes (material or spiritual) are just a matter of chance. Everything is valued externally, nothing internally. That is why “person” is used contemptuously.

Stoicism involves a withdrawal into the abstract realm of logical thinking. Scepticism, as the “actual experience” of Stoicism, stays in this realm. The Sceptic, who is happy to play this “thought-game” with the Stoic, proves to him that, in the supposed rational autonomy of his thought-world, he has *no* knowledge. The Unhappy Consciousness wants to get out of this world of abstract thought but cannot.

Consciousness becomes “Unhappy” because of its situation in the real world. The abstract thought of the free personality has been forcefully imposed on this world in all directions. The result is that the sceptical experience of the world of thought as a flux of opinions in which freedom can be found only through the

“suspense of judgment” is repeated as an experience in the real world. But we now have “fortunes” in place of “opinions”; the changes of personal fortune are a play of chance on the surface of substance; and that is what the legal abstractions refer to. It is the rights of *property* that are recognized; but the substance of real life is not controlled by that. Real life operates under a power of its own, which is now just fortune in the sense of “luck.” Let us observe this whirl of fortune the way good Stoics see it.

The self of *ownership* is the *Sache selbst* in the shape of the abstract category. This abstraction is now *realized* by legal recognition. The law defines what is mine, and what is yours. But by my word, given before witnesses, I can change or alienate my external property and make it yours. The doctrine of Stoic autonomy assumes that this separation of the category from the content applies to spiritual as well as material “personality.” Marcus begins his *Meditations* with an analysis of the spiritual gifts he has received from various specified donors. But, of course, we cannot alienate and receive our spiritual substance at will. In the Stoic view there is a Universal Spirit who bestows our spiritual personality upon each one of us. This power operates capriciously, for it gives great gifts to some and smaller ones to others, regardless of their formal equality as “persons.” Language itself teaches us the sceptical lesson implicit in this. The personal dignity and independence of Seneca slashing his wrists in the bath, declines into the near nonentity of the “person” for whom the servants can find no better name, because she is clearly not a proper lady or gentleman—like that legendary “person from Porlock” who is supposed to have interrupted the composition of Coleridge’s poem on “Kubla Khan” so disastrously.

Hegel wants us to pass from the Stoic Spirit of the Universe, who is so utterly arbitrary and capricious in the “personal” endowments allotted to the different rational sparks of the divine fire, to the equally arbitrary power of the “Lord of the World” in the sphere of real property. But, before we go with him, we should pause to consider the difference between the alienated “spiritual giving” of the capricious Universal Reason, and the identity of “true Spirit.” The view of Marcus that many of his “gifts” came from his forebears and teachers forms a kind of halfway house here.⁴² Socrates thought that everything important in his character was given him by “the Laws,” and that both his philosophical quest in life, and his obedient death was a debt that he owed to the City. Even in Plato’s “noble lie,” that native endowment of the soul which is hammered into the best shape that it will take by the educators, is supposed to have sprung from the native earth of the community, not from Mother Earth generally; and we can see how this faith operated in the mind of Sophocles, who comes at the end of his long life to seek in the story of Oedipus’ death in his own birthplace of Colonus, a glimmer of hope for his embattled City on the verge of defeat.

Seven cities claimed to be the birthplace of Homer. This is appropriate because he was the voice of the “Ethical Substance” generally. It is of him, most of all, that what Hegel wrote in 1803 holds good: what the Stoics (and we moderns) take as a “personal gift” is really an attribute of our own community. True Spirit knows nothing of “personal gifts”:

Mnemosyne or the absolute Muse . . . is itself the universal speaking consciousness of the people. The art work of mythology is propagated in the living tradition . . . This work of art is as much a universal possession as it is the work of everyone. Every generation hands it on to the one that follows beautified, or in other words it has labored further on the liberation of absolute consciousness. Those who are called *geniuses* have acquired a certain type of special skill, by which they make the universal shapes of the people into their work just as others do other things [of universal value]. What they produce is not their discovery, but a discovery by the people *as a whole*. It is the *finding* that the people has found its essence. What belongs to the artist as *this man here* is his formal activity, his particular skill in this mode of exposition, and it is precisely to this that he has been educated in the universal skill.⁴³

Working, thinking, speaking, creating for one's own community gives everything one does a substantial meaning. In the new situation, everything is a matter of chance; and everything is really external. To begin with, one is publicly valued in terms of one's external property. One can actually give this away (and one must make arrangements to give it away at death); it is not the real "substance" of the self. Even the inner "gifts" that one cannot give away, can be "wasted" like real property; and it seems to be nobody else's business. The "boredom of the world" arises, because it does not seem to matter, it makes no difference in the end, what one does. Everything external is "positive." Some value can be put upon everything one does; it is not a mere show (as the Sceptics proved Stoic knowledge to be). But it comes to the same thing, because the *self* has no reality and no value. The *Spirit*, the truly communal structure of selfhood, is gone. This is the "Spiritual Animal Kingdom" at the very beginning of its evolution. Everything that one does, one loses; it passes straight into the maelstrom created by the self-expressive activity of others. Only Fortune reigns over all; and we shall now see what that means, and how the *Gestalt* of "Chance" makes itself inescapably obvious.

(e) *Anarchy*

- 18./481. The freedom of the content has to be focussed in one of the atoms. This is the unitary authority, the absolute master of all. For him there is no higher spirit. But it is the legal subjection of the rest that makes him *lord*. When this authority fails, chaos ensues. The imperial authority is just the mantle and the soil of the tumult. The Emperor knows himself as the living God; but since he cannot control this chaos, his consciousness expresses itself only as excesses.

The sceptical dialectic only really inverts the stable Concept when we turn from the ups and downs of private citizens, and the arbitrariness of God's distribution of personal gifts, to the problem of the succession to the Imperial Purple. The God of the Stoics is spiritless because he has no true other in whom he can recognize himself. His *actual* analogue, the Emperor, suffers from all of the diseases that Plato discovered in the soul of the tyrant. Tiberius was solitary and suspicious to the point of paranoia; Gaius Caligula clearly suffered from hysterical megalomania,

and Nero and Domitian were not far from it; and after the “good Emperors” of the world’s “boredom,” the tyrannical disease is evident again in Commodus, Septimius Severus and Caracalla. But among the later Emperors probably only Elagabalus was madder than Gaius Caligula. The succession continually broke down into a military struggle; and in some periods the Roman authority broke down also. This is Gibbon’s theme, and his picture of the century and a half between Commodus and Constantine is the main “content” of Hegel’s conceptual analysis in the present paragraph. But the “year of the four Emperors” (A.D. 69) in the *Histories* of Tacitus is also of crucial importance.

The mental disturbance evident in several of the Emperors is the clearest sign of what Hegel calls their “lack of effective force.” As the wearer of the Imperial Purple the Emperor was the “self-consciousness of the world.” But the purple mantle in itself meant nothing constitutional at all. From the time of Claudius onwards, it signified only that the Army (or rather, some part of it—in the case of Claudius it was only the Praetorian Guard in the capital) had chosen this man. The unfortunate wearer was often, very sensibly, unwilling to accept the honor—but he had no choice in the matter. After Claudius and Nero, when there was no one left with a family connection to Julius Caesar,⁴⁴ the armies showed that they understood what the Praetorian imposition of Claudius on the Senate meant. In A.D. 69 there were four emperors (mainly because Vespasian, the most competent general and administrator, was in Judaea with a Jewish revolt on his hands when the crisis erupted). It is arguable that the “boredom of the world” began with Vespasian, since the armies did not get involved in politics again until Commodus was throttled by an athlete on the last day of the year 192. Gibbon is even willing to overlook the upheaval of A.D. 69 and speak of the Augustan peace as lasting for over two centuries.⁴⁵ In the *Phenomenology* Hegel seems to me to accept this latter view. The “Condition of Right” is a “world-concept” that is stably realized between 27 B.C. and A.D. 192. The revolutionary upheaval of A.D. 68–69 is simply the transient moment where the internal “antithesis” is revealed, so that we can see that all the traditional forms of constitutional authority are a mere façade. In reality it is the Army, as a great collection of disciplined atomic selves wrenched out of all their communal traditions (and even out of stable family life), that governs.

It is really the Army, therefore, that “collects the dispersion into one point.” Everyone *recognizes* the Imperial Authority, but it is the soldiers who “make up the valid universality of the person” who has “stepped over against everyone.” The personality (and even the capabilities) of the Emperor are not ultimately significant. It is what Gibbon calls the “respect of the legions for their oath of fidelity” that makes the Emperor “the actual God.” Just as the Emperor’s body is formally wrapped in the purple mantle that his legions put upon him, so the world is formally wrapped in his consciousness. Everything is done in his name; but the substance of the self-consciousness of this “actual God” is just the physical soil over which the tumult of battle flows as the legions come from near and far to establish the authority of their candidate.

Beneath the military discipline of the army (which is the “negative power” of

universal Roman law and justice) there is now simply a “chaos of spiritual powers.” The army is recruited from everywhere, and all the primitively uncivilized barbarism of the unconquered Germans in their forests, or of the various barbarian tribes who invade the Empire from outside, is only just below the surface in the armies that defend the borders of the Empire itself. Once the legions forget their “oath of fidelity,” the Empire can tear itself to pieces in the “wild excesses” of the “elemental essences that move against one another in a rage of destruction.”⁴⁶

This began to happen after the assassination of Commodus. The wars of the years 193–197, and the ruthlessness of Septimius Severus when his Balkan legions finally triumphed, are the first example of this rage of destruction; in the following sixty years the Imperial authority broke down and shrank until in about 260, Italy and the eastern Mediterranean lay between two effectively independent powers, Gaul on one side, and Palmyra on the other. Rome itself was fortified against invaders with the great “Aurelian Wall” (begun in 271). It was not actually attacked by barbarian forces for more than a century, but the crisis of confidence is evident. Unity was restored and there was stability under Diocletian. Then there was another time of troubles until the accession of Constantine. Constantine’s accession marked the end of the “world-shape” with which we are here concerned.

- 19./482. The Emperor becomes aware of his power through his destructive authority over his subjects. They cannot recognize their “true” self in him, being independent persons. But in their negative relation, he is the source of order; so he can destroy them. This supremacy is not self-consciousness; it is a devastating madness in which self-consciousness is cast away.

The first (simple) inversion of universal right and justice is universal tyranny. Various emperors were denigrated (after their death) as tyrants; and some were “tyrants” in the fullest generally accepted meaning of the word. Tiberius already exhibits the tyrannical psychology of morbid suspicion; Gaius Caligula and Nero behaved tyrannically as far as the Senate were concerned (and the opinion of the old Senatorial aristocracy was all that counted). Domitian counted as a tyrant in the *Panegyric* of Pliny and the historical rhetoric of Tacitus (whose praise of his own more enlightened emperor, Trajan, has an ironic note to it).

But if I am right in thinking that Hegel accepted Gibbon’s view of the “artful system” established by Augustus, none of this is part of the real inversion of the Concept. The “artful system” was a continuum of legal right in which the atoms could maintain their independent being; and the *Imperium* was the “essence and content” of this “formal continuity.” Hegel certainly realized that every Caesar was subject to denigration after his death—just as he was bound to be deified. That was how the world of “persons” necessarily had to experience the personal lordship that was integral to the maintenance of law. Caligula and Nero did have a “consciousness of the universal might of actuality,” I suppose. But the “actual consciousness” of what that meant only became universal in the period when the Emperors were obliged to *fight* for power while they were alive, and when there was open anarchy if the recognized Caesar died or was assassinated. The contrast

between the settlement of Vespasian in 69 and the barbaric ferocity of Septimius Severus in 193–197 is what is crucial. From 193 until the settlement of Diocletian in 285, tyrannical ruthlessness was absolutely essential to the survival of the imperial power.

Thus, when we read that the “destructive burrowing in this essenceless soil” (of private life) becomes necessary to the maintenance of imperial consciousness, and the almighty self is “mere devastation,” we should think of Septimius Severus allowing his troops to sack the great city that is now Lyons (in 197) and of all the warring devastation of the next ninety years. And if it is the devastation of the Empire, both by its own legions, and by its external enemies, that is the “casting away of the imperial self-consciousness” then we must distinguish this breakdown of law and administration from any aberration in the personal psychology of the Caesars. Genuinely crazy people like Caligula and Elagabalus could hardly be elected to the purple in the period of military tyranny. Hegel speaks of this devastating self as “outside itself,” because the legions were as bad as the barbarian invaders, and the Empire itself was divided. But obviously the “casting away of its self-consciousness” looks forward also to the conversion of Constantine. The end of the whole world-shape comes with the second (or comprehensive) inversion of this whirling dialectic of the atoms—with its opposite faces of imperial law and military anarchy—into the absolute otherness of the Divine Spirit in the “beyond.”

- 20./483. This is how the actual world is constituted: it is the actual world of the Unhappy Consciousness. The validity of consciousness is the reality from which it is estranged. The self is actual in this world now as “the person.” But the actuality is inverted into a loss of essence.

The world of the “condition of Right” is the real world “in which Self-Consciousness is *actual* as absolute essence.” If we look back to chapter IV we can recognize both how generally Hegel intends this, and how true it is. Those on whom the purple mantle was put, were frequently unwilling to accept it because a struggle to the death was involved. No one could expect to retire to private life, or be banished to an island, if he lost. The Empire at peace is the real world of Stoic speculation; and the Empire in civil war is the real world of the Sceptical suspense of judgment. In the conversion of Constantine, and the gradual establishment of the other-worldly monotheism of the Christians as the source and fount of all truth and all authority, we shall finally see what the comprehensive retreat of self-consciousness into itself means.

The Sceptic is aware of his own inessentiality; but his consciousness is a humorous one. For him, life is just a great comedy of impressions; but life is no longer comic when the uncertainty of “fortune” becomes a matter of his own survival. We can smile while we dispute whether Justice is “natural” or “conventional,” as long as Justice is firmly established. But when the peace and prosperity of real life under law is threatened on one side by the barbarians, and on the other side by the warring legions themselves, the formal Reason that is common ground to Stoicism and

Scepticism will tell us that the real justice, the effective reality of law, is not to be found in this world at all, but only in a divine self-consciousness that is beyond it and alienated from it. This was the logical truth implicit in the “Stoic independence of pure thought” as realized in the Roman Peace. But we now have the Unhappy Consciousness as the experience, not just of Paul and of a strange sect of fanatics who will not acknowledge the divinity of the Emperor, or of any of the gods in the Pantheon, but as a world-experience.

In the “Condition of Right” the flux of life is just like the flux of the elements. There are new fights in the amphitheater, new chariot races, every week. Life is a bore, and death is the rest to which we all go. The Stoic Emperor himself came to this conclusion, and cried “How long then?” The first form of despair for the world is this sense of pointlessness. This is “the boredom of the world.” But when there are not just comic disagreements about justice, but violence everywhere, it is plain that the decision of “the self” (some prince or other) is all the law there is; and when he perishes it is equally plain that that is no law at all. The “essence” of the community is a self; but that self has no “essence” at all. We have to make it into a “universally valid self.”

This is where we pass over to the real world of the Unhappy Consciousness (in its “second relationship”). The world knows that its “essence” is a self (God) and that the divine self has absolute validity. God’s will should be done on earth; but this world is actually where the Devil rules. The “ethical action” that destroyed the “selfless” Ethical Substance, must now be reborn as self-reformation. Action, *actualizing*, must overcome the estrangement between the world as it is, and the world as it ought to be. “The actuality of the self, has been gained through the return of actuality into the person.” The world of persons defined by law, must give way to the world of persons who act to make themselves (or in the language of “estrangement,” to “save their souls”). The difference between the “Unhappy Consciousness” and “Culture” is that the subjective desire and labor of the Unhappy Consciousness is a contradictory failure because of its simple self-assertion; that of Culture is a success, because it aims at self-reformation. We do make a new world; and eventually we make a new self that is not unhappy but self-confident. We never get what the Unhappy Consciousness wants; but we *get over* wanting it.⁴⁷

Notes

1. Antigone and Ismene are *resolute extremes*. Ismene is ready to die with her sister; but her acceptance of the public authority is equally resolute. The *middle* between them—Antigone’s conviction that *something* must be done, combined with Ismene’s conviction that it is not for a woman to do it—would have produced the response that the harmony of the two Laws needed. A different view of who the *guilty* agent is, is possible—and the “action” of the play, which is the *complete* “ethical *Handlung*,” will bring it to light. But in no case is Creon properly describable as a guilty *individual*. Only Antigone is “the *absolute being-for-self* of the purely singular self-consciousness.”

J. Royce (1919, 203) says that “the ideal commonwealth lives through an unconsciousness as to what its own inner doubleness of loyalty *means*.” J. C. Flay (1984, 352, n. 22)

objects that the poet produces “consciousness.” But *intuitive* subjective consciousness only exacerbates the problem. (Antigone *understands* the situation much better than Creon. But that only strengthens her “resolve.”)

2. It is this second burial that is the *political* act. Antigone cannot let a common soldier (a mere *serf* in Creon’s eyes) pay the penalty for her *secret* piety.

3. V. Ehrenberg (1954, 33) says “Antigone believes in a divine order of the world; Creon relies on human laws and standards”; and he faults Hegel for believing in a “higher unity of the two worlds.” “Hegel’s mistake was to take Sophocles for a Hegelian.” Now Sophocles was certainly not a Hegelian; but he *did* believe that the human world should conform to the divine order. It was Hegel’s merit that he saw why this was impossible. Empirically Antigone is wise (aware of the unity) and Creon foolish (aware only of the dichotomy). But it is Antigone who is the *transgressor* in action. On what she loses by her “transgression” see the interesting argument of J. Bernstein (1994, 66). His article brings out the implicit anticipation of “Conscience” very well.

4. “The question of exactly how woman can represent the sphere of particularity while never knowing herself as this particular self is a question never addressed by Hegel,” says P. J. Mills (1986, 139). She has the problem backwards. There is *no* problem about *how* we know ourselves as “this particular [i.e. singular] self.” That is intuitive in Sense-Certainty, and everything we learn in “experience” develops it. “True Spirit” requires us to forget that knowledge ethically in order to know what it means *in particular* to be a woman (or a man). How the *singular* can be identical with the *universal*—how the *I* can be *We*, and the *We* can be *I*—is the problem of the whole book; and the answer remains as *existential* as the “first experience” of freedom. The scientific *theory* does not do away with the practical difficulties. (Pace Adorno 1973, 173, whom Mills cites approvingly, Hegel does not “shrink from the dialectics of the particular [i.e. the singular]” at all. But he starts from the Truth of the Ethical Substance—“True Spirit”—and not from the “Truth of Enlightenment,” as these authors do.)

5. Like many other critics P. J. Mills (1986, 140) says “Sophocles does not create Antigone and Creon as ethical equals.” Of course, Hegel does not say, or suppose, this. As man and woman they cannot be ethically “equal,” but only different—see further notes 3 above and 26 below. Hegel’s position is that the commitments they make are both *necessary*, and each is *blinded* by the commitment. Oddly enough, in spite of her admiration for Antigone’s superior “ethics,” Mills claims that “Hegel misses what is most significant: that Antigone must *enter* the political realm” (139). Even Antigone does not *miss* that; she regards it as ethically irrelevant. And Hegel cannot “miss” it because he regards Creon’s political responsibility as having an equal “right.” What Hegel “misses” is the relevance of Antigone’s necessary entry into the political realm for *our* world. His world was contentedly Aristotelian, and he did not draw out—even logically—the *difference* between naïve *Sittlichkeit* and “returned *Sittlichkeit*” (compare chapter 3, note 74).

6. This doctrine is clearly stated in the Theses of 1801: “XI. Virtue excludes innocence both in acting and in suffering” (Rosenkranz, 159).

7. *Oedipus Tyrannus*, line 1080.

8. *Politics* II, iv, 2–3 (1262a); compare *Philosophy of Right*, Preface. Aristotle also complains (in II, iv, 1) that all kinds of offences against the person are more heinous when committed against a parent—and this essential difference made by the unwritten law is washed out by Plato’s scheme. In the myth, of course, a justifiable homicide is united with parricide.

9. C. J. Arthur (1988) claims that paragraph 470 is mistaken because Antigone feels no “guilt.” It is, of course, *action* (not “feeling”) that counts in “True Spirit”; and Antigone’s actions (like her father’s) contain her acknowledgement of “guilt.” (Arthur also claims that “Antigone is not a tragic figure at all in the Greek sense.” Sophocles would certainly have preferred Hegel’s understanding of the tragedy that he called by Antigone’s name, to this truly medieval reliance on a very simplistic reading of Aristotle’s *Poetics*; and Aristotle himself would have agreed that Aeschylus and Sophocles knew best what a “tragic figure” is.)

10. Some ink has been spilled foolishly over the fact that Hegel misquotes Antigone’s *conditional* statement: “But *if* these things be fair in [the eyes of] the Gods, then having suffered, we *would* agree that we have erred.” But Hegel (who certainly knew how to translate the passage literally) saw the deliberate echo of the Aeschylean *pathei mathos*. That echo is the key to Antigone’s suicide. Hegel also realized that the alternative possibility offered by Antigone was similarly *prophetic*: “But if these men [the human authority] are in error, then may they suffer no more evils than those that they unjustly do to me” (*Antigone*, lines 925–928). Zeus hears that prayer, too. Creon *loses* the spouse and son that Antigone is never allowed to have. C. Ferrini (1981, 401–403) rightly says that it is not woman’s lot to face death; and that the Divine Law is only a *feeling* until Antigone has to admit her error. This shows us why Hegel’s reading of her conditional statement is essential to his theory of the downfall of *Sittlichkeit*.

11. *Antigone*, lines 777–778.

12. J. B. Hoy (1981, 412) is only half-right when she says that “self-respect varies so significantly that it is meaningless to cite it as a good desirable to human beings per se.” It is not “meaningless.” We are meant to recognize Kantian *moral respect* as the “returned shape” of Antigone’s identity of “character.” But, of course, they *are* radically different.

13. *Antigone*, lines 65–66; compare the fate Creon offers Antigone at lines 777–778 (cited above).

14. Compare Creon’s alternative to “the luck of not dying”: “or she may know indeed, though only at the last, that it is an extravagant labor to reverence Hades’ realm” (lines 779–780). Again Creon echoes Ismene (line 68) but with an open impiety that she carefully avoids.

15. In view of this second “misquotation,” it should be obvious that Hegel is interpreting what Sophocles *means* (not mistaking what Antigone *says*).

16. Since the “ethical action” is a conflict about the deceased spirit of Polyneices, it seems clear that Hegel intended the pun when he made his Tacitean use of the word *verschieden*.

17. This absolute identity precludes “private judgment.” A wise monarch (Theseus) does the *wise* thing just as immediately as Creon does the *simple* thing. The contingency of the decisions is *natural* (not reflective). This is how virtue is “absolute” in the sense of Thesis XII (1801): “Morality is repugnant to absolute virtue in every way” (Rosenkranz, 159).

18. Ismene says nothing about any agreement to share the Kingship, but simply blames the rebellious youthfulness of Eteocles for starting trouble (*Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 367–381). But Oedipus has been away from Thebes for years. So we must assume that Eteocles was the choice of the people after each brother had reigned in turn; and Polyneices naturally had to be banished because he would not accept that decision. Polyneices feels very strongly that his younger brother cannot be allowed to get away with the final act of usurpation (see lines 1292–1300; 1422–1423).

19. *Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 600, 1173–1206, 1254–1446. The Critical Editors think one detail definitely comes from Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes*; so they refer to that for the

whole story. Quite probably Hegel's comment about "the other who at the very walls had already proclaimed its laying waste" does refer to the curse that Polyneices lays upon Thebes in the *Seven* (lines 633–635—compare note 23 below). But I think Hegel simply borrowed that because it makes the justice of the City's curse upon Polyneices plainer. Sophocles took great care to provide a rational motivation for everything in the story (e.g. the curse of Oedipus on *both* sons) and we know that Hegel studied his Theban plays carefully, and talked to Hölderlin about them at length. So I think we should assume that everything that *can* come from Sophocles, *does* come from him. Logically, however, it does not matter *what* version of the events leading up to the life-and-death struggle we adopt, since the appeal to that struggle equalizes all finite rights and wipes out all finite wrongs—cf. *System of Ethical Life* (Lasson, 458–459; Harris and Knox, 140–141).

20. *Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 1295–1299. Polyneices has a *Lockean* conception of the state of nature, with combat as the court of appeal. But the appeal inverts the Lockean view into that of Hobbes.

21. The thesis of 1801: "IX. The state of nature is not unjust, and on that account it is to be left behind" (Rosenkranz, 156) is to be understood in this Sophoclean sense.

22. The detail of Polyneices' public proclamation comes from Aeschylus. But in the *Oedipus Coloneus*, Antigone begs him "Not to destroy yourself and the City" and asks him "If you lay waste [or raze to the ground] your fatherland what will it profit you?" (*Oedipus Coloneus*, 1417, 1420–1421). Of course, Sophocles would have the *Seven* in his mind (and Hegel would certainly notice the connection); but it is the Sophoclean account in which the curse is interpreted as the *destruction* of the City rather than the simple *conquest* of it.

23. We can see now that Hegel's earlier reference to the "*Stygian* water of forgetfulness" (par. 467) was not a slip of memory, but a deliberate collapsing of absolute forgetting and absolute remembering into a single image. For an interesting meditation on Hegel's use of Lethe see D. J. Schmidt (1988, 181–184).

24. *Antigone*, lines 1080–1083.

25. Incidentally, however, this "result" does show how—*pace* note 5 above—P. J. Mills is right in saying that Antigone and Creon are not ethical equals (1986, 140). Antigone maintains her ethical *character* unto the death. That is what the simple *truth* of Spirit requires. (Of course, if we think that she dies *defiantly*, then she is only naturally braver than Creon and they are ethically equal—because both are self-willed to the point of stupidity. But like Hegel, I am confident that Sophocles intended to exemplify "learning by suffering," and so to make the difference between them into an *ethical* one. Mills sees the difference clearly, but she calls Antigone's courage "moral" (141). This adjective is completely out of place; it typifies what we might call—*honoris causa*—the "Goethe fallacy.")

26. See the *Supplices*, lines 724–725. This may well come from the epic tradition of the Theban Cycle. The singer of the *Iliad* knows of Oedipus falling in battle (xxiii, 679); and of Polyneices raising an army against Thebes (iv, 378). (Hegel needs to have the "spiritual thing" destroy *itself* in its relations with the others; and that is what Thebes has logically done by the time that Teiresias prophesies its doom.)

27. Theseus argues in the *Supplices* of Euripides that the young men who are the City's resource, will cease to fight for her if they fear they will not be buried with due ceremony (*Supplices*, lines 538–541). The *need* for male aggression is what gives Irigaray's reading (1985) of the "eternal irony" (par. 475) its power. What gives it *validity* against Hegel's own world, and his real philosophy of that world, is the fact that although the slaves—whom Hegel silently ignores in the Ethical Substance—are politically liberated, the womenfolk are

supposed to adopt Antigone's *piety* (and her protest against its political secularization) as their ideal. For *our* world, H. M. Ravven (1988) offers the properly constructive feminist interpretation of Hegel. (See also the essay of T. J. Gerald [1984/1985]. The *Hegel-Jahrbuch* 1984/1985 contains several essays on Hegel's theory of the Family.)

Failure to take into account the *historical* dimension (and limitation) of "True Spirit" is endemic among interpreters of the *Phenomenology*, and critics of Hegel's theory of sexual relations generally. See, for example, J. Loewenberg (1965, 193); W. Becker (1971, 118); R. C. Solomon (1983, 545); J. B. Elshtain (1981), S. Moller Okin (1980). In this respect S. M. Easton (1987) and T. O'Hagan (1984/1985) deserve commendation.

28. We find here the explanation of the paradox remarked on by M.B. Foster (1929, 85–86n.). He says there is no proper recognition of party-politics in Hegel's image of Greek *Sittlichkeit*. Hegel would have pointed to all the signs that "dispositional opposition" *ought not* to exist: the *graphé para nomón*, ostracism, expulsion of factions, etc. It is the *Platonic Ideal* of the City that is displayed in Aeschylus and Sophocles. (In par. 455 Hegel seems to hold, like Aristotle, that *democracy* is the fully developed shape of the *polis*. But he also holds that the *polis* is a self-contradictory concept.)

29. It is Aethra, the mother of Theseus, who persuades him to take up the cause of the *Suppliant Women* (lines 297–331). She urges Theseus to go to war, but she pleads for the common piety of Hellas as one family. Thus she agrees with Antigone (see chapter 3, note 71 above, and *Antigone*, line 523).

30. *Oedipus Tyrannus*, lines 708–709, 857–858. The reaction of the Chorus follows the second declaration at once—see especially 895–896; and Jocasta promptly makes ceremonious penance for her impious words at 911–913; but it is plain enough that she wants everyone to leave the secret of the Oracle's truth unrevealed.

31. When Napoleon fell the cunning of Reason overtook Hegel's own expectations about how the nascent world would come into being; but the (European) world that *did* come into being answered his *logical* expectations quite well. He only *needed* to be right about the triumph of constitutional nationalism in principle.

Useful studies of the *Rechtzustand* are J. Hyppolite (1966), J.-F. Kervegan (1987), R. Bernasconi (1989), and especially M. H. Hoffheimer (1992). There is a translation of this section, with a useful introduction and notes, by M. H. Hoffheimer (1993)—see also the "Prelude" above, note 1.

32. True Spirit is a "substance" without a proper self-consciousness. The self of the City is only the stone statue of Athena (for example). Citizenship is the forgetting of the singular self in the universal community; this direct coincidence of the moments is the *truth* of Spirit. It is a true Spirit because it can say "We"; but it cannot yet say "I." (R. Stern [1990, 43–54] gives us a bird's eye view of the dialectic of Universal and Individual in the *Phenomenology*. But the inadequacy of a logical analysis that tries to ignore the historical context becomes very plain when "individuality" emerges triumphant at this point. What Stern calls "a one-sided allegiance to the divine law and individuality" [51] was just the opposite. It was the ethics of the Family that was truly "universal.")

M. Westphal (1979, 159) remarks that the "truth" of the Ethical World is a problem, not a solution. But this could be said about every "result" (even about "Absolute Knowing" because it sets us the problem of the Logic). The "problematic" appearance of the *Rechtzustand* is more striking than usual, partly because Hegel's presentation is coldly ironic (in contrast with the warmth of the account of "True Spirit"); and partly because the story is so condensed. If we reflect on the two centuries of the Roman Peace—as opposed to the Hera-

cleitean dominance of war in Greek history—we can comprehend why the “Condition of Right” properly counts as a “solution.” It gets its “problematic” appearance largely because the *happy* pages of history are blank.

33. On the concept of personal equality, compare J. W. Burbidge (1992, chapter IX). In early Roman law, the position of a woman was that of a perpetual minor. But “the Roman woman obtained during the Empire a position of great independence, both personal and in respect of property, whether married or unmarried” (*Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, compiled and edited by Sir Paul Harvey, 1937, 239, column 1; M. C. Howatson is less fulsome in the second edition [1989]—see 599, column 2).

34. R. Bernasconi (1989) brings out the ironies and paradoxes of Hegel’s various discussions of “personality” in different contexts—and, in particular, he brings out the importance of the “mask” sense of the term. But he does not manage to put the different aspects together into a proper “Concept.”

35. Hegel first read Gibbon at Bern, in a Swiss edition of the English text—cf. *Unkunde der Geschichte* (early 1795), Nohl, 366. He quotes Gibbon in the *Natural Law* essay—*G.W.* IV, 456, line 30–457, line 5; Knox and Acton, 101–102. (The citation—which is given below at note 38—is relevant to the point made here.)

36. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, London, Everyman, I, 78. This is where Civil Society originates (and VI A and B are aspects of its development). Compare F. Valentini (1968, 95–97, 104–110). But Civil Society is only mature when the work of Culture is completed (and legal inequalities are abolished).

37. Rosenkranz, 136; Harris and Knox, 181. To say, as J.-F. Kervegan (1987, 55–56) does, that this chapter “totally ignores the State” is misleading. “The State” does not yet exist. There is a universal legal system imposed upon “political communities” and on many more elementary forms of social organization.

38. *Decline and Fall*, London, Everyman, I, 56–57. This is exactly the way Hegel quotes the passage in the *Natural Law* essay (see note 34). Only the clause in square brackets has been restored by me.

39. The short encomium by Gibbon should be studied as a whole (being the most likely source of Hegel’s own “recollection” of the “condition of Right”)—*Decline and Fall*, I, 76–78. Of course, Hegel read the *Meditations* for himself; so he will have known that as well as “the idea (*phantasia*) of a state with one law for all, based upon individual equality and freedom of speech, and of a sovereignty which prizes above all the liberty of the subject” (I, 14) there are some vivid expressions of the Unhappy Consciousness in Marcus. One of the most famous is: “Everything above and below is ever the same, and the result of the same things. How long then?” (VI, 46).

I do not know whether Hegel read the *Panegyric* of the younger Pliny on the “restoration of Senatorial freedom” at the accession of Trajan (ruled A.D. 98–117). But he would have liked the following expressions of what he calls “the pure One of [the person’s] abstract actuality”: “nearly all of us live according to the standards of one man” (45,5) and “He will know when we use the freedom that he gave that we are being obedient to him” (67,2).

40. It is not even true that the “male self-consciousness” as such is “lord” of the Ethical Substance. That was Creon’s mistake certainly; and it was matched by Antigone’s mistaken idea that *she* could speak for the “unwritten law” of Zeus. Only Zeus, the divine Father and King, is “Lord” of the substance; and it is not accurate to call any of his children his “bondsmen.” They are all ethically committed “to the death”; so if we take *Knecht* in the sense of “man-at-arms” the *Herrschaft-Knechtschaft* relation holds. But it is “ethical obedience”.

41. The “first relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness is already here, but (as forecast in par. 211) the “behavior” of the Unchangeable is different at the substantial level, from what it was in the singular consciousness.

42. Marcus Aurelius (like other Roman Stoics) was orthodox in ethics, but rather agnostic, though not an outright Sceptic, in physical theory. He often toys with the Epicurean view of nature, and seems a little inclined to the dualistic hypothesis of an Epicurean world of matter, and a Stoic world of mind. See for instance *Meditations* IV, 27; VI, 17,24; IX, 21.

43. Rosenkranz, 180; Harris and Knox 254–245. (The original text will be published in *G.W.V.*)

44. A hero-cult was established for Julius Caesar at Rome during his own lifetime, so that he is properly the first “person for whose consciousness no superior spirit exists.”

45. Patricia Fagan (forthcoming) has interpreted the whole section plausibly in terms of Roman history from Caligula to Vespasian. Only the need for a continuous evolution of the World-Spirit makes this unsatisfactory. It is plausible because the resting Concept must contain its own moment of “Antithesis.” The paragraph in which Gibbon deals with the Year of the Four Emperors is worth studying:

During a long period of two hundred and twenty years from the establishment of this artful system to the death of Commodus, the dangers inherent to a military government were, in a great measure, suspended. The soldiers were seldom roused to that fatal sense of their own strength, and of the weakness of the civil authority, which was, before and afterwards, productive of such dreadful calamities. Caligula and Domitian were assassinated in their palace by their own domestics: the convulsions which agitated Rome on the death of the former were confined to the walls of the city. But Nero involved the whole empire in his ruin. In the space of eighteen months four princes perished by the sword; and the Roman world was shaken by the fury of the contending armies. Excepting only this short, though violent eruption of military licence, the two centuries from Augustus to Commodus passed away unstained with civil blood, and undisturbed by revolutions. The emperor was elected by *the authority of the senate*, and *the consent of the soldiers*. The legions respected their oath of fidelity; and it requires a minute inspection of the Roman annals to discover three inconsiderable rebellions, which were all suppressed in a few months, and without even the hazard of a battle.

This period (27 B.C.–A.D. 192) is the “world” of the *Rechtzustand* as a stable shape. The crisis at the death of Nero (A.D. 68) is the internal “antithesis” (*Gegensatz*) in which the dynamic tension of the “Concept” is revealed. From A.D. 192–311 the concept is “in motion”; with Constantine (311–337) the world of *Bildung* begins. (From that time onwards there is a *division* of “divine” and “human” *right*. We enter the world of “Culture,” and of the Universal Church.)

46. M. Le Dantec (1982, 140) is right in saying that the “historical foundation” of the Unhappy Consciousness is here. But he is mistaken in arguing that the impoverished class of modern Civil Society is in the condition of the Unhappy Consciousness. Only if they believe that *God* has put them in their wage-slave condition will they be “unhappy” in the relevant sense. The “unhappiness” of Consciousness is a condition of *guilt*.

47. Of course we shall then discover that our “enlightened” “happiness” is inadequate; in the end we do need to obtain what the Unhappy Consciousness wanted—but not in the impossible shape in which the Unhappy Consciousness looked for it.

Chapter 5

The Far Country of Grace

VI B: The Self-Estranged Spirit; Culture

The second main section of Hegel's sixth chapter is divided into three phases (of which the first two are dichotomous). First comes "I: The World of Self-Estranged Spirit"; then "II: The Enlightenment"; and finally "III: Absolute Freedom and Terror." This chapter of our commentary deals only with Phase Ia: "Culture and its Realm of Actuality." This embraces the "cultural" transformation of the Weltgeist between the Conversion of Constantine and the French Revolution.¹ The mental transformation of our way of thinking is the topic of Phase II; and the resulting revolution in the real world follows in Phase III. (We shall deal with Ib and IIa together in our chapter 6; and with IIb and III in chapter 7. The reasons will be explained in due course.)

Hegel himself begins with an overview of the whole section VI B in three paragraphs. So we can dispense with any preliminary discussion of "Estrangement" (Entfremdung) here.² For the moment, I shall offer only a brief exposition of the metaphor upon which this chapter of the commentary is founded. The Ethical Substance of Hellas was the "Garden of Eden" planted by the Spirit in Nature. The story of that human Garden of Eden is over; and mankind has learned what the world of self-conscious desire and labor is actually like. The Spirit must now embark on the great labor of self-making. The Roman Imperial World was the world of "natural Self-Consciousness." In that world we were all in bondage, and obliged to recognize the absolute selfhood of an earthly Lord. When the otherness of the Lord becomes absolute, the appearing of Spirit can become self-conscious. This is what happens in the triumph of the Gospel as "the belief of the world" (par. 758). We are now invited to recognize ourselves in the "absolute otherness" (par. 26) of a Spirit who is "not of this world." In this present life we are estranged from our true selves in God's kingdom.

We must each one of us "make ourselves over" in order to join the true community of the Spirit in the other world. Our own present world is the place of "Culture" (Bildung).³ The land where we shall truly be "at home" is far away, and by culturally reforming ourselves we are journeying, like pilgrims, towards it. The "grace of God" is what makes this possible.

(a) *The Concept of Self-Estrangement*

- 1./484. The Ethical Substance kept consciousness in unity with its being. As custom it was something existing only *for* consciousness, which was also the essence of consciousness. In the Condition of Right the substance is external, and the self is a thinking atom. But this external world is spiritual in essence, penetrated by individuality, made by man even though it appears as given. The content of legal right is made by self-externalization. The ruin that seems to come upon the Empire from outside, really comes from the self-alienating activity of the spirit. The destruction is necessary, because self-alienation is the actualization of the Substance.

This first paragraph of Hegel's chapter VI B is a review of where we have arrived, as compared with where we began in VI A. In the ethical world the citizen, man or woman, was simply conscious of the custom as objectively given. The custom was recognized as law (divine or human); but it was not something external to one's own being. In True Spirit we have a situation in which there is no antithesis between "consciousness" and "being," or between "self-consciousness" and its "essence." The essence is there already, the custom is Athena's wisdom, and to be "self-conscious" is to be living virtuously. One is not born with this identity; but to have established it is what being grown-up means, since this identity is one's "true" self. The identity is a *specific* (or *particular*) one, because we are born either male or female.

Antigone, for instance, is a violent and passionate person by nature. She says things to her sister that sound like expressions of absolute hostility. But Ismene does not accept them at face value. And, of course, she is right, for how could Antigone really be estranged from her own family? What sense would her "ethical action" make if estrangement were possible for her? Antigone does not want to die, and she does everything she can to avoid it. But she accepts death because she would be less than nothing in her own eyes, if she were to lose her active identity with her customary substance and be reduced to mere "ethical disposition."

In the Condition of Right, on the other hand, the good citizen has to be "ethical disposition." She must be ready to do what she is told obediently. If Antigone disobeys Creon openly in this new world, and gets away with it, then we have chaos. The substance of right and justice can now be produced only through estrangement from self, and the doing of what is commanded. I am not supposed to identify with it, but to recognize it as imposed from above. The self becomes a social atom. The Law is a norm for the interactions of atoms, just as the physical world is an external reality that reliably obeys its own laws. The *Dike* of Zeus is still preserved in thought; for according to the Stoic theory the whole system is moved and controlled by one universal Spirit, which is the life of the physical world, and the shared Reason of the ethical world. But this is only a sublated Spirit, because the actual social world is an Epicurean system of atoms moved by Chance. The social world is recognizably the work of self-consciousness, but the "self" is alien. We must all be "law-abiding"; but the law is a foreign authority. The emperor Caracalla made every free citizen of any community in the Empire a *Roman* citizen (the *Con-*

stitutio Antoniniana, A.D. 214). But this universalization of the imperial City did not change anything significant, except the taxation system. Caracalla belongs to the period of overt military tyranny.⁴

The realization of Self-Consciousness as a *world-order*, involves a reversal of the categorical development of the singular self-consciousness. When the world moves from the Stoical condition of Right to the Sceptical condition of military tyranny, the Self-Consciousness of the world divides into the *judgment* of Lordship and Bondage, and the rationality of Law declines into the natural self-assertiveness of the stronger will. If we examine the syllogism of Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness, we can see why this is necessary. The Sceptical self-consciousness is already an internally divided one even as a singular *Gestalt* (with the Changeable and Unchangeable as its sides); the transition to unhappiness only involves the admission that the rational standard (the Unchangeable), which is just as essential to Scepticism as it was to Stoicism, does not exist in the mind as anything more than an abstract form (or postulate). In reality it is beyond our reach. The communal experience of this estrangement brings about the explicit development in the world of all of the moments that it comprehends. In order for a *world* of Unhappy Consciousness to exist, the rational self-consciousness has to become the passive observer of the evolution of the community, from the stage of blind will, to the moment of voluntary self-estrangement. The formally simple transition from the Sceptical standpoint to that of Unhappy Consciousness involves a radical transformation of consciousness—a conversion experience in which all of the old standards of truth and rationality are overthrown.

If we take Caracalla as our paradigm of Legal Tyranny,⁵ we can see that in murdering his brother Geta he was not only establishing which of the two sons of Septimius Severus was to be master (in a primitive struggle for recognition); he was also consciously preserving the unity of the Empire. To maintain unity and public order was his proper *Werk*; but underneath the order that he was maintaining—and outside its borders—there was an “alien actuality” of elemental passions. Resistance had to be stamped out; so thousands perished, because they were suspected (often upon very slight evidence) of being “friends of Geta.” Among those executed was the great jurist Papinian, who refused to provide a constitutional apologia for the murder, saying “that it was easier to commit a parricide, than to justify it.”

Papinian represents, very neatly, the consciousness of Legal Right that does not recognize itself in the reign of terror through which Caracalla maintained order. This kind of “pacification” was necessary because Caracalla had to spend most of his time on the frontiers. Gibbon ignores the military aspect of the crisis, but by concentrating on Caracalla’s brutal massacres within the boundaries of the “inhabited world” he makes clear the justice of Hegel’s comment that the “elemental essence” (i.e. all the primitive and barbaric forces of the natural self-consciousness that did not recognize itself in the Roman Law) was also the *Arbeit* of the Lord of the World. His positive *Werk* was the maintenance of unity and order; but he performed the labor of it, negatively, by exercising barbaric violence, and liberating those very same destructive forces of natural life which it was his office to dominate

and control. These rebellious and anarchic forces are generating the new self. The military tyrant, embracing all this disorder (within which “legal” and “illegal” are only labels used arbitrarily), is tilling the ground, doing the negative “labor” of the self; and the unconquered barbarians are doing the same.

Thus it was not the barbarians outside the Empire, but the revelation that the legal self-consciousness is itself barbaric, that made the decline and fall of the Empire inevitable. This was what became clear when formal Reason sought to establish “mastery” (a relation of unequal recognition) over the natural passions. The attempt was inevitably transformed into the tyranny of aggressive self-consciousness (the military) over finite life (the civil population). The real self of the inhabited world was shown to be a “play of raging elements,” because the imperial authority, as a military tyranny, is “without substance.” The whole system based upon the immediate recognition of “personality” is arbitrary. The Empire falls, because all selves must learn the lesson of self-estrangement, the lesson of submission to a command from above. The substance that truly belongs to “legal right” is its “emptying out” into disorder; and this disorder is the birth of the *new* substance, the ordering of the spiritual powers of the political world and its underworld into a new pattern, with the “inhabited world” on one side, and the Overworld on the other. The “essence” is now “self-estranged” because the commanding voice is in the Overworld. God himself becomes the absolute Person, the Lord of the World.⁶

- 2./485. The new order is thus spiritual, but alienated into two worlds. The world of actual consciousness is an alienation of finite spirit into the natural order of things; through the struggle both of the finite sides are sublated in its pure consciousness, the perspective of God in Heaven. These alienated sides still logically involve each other.

The transition that the world-spirit makes at this point is a transition at the level of Religion. Hegel has already explained it (in chapter IV B) as well as it can be explained from the standpoint of the natural (singular) self-consciousness; and he told us then that for the finite self what happens appears as the act of God in his own independent world (pars. 211–212). The existence of another world, the Beyond which we can enter only in thought, is *revealed* to us. So at this point Hegel can only tell us that the self of our present life must regain substantiality by alienating itself, by emptying itself out into a world where the spiritual powers order themselves in a self-preserving way.⁷

When he says “Substance is in this way Spirit” he is referring to this doubling of the world. Spirit, as we know, is “pure self-recognition in absolute otherness” (par. 26). This definition was realized in the “ethical order” because *Dike* appeared as the “absolute other” with which the self identified. In the world of True Spirit, the self simply forgot itself in the otherness of the objective custom. The Condition of Right was “spiritless” because there was no absolute otherness, there was only an absolute but natural self. That absolute self has now been recognized as nothing but *its own* otherness—the unconscious and uncontrolled forces of natural life. This factual otherness must regain selfhood from “beyond.” The ethical self

looked to God (or rather, to “the Gods”) for its substance in the sense of its objectivity, and rational stability. The substance for which the estranged living self looks to God is its own real selfhood—its “immortal soul.”

It is “Substance” that is now Spirit properly. Antigone’s Zeus does not succeed in being the absolute Spirit of the Ethical Substance; he has to yield to the “absolute otherness” of Destiny. It is “Destiny” that becomes a *Self* for Unhappy Conscience. Spirit is “the self-conscious unity of the self and the essence.” The actual self—even in its universal shape as “Lord of the World”—has shown itself to be a mere “play of the raging elements” of natural life. But in its Stoic rationality it knows that selfhood is identity with the spiritual “essence” (Justice, Virtue) not with nature. This *pure* consciousness now confronts it as a revelation; and by self-alienation it becomes one with the eternal truth. It is finitely conscious of the natural world; it takes this world over and unites it with itself, by obedient labor. It empties itself out into the world in obedience to the divine authority; and the world passes back into its possession as a result. It is at this point that our Science of Experience properly becomes the “appearing of the Spirit.” The rest of our story will be the evolution of the relation between “finite spirit” as actual consciousness and “absolute Spirit” as “pure consciousness.”

The whole actual world, both the finite self-consciousness and its world of work, is now inverted into the subordinate status of a mere moment in the divine plan for humanity. This “divine plan” is a thought-construct; and the thinking is ours. But our *pure* consciousness is estranged into the Beyond. In its estrangement it is “essence,” i.e., it is our having already been thought by God. The realm of Essence is a comprehensive, eternal world, for which our natural world is just the temporal, changeable, moving antithesis. The finite self is a spirit because it is not just a mortal moment in this world of transient life and labor, but an absolute other of that natural self, an immortal soul, destined in one way or the other—either by damnation or by salvation—for union with God.

On this basis, it becomes rational, once more, to be obedient to those set over us in this world—even if they are still no better than Caracalla. For we now know that God put them there as a necessary part of his plan. Our “vocation” is to bring “this side” back to God on the other side. God is neither a “substance” nor an “atom,” but a properly universal Self; and the way to be united with Him, and to bring “this side” back to Him, is *obedience*.

This logical analysis provides Hegel’s final answer to the problem that troubled him from his schooldays onwards: “Why did Christianity triumph over paganism?” His conclusion was that the evolution of the Hellenic culture from aesthetic particularism (the Cities as “spiritual things”) to the philosophical comprehension of human nature, accompanied by the emergence of a “universal Empire,” demonstrated that rational freedom cannot be stably achieved in a society of “natural Reason”; and natural Reason cannot tolerate the discovery of its own contradictoriness. In order to stabilize a social world in which authority is natural (and therefore *arbitrary*) we are forced to postulate that it is founded upon supernatural Reason.

This is an *absurd* postulate, because “absolute authority” is contradictory. The

original contradiction is only *doubled*; we hide it from ourselves by pretending that it is resolved in the Beyond. Reason can only coincide with Freedom; the absurd postulate of a rational divine *Will* in the eternal world of thought is just a necessary first step in the emergence and evolution of this “identity.” Universal Christianity, as a social institution, justifies what is logically and ethically experienced and known to be absolutely unjustifiable: the acceptance of arbitrary authority. But without the projection of Reason into the Beyond, humanity could never become what it essentially is: a *free* self-making spiritual community, not a community of “natural Reason.”

- 3./486. So this spirit has a *doubled* world. Ethical spirit had only this world (with its hidden part under it). Everything and everyone was present, because the family maintained the rights of its dead. Now the present world is despiritualized; the unseen spiritual world is elsewhere and exists only for the pure consciousness of Faith. Just as the two laws of the Ethical World returned into the self that is now in this divided state, so these two worlds must return into the self of Reason, the universal consciousness that grasps its own concept. This return is Pure Insight. What Culture produces is: the *forming* of world as self and self as world. As hostile to the other world of Faith it is “Enlightenment.” Enlightenment invades the other world critically, making us see it as the image of this world until we achieve the insight that Faith’s world is just the unknowable absolute Essence, and all of its uses for us. Then both worlds go down in the revolutionary consciousness of Absolute Freedom. This marks the transition from the land of Culture to the land of Morality.

Having characterized Estrangement, Hegel now looks forward and tells us what happens in the whole of his section B. True Spirit was properly “selfless,” because *two* selves accepted their natural allocation to its sides. Legal Right is “spiritless” (not “selfless”) because there is no recognition of the absolute Spirit in it. Formal (legal or abstract) recognition of selfhood turns out to be the *loss* of the divine Spirit. “Estrangement” solves this problem by giving us an absolute Spirit and a concrete self (an ethical substance) in the Beyond. In our legal theory we have learned to *think* universally; so we know that the “pure consciousness” that confronts us is our own thought. But the thinker knows that what is truly thought must always *have been* true. Our pure consciousness confronts us therefore (like our actual consciousness) as *what is*. But being eternal, it is in God’s kingdom, not here in the transient temporal realm.

“Hence this spirit projectively molds for itself not just *one* world, but a doubled, sundered and opposed world.” This is the only way in which the sentence can be construed consistently; but the most usual and natural meaning of the verb is rather different. *Ausbilden* means “to educate, to train.” But not even God could be said to “educate or train” this *divided* world, since in its comprehensive or eternal aspect it is unchangeable. By using the word *ausbilden* Hegel suggests already the opposite of what the world-consciousness of this divided world believes. According to the finite consciousness that knows itself as part of “God’s plan,” “this world” is a forming or training-ground for the “other” one; actually the projection of the

“other world” is part of our training for this one. We know that in this world of *Bildung*, the self-estranged Spirit is forming or training itself as a self-conscious Spirit that will regain its truth. Thus the use of *ausbilden* really indicates that the standpoint of True Spirit is the correct one. It is this *present* world that is real. It is this present world that is molded into the shape of *one* divided world, which has the *pure* consciousness of eternally unchangeable truth as its “beyond,” its non-present, aspect.

It is in this world that training makes sense; but to conceive this present world as a world of training, and nothing but training, would not make sense. Faith prepares itself for the other world; but in the end, the Beyond must be recognized as the “training” aspect of this present world. On behalf of the estranged Spirit, I have spoken of “this world” and “the other one”; but Hegel never does that. He allows the Understanding to have two worlds (even two “supersensible” worlds). But Spirit has only one world, however much it may have to be logically divided; and there is no doubt that Spirit’s one world is this present world. Otherwise Hegel could not use the expression *true* Spirit, as he does, for the self-consciousness that directly identifies with its present world. That is why he recapitulates the standpoint of True Spirit here, and emphasizes that the departed spirits in the Underworld are just as much present as the embodied living selves; they are present *substantially* in the “blood” of the kin-group; and *spiritually* in the “self” of the family.

In order to follow Hegel’s argument, we have to employ certain concepts (notably those of “self,” “self-consciousness” and “Universal”) in unfamiliar ways that seem paradoxical, because they violate our ordinary assumptions about concepts, things, and self-consciousness. But if we make these logical adjustments—which are what is really meant by “Substance is Spirit” or “Spirit is Substance”—we can not only turn all the otherworldly talk of the world of culture into straight talk, but we can come to understand why the otherworldly talk was necessary. There is no “other world” of pure Spirits; the world of Absolute Spirit is the highest aspect of this world—the “comprehension” of it. That is what will eventually be understood.

The truth that “Substance is Spirit” could only be formulated initially as the hypothesis (the faith) that every actual person has her pure consciousness “in the Beyond.” The true being of everything, its *Wesen*, is received from the supremely real essence which is God. We live and move and have our being here and now, in this other consciousness that is eternal. Here I am a mortally embodied self; but Yonder I am an immortal soul. Every single person is a duality of temporal and eternal being; and the substantial world as a whole is a duality in the same way. The division of the world of True Spirit into the seen and the unseen collapsed into the natural self-assertion of self-consciousness; and in due course, the division of the world of estranged spirit into the visible and the intelligible, the realm of actuality and the realm of faith, will collapse back into the categorical identity of the rational self; and as “pure insight” this rational self will unmask the irrationality of the claim of faith that we can receive the truth of “pure consciousness” by revelation.

Pure insight (i.e. pure self-consciousness) will destroy pure consciousness, leaving just the universally rational self with its world of useful things. This sweeping

away of the “faith” aspect of “pure consciousness” is *Enlightenment*. The unknowable Absolute Being is all that is left in the Beyond. Enlightenment completes the estrangement of our world from the Beyond; but as a result our world loses its substantial basis; and the actual world that was interpreted in terms of Faith is overthrown when its ground disappears. The Absolute Freedom that reigns as a result turns into Terror immediately, because Pure Insight knows that it can be perverted; and it must suspect all others of perverting it. So the Beyond of Faith is reborn almost at once as the necessary Beyond of Reason. Estrangement ends when Faith becomes Reason; but Reason is left to liquidate its own Beyond, the realm of “moral consciousness” or “rational faith.”

If we consider this review in relation to the external structure of the section that it surveys, several things become clear. First, there are three historically successive stages, which we can identify in more traditional terms as (1) “the age of Faith” (with Reason, or Insight, as its “handmaid”); (2) the struggle between Faith and Reason (which everyone, including Hegel, calls “the Enlightenment”); and (3) the Revolution (political in France, intellectual in Germany).

Secondly, the three sections of Hegel’s argument do not correspond to these historic stages. The evolution of the social world through both of the first two historical stages is dealt with in the first part of his first section. (This is the topic of *our* present chapter.) The second section deals with the movement of thought in the second stage (and the second part of Hegel’s first section lays the foundation for that). He takes advantage of the fact that the account of social consciousness has already been brought to the verge of the Revolution. He presents and employs the concepts of “Faith” and “Insight” in their developed antithesis from the first. Finally (in Section III) he returns to the French political revolution; and he leaves the German intellectual revolution for the last phase of his sixth chapter.

In the coming section of the argument (i.e., in our present chapter), social history is seen as producing the movement of ideas; then (in our next chapter) the movement of ideas is seen as producing the social revolution. But if we take in the pattern of Hegel’s chapter VI as a whole, the perspective changes. For it is clear that Hegel was not interested in the social history of Greece at all. He presented only the *Vorstellung* that the pre-philosophical Greek culture had of the Family. It is in the “Condition of Right” that social history takes over.

The overarching topic of chapter VI is Law and Right. Beginning with the family as a system of “ethical” rights, Hegel moves through the evolution of legal and constitutional right into “natural right” and so back to the rationally universalized sphere of moral right. The middle phase (our present chapter) is concerned with the ousting of religious authority from the sphere of human rights. It is *social authority* not *religious faith* that is the general theme of Hegel’s sixth chapter. We are helping to make this fact visible by leaving “Faith and Pure Insight” for our next chapter. The Enlightenment is logically just the unfolding of that antithesis.

As scientific observers we have to observe the movement of the World-Spirit in a *logical* order. That is why we must observe the actual evolution of dialectical thinking to its full self-consciousness (at the very brink of the Revolution in which

it advances to seize the royal authority) in order to comprehend what the principle of Pure Insight actually *is*. Pure Insight was liberated by the banishment of True Spirit from the world, but it takes a long time to mature. We shall here watch the disciplining of the natural self into the self of Reason. Then (in our next chapter) we shall watch Reason take over the world of thought. It does that in the very process of its development towards full self-consciousness. The discipline of singular consciousness into “Faith” had to come first; and we have *already* observed that in our analysis of the Unhappy Consciousness. But from the time of Luther and Descartes, the movement of Insight towards self-consciousness goes hand in hand with its movement towards actual power. (That is the topic of our *next* chapter.)

I: The World of Self-Estranged Spirit

Hegel has already surveyed what is to come; and he will now give us a slightly more detailed survey of what happens in the first phase of his argument. No doubt he is being extra careful because history and logic do not stay evenly in step in the story of the estranged world—as they did, on the whole, in the story of the Ethical Substance. The world we are entering is the one divided into “Heaven and Earth”; its story is the story of how Faith and Reason change places. This Reason is the subjective singular Insight that we have already observed in Hegel’s fifth chapter; and the result that emerges is a concept of Pure Insight that is radically dialectical. The movement of that Concept—the antithesis of the Faith that accepts the world of pure thought as a revelation—will follow logically in the next phase.

(b) *The Dialectic of Estrangement*

- 4./487. Self-estranged spirit has a doubled world: the actual world and the world of thought. In the aether of the other world it is supposedly not estranged, but actually that is the complementary mode of estrangement, because it is Beyond. Therefore, this is not the consciousness of “Religion” but of “Faith”; and Faith is not alone in the world of thought. The spirit of knowledge is there too, because thought is its element.

This paragraph introduces the “resting Concept” of Estrangement. Actually there is little rest in the whole section, because the Concept is coming to be “for itself” in actuality; and when it does, we find that in its self-estranged shape it has the divided structure of a judgment. The Pure Insight that comes to be “for itself” is opposed to the Faith that was there from the first. “Faith” and “Reason” actually make their appearance together; but as Reason develops, their relationship changes. “Faith” is the “resting Concept,” whose motion is the evolution of Reason as Thinking. This motion is our proper concern. Faith in its stillness is not a mode of knowledge at all. It is the “devotion” of the Unhappy Consciousness at the threshold of thought. In that strictly singular shape, it falls into contradiction whenever it seeks to realize itself in the world. Faith proper, has crossed the threshold into actual thought; and it does successfully transform the world. But as Pure Insight it will come back to the experience of contradiction.

“The world of this Spirit falls apart into the doubled world” of actuality and pure thought. “Estranged Spirit has its consciousness in worlds of two kinds”; but it “embraces both.” It is the faith in the world of pure thought as “another world” that has to be overcome (as the root of our estrangement from this actual world). Once we recognize that the other world is the world of our thought, our own thinking will take it over. Then the estranged *authority* of the other world will be done away with in this actual world, and Reason will be master in its own house.

“Breaking up” or “falling apart into a doubled world” is what happens from the point of view of the one actual world of the Empire. In that world, there always was the realm of the Gods to which the dead Emperors go. But now that world of the Gods falls away from this one altogether, because there is only one God, and the revealed Truth is that “In the beginning” he created his eternal world with our temporal sphere inside it. Our present world of time has lost its “essence,” its eternal status.

The standpoint of Faith, however, is not the same as our standpoint (as rational observers). From our point of view this eternal edifice is erected for its own edification by the world-spirit that we are observing. This great thought-construct is necessary because the actual world of human life in time is a world that has become self-estranged. I am here in this world, but I do not belong to it, nor it to me. On the contrary, I am a spirit; and as a spirit the eternal world is where I belong. That eternal world belongs to Faith, i.e., to the *pure* consciousness of an intelligible world. I could never know that it is there at all if it were not “given” to me. It is no more mine (as the work of my humanly rational self-consciousness) than the natural world of empirical consciousness is.

The world of Faith belongs to the Other just as the world of Nature does. But I am conscious of the world of Faith intellectually—or through *pure* consciousness. My awareness of it has no sensory aspect. “Faith” is the knowledge that God gives us, whereas knowledge proper is always self-knowledge.⁸ We shall only reach “Religion” in our science of consciousness when our “faith” becomes “knowledge”—i.e., when we share God’s knowledge of himself and his world, or when our knowledge *constitutes* what God is.

The sphere of “pure consciousness” is the intellectual world. Faith is a mode of thinking that takes itself to be knowing without thinking, or at least to be knowing something that is other than thought. So pure thinking must appear when Faith does; but it appears in a subordinate role. Pure consciousness is necessarily “the element” of pure thinking (i.e., of the logical Concept), as well as of Faith with its intuitive knowing.

We shall only consider Faith in its antithesis to the *Begriff*, says Hegel. This is a warning that our treatment of the *content* of Faith at this stage will be a limited one. We dealt with the dogmas of Original Sin and Grace in our discussion of the Unhappy Consciousness. The content of Faith is the dogma of the Trinity. But because “Religion proper” is a much higher development we must understand that these earlier discussions are not complete or final.

The estranged shape of Faith—the belief that it is not our thinking at all, but a

knowledge that is *given*—is the complementary form of our estrangement from the actual world. We picture a world in which the alienation of thought from life is done away. Here in our actual world, all the ideals of our thought are flagrantly contradicted by life. There, in God's world, all of our pure thoughts will be absorbed into a life that is better even than they are. We must labor painfully and faithfully here, accepting the violation of all our ideals in actual life patiently, in order to pass over to that higher life; but this supposed "overcoming" of estrangement in thought is simply the fulfilment, or logical completion, of the estranged condition of our world itself. Our actual estrangement consists precisely in the logical need for another world in which what this one lacks is supplied. Religion proper will be the overcoming of this whole conceptual pattern of estrangement. We ourselves (as students of this commentary rather than as observant readers of par. 487) are already *religious* observers, because we already understand why the "age of Faith" is a necessary moment in the "phenomenology of God as Spirit"; and as religious observers we are the "self-consciousness of the absolute essence as it is *in* and *for itself*."

VI B.I(a): Culture and Its Realm of Actuality

We shall begin with the actual world of this estranged consciousness and follow the evolution of its actual thought about itself—the thought that guides and controls action in it—until it reaches the point where the self-estrangement of intuitive Faith from self-conscious discursive thought is dissolved in Pure Insight. This is the conceptual advance produced by Culture (Bildung).⁹ As Hegel said (in par. 485) "through its emptying out (Entäusserung) the actual self-consciousness passes over into the actual world, and the actual world passes back into it." This identity is "pure Culture," and the passage to it is a purely intellectual one. With the dawning of "pure Culture" we shall be conceptually equipped to deal with the "pure consciousness" of Faith. We shall have comprehended the "element" within which Faith and the Concept constitute the fundamental Gegensatz.

(c) The Task of Culture

- 5./488. The Spirit is now an essence that knows itself as an actual world facing an independent *self*. The world's way of being is a motion in which the self brings its world forth by putting off its personality. Only by doing this does self-consciousness count for anything at all. Equality in this world is not legal but a conformity to the universal produced by active self-estrangement.

Unlike the Condition of Right, Culture has a properly absolute Spirit. In the Condition of Right there was a finite self that claimed to be absolute (the Emperor); but now the Emperor himself is a servant of God. The absolute Spirit is present in the world of Culture as a multitude of souls who belong to God's *Church*; they face a world, which is a "spiritual essence penetrated right through by self-consciousness." I know myself as a free agent; and the actuality that confronts

me is constituted by the cultural motion through which I transform it. The previously spiritless world of Legal Right is “penetrated right through” by the new spirit; and this penetration inverts all normal views. We are all children of God, ministered to by his Church, headed by the “Servant of servants.” The “new spirit” is the conviction of all of the selves that they must alienate their natural personality (“put off the old man” is the metaphor of the new religion). The “things of this world” are foreign to this new spirit; but our spiritual self-conversion is bound to transform the world as well, because the self of Culture inherits from True Spirit the awareness that spirit is identical with its world. I cannot make myself over, without making the world over. The finite identity of “self” with “property” still holds good (as in Legal Right); but what matters now is not my “given nature” but the self that I make; and it is not treasure on earth, but treasure in Heaven that I am concerned about.

In the traditional terminology, the finite spirit is a “soul” (immortal spirit, not Aristotelian life principle) which knows that it must “put on the whole armour of righteousness”; whether my soul is eternally saved or damned depends upon the “actuality” that my active self gives to it in this world.

I have to “master” the natural world (especially my own nature); and, like the serf, I have to do it according to a pattern given me by the “Lord.” But again, as in the case of the serf, it is my own sense that I give to things in mastering them¹⁰—and particularly it is my own sense that I give to the new self that I reform and actualize. Thus the problematic relation of my soul to God in the Beyond provides a standing ground for Reason, so that it does not degenerate into the Hobbesian tyrant (which is all that the “Lord of the World” can be, as soon as the open market for military support is established).

The salvation of the soul was what mattered to the Unhappy Consciousness. But the experience of self-assertion and of the satisfaction of its own desires through its labor was for it the perpetual occasion of renewed repentance, and self-castigation. The self of *Bildung* is implicitly rational; it has got over that bind about self-assertion; and it is not hung up about the impossibility of reaching the Beyond. These problems are by no means solved, and they will return to plague Reason in its “moral faith”; but for the moment, they are not problems, because the only question is whether I have carried out God’s will *in this world*. Whether I am at peace with God in my own mind is not what is important; and how God will decide my fate in the other world does not matter on its own account at all. *My anxiety about it* matters as the stimulus through which I am enabled to remake myself and reorganize the world. Once it has served that purpose, it will be liquidated through the recognition of its unintelligibility. The goal of Culture is to produce a universal self-consciousness that has no *need* of that estranged selfhood standing at the seat of Judgment in the Beyond.

The equality that matters now is not equality before the law, but equality in the sight of God—the positive equality of salvation or justification. The Unhappy Consciousness demonstrates that one *cannot* be justified by works, so its salvation comes by faith in the forgiveness of sins; the world of *Bildung* is properly the world

of justification by good works done in the security of faith. It rests upon the faith of the Unhappy Consciousness, and it speaks the language of “justification by faith.” But it knows what “good works” are, and it has no hesitation about affirming its own capacity and will to do them.

- 6./489. *Bildung* is the foundation of actual being. Man’s true nature can only be regained by alienation from its natural state. That is how God’s will gets done *and* I get saved. My actuality and power depends on my self-educative effort. I put aside my natural self in order to be the self God knows. Quantitative differences in natural endowment do not matter. The good will is simply God’s—it is not “good in its kind.” It is absurd for a “kind” to set itself up as something on its own account; Pure Insight will make “type” into a term of abuse and contempt. We are all brothers, and only our efforts to do God’s Will count.

In paragraph 488 Hegel said that “the spiritless universality of Right accepts within its range every natural mode of character as well as of being, and justifies them.” This indicates that the application of the concept of “character” is much looser and more ordinary in the Condition of Right than it was in the Ethical Substance. Hegel’s reduction of ethical *character* to the simple dichotomy of male/female was an *ethical* simplification borrowed from the *Antigone* for a logical purpose. This division is the ethical translation of the *Gegensatz* between Life and Freedom in natural Self-Consciousness, and the sublated shape of the Dependence/Independence relation in True Spirit.

But all of the relationships distinguished in Aristotle’s theory of the family (husband, wife, brother, sister, free citizen, slave) are modes of *character* that are necessary to True Spirit; and the “ethical characters” sketched by Aristotle for many of the virtues, and by Theophrastus for many non-virtuous, and some vicious types, illustrate the emergence of “individuality” in Comedy.¹¹ When one considers Hegel’s early admiration for the “individuality” of Socrates (and all the remarkable followers who got their inspiration from him), it is mildly paradoxical to observe that according to Hegel’s mature conclusions about how Christianity triumphed over paganism, all of those forms of “human wholeness” were part of the *breakdown* of the Hellenic ideal. But even in his earliest reflections Hegel distinguished between wholeness within the community, and the rational need to be separately autonomous.¹²

The development of *personal* identity passes over directly into the world of alienated *Bildung*; and when alienation is overcome, the Stoic autonomy of “character” will become a universal goal again in the Enlightenment. This is the social context in which we find the “spiritual animal kingdom” of the Real Individuals. But its destiny there is to be broken down by the “absolute culture” of *Rameau’s Nephew*. Hegel’s anticipatory reference to that work here is intended to close the circle of Culture as an infinite concept, by connecting the impact of naive Culture upon the system of “natural character” recognition in the Condition of Right, with the impact of “absolute culture” on the “spiritual animal kingdom” that Culture itself produces. Self-alienation as a substantial (or stable) cycle already shows the basic

pattern of “rational action” or of the *Sache selbst*. It is “what is there,” as well as the goal that is aimed at; and equally it is the means or mediation of the transition.

In his discussion of the Condition of Right Hegel remarked on the irrationality of the distribution of natural gifts to the rational personalities who enjoy formal freedom and equality in the Stoic view (par. 480). In the spiritual perspective of Culture, this irrationality and divine caprice is completely transcended, because the given nature of the individual counts for nothing. The individual achieves her true status as a spiritual essence by “putting off the old man” and “putting on the whole armour of righteousness.” It is by alienating oneself from nature, including one’s own nature, that one can establish one’s real status as a soul in God’s eternal world; this is what Hegel calls *die gedachte Substanz*, or the “thought[-constituted] substance” actually visible in our world. This alienation from nature is also the *salvation* of the soul into Heaven and out of Hell—the passage of “the *determinate individuality* into *essentiality*.” How far one succeeds in this labor of salvation is what determines one’s status in the other world. But given that one succeeds at all, the comparative measurement of one’s achievement is not important.

What Jesus represented in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (who all received the same payment of a penny no matter whether they worked the whole day or only for the last hour), is brilliantly portrayed in terms of the “*particularity* of nature and character” in Canto III of Dante’s *Paradise*. Dante (being the emulative character that he is) finds it difficult to credit that those who occupy the lowest ranks in Paradise do not envy those whose rank is higher. Piccarda explains that the love of God wipes out every possible discord with his will: “and in his will is our peace.” Then, in Canto IV, Beatrice explains that no one really is “higher” or “lower” in Paradise. Everyone really does receive the same penny, and the distinction of the spheres is valid only *quoad nos*.¹² This is what Hegel means by insisting that “the originally *determinate* nature is reduced to the *unessential* difference of quantity, to a greater or lesser energy of the will.” The equality of the blessed (when we give it an *actual* interpretation in this world) becomes the objectively implicit presence of Reason. Enlightenment only has to strip off the cloak of estrangement for everyone to see this.

In the development of Culture, the Concept does specify itself; some distinctions between “kinds” will become socially important. But as far as the Science of Experience is concerned, this importance is strictly transitory. Absolute Culture will possess an “insight” that sees *through* all social distinctions of worth. The Spiritual Animal Kingdom is only a phase in the evolution of Culture (though it is also a permanent feature of the rational society). Rational contempt turns the world of “spiritual kinds” into the world in which the word “*espèce*” expresses contempt. At that stage both the properly spiritual estate and the Nobility become completely confused with the educated bourgeoisie. The specification of *labor* into kinds (the guild system) remains functionally important; but it was without spiritual significance from the first, because it belongs strictly to “this world.” It is the survival (in sublated form) of the system of “character recognition” that came into existence in the Condition of Right. The truth of Culture is that we are equal in the sight of

God, just as the blessed are all equal in Paradise, even though they appear to Dante in an orderly array of higher and lower spheres. What Piccarda told Dante in Paradise, Rameau's Nephew will eventually reveal (contemptuously rather than humbly) to Diderot.

- 7./490. "Culture" is the simple "soul" of the substance. The movement of individual culture transforms the actual world. Thus the formation of the estranged consciousness results in the control of the world. We make over the world in our own way even while taking it for God's creation, and using his gifts in his service.

Faith sees the whole social order as established by God's Will: "The rich man in his castle,/ The poor man at his gate,/ God made them high or lowly/ And ordered their estate."¹⁴ But, in reality, the general effort of everyone to do God's will on earth is what produces the stable order of society. We can see here why Hegel insists on the immediacy of the transition involved in truly rational action. At the level of the World-Spirit, our own activity becomes quite invisible to us. We do God's will; and we say that He made it all just the way our efforts turn out. This is how we are estranged from our world; and since we do not want to go back to a world of warring legions or lawless barons, we can appreciate why children were (and are) taught to sing this hymn.

But even Mrs. Alexander—who wrote the hymn—knew that the world was full of active and ambitious people whose self-formation involves a conscious effort to "have power over" (*bemächtigen*) the status system. Here we have the free expression of "original character and talent" that we recognized as what was meant by *action* in the rational world of the Real Individuals (par. 404). In the present thought-context, this is the "actualization of substance." Every soul fulfils God's purpose by making itself over. Mrs. Alexander may want the children to sing about God making everything (including the social order) on Sundays; but she would fervently endorse the view that they must make themselves in conformity with God's order all the week.

Hegel's reference to *Rameau's Nephew* at the end of paragraph 489, as well as the clear echo of the concept of "rational action" here, impose this reading of the paragraph in terms of the "maturity" of Culture. But he is about to introduce a whole string of concepts (Good, Bad, State-Power, Wealth, Nobility) that apply to the earlier phases of this "world-shape."¹⁵ So we ought to consider how the doctrine of this paragraph applies to Culture in its beginnings. My example—which takes us into the cultural world after the Revolution—is helpful here. The barbarians breaking down the Empire, like the tyrant-emperors who maintained it, were simply expressing the actual, natural self, breaking through all formal legal and philosophical structures. But to the extent that they were later seriously affected by the educational work of the Church, they entered the new thought-world in which the *remaking* of the self was the primary concern. It is not important to us, or to Hegel, to decide who was a robber-baron, and who was a "Christian knight," in this transitional stage. At the level of empirical fact we are faced with a massive

amount of “hypocrisy” (both conscious and unconscious) at every stage of “Estranged Spirit.”¹⁶

When Hegel distinguishes the Unhappy Consciousness as a “subjective shape” that cannot achieve objectivity, he seems to direct us to the Crusades as the time when the grip of Faith upon society became truly “objective.” Having been educated as a Lutheran himself, Hegel was convinced of the importance of the Reformation; and the formation of the national state, with the movement from feudal monarchy to popular sovereignty, is the main focus of interest in the present section. But we do not need to accept any of his particular historical views. Obviously he had to do the Science of Experience in terms of the history he knew. To interpret it in terms of what *we* know is only to test it appropriately. So our proper concern is with the “Christian world-view” as an ideology evolving above the level of personal decisions and commitments. Thus, without worrying particularly about individual commitments in any period, we can take Mrs. Alexander’s famous hymn as the final (truly “contemptible”) decadence of what began with the *Song of Roland* (and with the Christian struggle against the Saracens that it celebrates).

(d) *The “Values” of Culture*

- 8./491. It is only a *sublated self* that is actualized. The estrangement of the self in this world brings Heaven and Hell to life; and that gives life in this world its meaning. But the distinctions will not stay fixed. The soul of this understandable fixity is dialectic; the [linguistic] *Dasein* of this Spirit is Good/Bad as an identity of opposites. We shall see how estrangement estranges itself and the whole returns into the concept of Culture.

The foundation (or starting-point) for Culture as the *Gestalt* of a stable world is provided by the Unhappy Consciousness. This is the singular self that knows itself as sublated. Its true self is “beyond.” It does not even know itself (except *per speculum et in aenigmate*, “by a mirror and in a riddle”); for in its own view it is not the unity of consciousness in *this* world, but a purely intellectual principle that subsists in God’s world. Life in this world is only the time of decision about its eternal fate. The crucial question is whether it will be saved in Heaven, or damned in Hell.

The “faithful” self does not know that the world that it is remaking is its own substance. Instead, the two sides of its doubled world operate like a magnet: “Through the self as the soul, substance is developed (*ausgebildet*) in its moments so that one opposite inspires (*begeistet*) the other, each gives the other stability (*Bestehen*) and receives it in like manner from the other.” These opposites are the Here and the Yonder; and Hegel uses the word *ausgebildet* to express the manifestation of God’s eternal Providence in time. God’s Heaven is set against “the world, the flesh and the devil.” Our world is only the mouth of Hell; “thought *fixes* the difference in the most general way” as the absolute opposition of Good and Bad, the sheep and the goats.

But Divine Providence is only the estranged absolute Self of the human self-consciousness that is passing from its natural existence to its self-possession as

Reason. From the standpoint of our rational observation this self is the “soul” (living or moving principle) that develops Substance into its moments; the world of Heaven and Hell only arises because estrangement is necessary for the transition to Reason as objectivity. Dante’s world-picture shows us the *fixation* of the movement of Reason in the form of an understandably stable eternal whole.

Heaven and Hell are the fixed forms that shun each other and cannot in any way become the same; but the “distinction” that is fixed as an *actuality* by this opposition is between this world of time, and the eternal world of Heaven and Hell. The temporal world is evil: “the world, the flesh and the Devil” must be renounced. But in temporal experience, the flight of good from bad cannot be maintained. The movement of Culture will show that devotion to God’s will is not in principle better (or even different) from devotion to the things of this world. Good and Bad are “pure thoughts”; Dante’s world-view is established in the realm where everything turns over dialectically into its direct opposite. This will still be true, even when the Enlightenment brings Heaven to Earth. The Spirit of the estranged world is the dialectic through which Faith gives birth to Pure Insight. The world of self-estranged values will finally collapse into that.

- 9./492. The alienated Substance of Culture has *four* masses (two Heavenly, two Earthly) corresponding to the two masses of Ethical Substance. It is like the stable Earth, and the moving cycle of Air, Water and Fire that is Earth’s *life*. First, the Air of Spirit is the *an sich* universal, self-identical, spiritual essence [of the Community as Church]; second, the Water of Spirit is the State as the divided structure of public service and cultural enjoyment [the Estates]; third, the Fire of Spirit, is the comprehension of the unity of Church and State. This Fire is both the dialectical Insight that brings the Revolution, and the speculative Reason that preserves the *Gestalt*.¹⁷

In his account of the Ethical Substance, Hegel used the word “mass” to refer to the matter in which the universal form individuates itself as a *thing*. In that context a *mass* was the population group that became a *polis* under the impact of Self-Consciousness (its founding King). It already had the Divine Law in its own shape; for otherwise its self-consciousness as a mass could not be generated. But with the founding of the City it becomes a *doubled* mass, because it now embodies not only the “law of Nature,” but a self-consciously made and willed Constitution.

In the world of Estranged Spirit, the social mass is a *national* community; and it has a fourfold structure. It is *double* both in “actuality” and in “thought.” Metaphorically, it is like the Earth-Process. Around the solid Earth, the three free elements create the infinite cycle of transformation upon which all natural life depends. In the analogy Earth stands for the community as a conscious (but not yet self-conscious) living organism. This is what we normally call “the national economy.”¹⁸ Every member of the community has to “make a living”; and the living of everyone is controlled by the “invisible hand” of which Adam Smith speaks. That is the alienated shape of the Divine Law in actuality.

On the side of thought, what corresponds to this alienated law of life, is the universal faith in salvation. Everyone belongs to Mother Church and to God’s

Kingdom in Heaven. This is the spiritual “air” that we breathe; and from the Church we receive what we regard as the *true* Divine Law.

The Human Law is doubled likewise. In actuality, we must all devote ourselves to the public service. Even the peasants do this, when common soldiers are needed; but there are three self-consciously active Estates whose vocation is to serve the community in different ways. The Clergy mediate the Divine Law of the Faith for us all; the Nobility (and their Peasants) fight our battles; and the Third Estate both creates the national wealth, and runs the civil service (including especially the education system). This is the “rain-cycle” of society; the articulated “watery” mass mirrors the elementary structure of the whole. The first dichotomy of Reason into spiritual “kinds” is the division between the nobles (and peasants) who sacrifice life, and the “third estate” who serve the public for their actual living. The Clergy represent the principle of Estrangement itself, by giving up the life of this world altogether.

Finally, in thought, there is the community of human Reason as a universal mass. Initially the Clergy do all of society’s “self-conscious” thinking; but the advance of enlightenment sets the peaceful atmosphere of Faith “on fire” almost literally. The whole realm of Faith, with its Divine Law, exists in the element of thought; so it is essentially and necessarily combustible by the fire of rational reflection. The world of Culture ends (like the Stoic World-Order) in the universal conflagration of Absolute Culture. When Enlightenment makes Insight universal we finally realize that the Kingdom of Heaven is only the thought-ideal that we have to realize on Earth.

Thus Earth and Water are the “elements” of the actual world (and of *natural* and *human* law); Air and Fire are the “elements” of the ideal world (and of the laws of Faith and Insight). Universal Insight is the Destiny in which the whole system is engulfed; so self-conscious Reason is now quite knowingly the *Macht* over all of these *members*. The Revolution of 1789 will engulf them all.

Only “the Earth” is not here treated by Hegel as a moment in the motion of Culture.¹⁹ The Earth is almost literally “the subject of these essences and of their process, their departure and their return.” I say “*almost* literally” because we must understand the Earth as the home of Spirit, and not simply as the stage of our mortal lives. We never go to “the other world” except as a way-station for our “return” to this one. That is what the Enlightenment reveals, and it is an “insight” that is not destined to pass away.

The only difficulty for this view is the description of the masses as *daseienden noch unbegeisteten Momente* (“extant, still unspirited moments”). The Economy, the Church and Civil Society have the right sort of simply factual existence; but the Enlightenment becomes truly a “universal fire-mass” only when the whole is engulfed by its revolutionary force. Hegel speaks of it first, however, not as “consuming,” but as sustaining spiritual life (*beseelende*). So we should think first of the conservative “fire of Faith” that unites private and public life in the universal community of the Church Militant. This is what is gradually transformed by the process of Culture into the consuming blaze of universal insight and Enlightenment. It is a “mass” inside the Earth (of our natural life).²⁰

The “inequality” of the watery element of public service is quite simply the social inequality of the “three estates of the Realm.” We shall follow the functional dissolution of the Nobility into the Bourgeoisie in Hegel’s conceptual analysis. But we have to remember that the Reformation began this process by dissolving the “spiritual estate” into the lay community; the “fire” of Faith had its “outbreaking and consuming aspect” long before the advent of Voltaire. Also the unifying function of *war* is carried over directly from the smaller community of True Spirit; and this reminds us that the “watery element” actually has *four* estates. It is the peasants who are the soldiers of this “self-sacrificing” mass; and they certainly showed a fiery cultural aspect during the Reformation.

Unlike the True Spirit, these “masses” do not have an *einheimische Geist*. The spirit of the Economy is the “invisible hand” of an alien “mechanical” power; that of the Church and of Public Life is the God of salvation; and although when universal Faith is transformed into universal Insight that Divine Spirit does come to Earth, it is not “at home” here. It proves to be as alien as the “invisible hand” or worse. Instead of the promised “Heaven on Earth” the Enlightenment creates only the living Hell of the Terror. But unlike the alien might of the historic destiny that overwhelms Zeus and his children, the Cities, the Enlightenment knows exactly what it is doing; Robespierre, who presides over the Terror, is a very typical representative voice of Pure Insight.

It is the Spirit of “Faith”—“the being *in* and *for itself* of the whole”²¹—that “splits apart” into the Church and Civil Society (the Air and Water Masses). The Revolution, when it comes, will be the “flame erupting from Substance and consuming it.” In the actual context of 1807 Napoleon was engaged in restoring its “abiding shape.”

- 10./493. Community and Family are represented in both ways: in thought, the first member is the Good—an unchangeable essence, and the might of God’s Will; the other is the Bad, the physical world that lets us take our singular life from it. This too is permanent. The first is the foundation and result of our universal Reason; the second is the instrument of our singular happiness.

Hegel has already said (in par. 491) that thinking *fixes* the distinction between the Substance as abiding and the Substance as self-sacrificing “through the absolute opposition of *Good* and *Bad*.” For the abstract characterization of the opposition as pure thought, Hegel returns here to the terminology of the Unhappy Consciousness. The Good is the “unchangeable essence of all consciousnesses”; and the Bad is the essence that allows itself to be enjoyed and consumed (the nature that is to be reduced to *nothing*, *das nichtige Wesen*). “This absolute becoming-dissolved of the essence [into Augustine’s two Cities] is itself abiding.” On the one hand there is God’s eternal world for which we are destined as baptized members of the Church: “the foundation, starting point and result of individuals, and they are purely universal in it.” On the other hand there is the actual world of our life on Earth. The “pure thoughts” correspond to the “physical mass” of life on Earth (the Bad) and the “spiritual mass” of the Church Militant (the Good). These are

the universalized shapes of Family and City. It is logically important that the “mass” which is thought of as the Bad is precisely the “result” that emerged from the experience of the Condition of Right. The Bad is the natural life that must somehow go on (to the despair of the Unhappy Consciousness); the living Earth gives itself in order to sustain the human form that the Son of God took upon himself for our salvation.²²

In the symbolism of the Eucharist the Bad becomes Good; but in principle it remains the Bad. The Good is the “thought” of the Church as the spiritual “body of Christ”; but we could never be members of that mystic Body if we did not continually return to ourselves as *singular* and abidingly “come to be *for ourselves*.” This imperative inverts the pictured interpretation of Christ’s coming. The Risen Christ is not a “Lord,” but an inner self incarnated in every one of us.

- 11./494. These thoughts are also real goals in this world. The Good is public service (State-Power) and the Bad is self-seeking (Wealth). State-Power is the substance, the universal *Werk*, the Thing Itself (or *res publica*). The Republic, however, is likewise the Common-*wealth*, it exists to maintain us in our selfishness. Our common *work* is the means of our private pursuit of happiness (a quite unspiritual pursuit). But this self-seeking produces common benefits, and universal goods; the privacy of wealth is ultimately illusory.

Hegel himself now proceeds to actualize the “pure thoughts” as *motives*; and this justifies my interpretation of them as Augustine’s Heavenly and Earthly Cities. The “pure thoughts” are *Vorstellungen*; and we must picture them in such a way that they can become the motives of our lives. No one wants to go to Hell, so that cannot serve as a motive. But to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Earthly City is a valid goal, even for the Heaven-seeker. Hegel’s “actual objectives” are the driving forces of the two “members” through which the four “essences” of Estranged Spirit correspond to the Community and the Family in True Spirit. The pure thinking that we are observing, is the logical exposition of the four “essences” presented to us as *Vorstellungen* of the Understanding (“extant, still unspirited moments”) in paragraph 492. The Good and the Bad of paragraph 493 are the Sunday-sermon idealizations of the Earth and Air masses, before their momentum against one another in the weekday world of the Water mass begins.

The “actualization” of the pure thoughts is their self-estrangement. When we reflect upon the practical character of the concepts Good and Bad, we can appreciate the necessity of this estrangement. These two “thoughts” are a *Sache selbst*; so they have to be a goal, a raw material, and a means, all at the same time. The Good is an ideal to be realized in the world; its actualization is a *motive*; and the motive of “public service” is the real “Power” of the State. When the State-Power actually exists it will absorb all the moments. The estrangement is plain enough. We have moved from the realm of thought to that of actuality: from the Church to political life in this world (the sphere of the Bad), from the abstract to the concrete.

In the case of the Bad, the movement of “immediate self-estrangement” is the other way: we go from actuality to thought, from our earthly life of consumption to

the economic market, from the concrete to abstraction. The Bad becomes Wealth, enjoyment becomes money; and Money is the generalized concept of the “Goods of this World.”²³

This is the emergence of the “watery mass” that is “internally unequal.” In its *good* aspect it is “the public service”; in its *bad* aspect it is the social world of ambition and self-interest. The logical dialectic of the simple ideals of Good and Bad (Heaven and This World) with the practical (this-worldly) motives of public service and private profit organizes the watery instability of our weekday lives into the “estates of the Realm”; but this stabilization into social types is eventually shown to be spurious, when the “fiery mass” emerges visibly in its consuming aspect.

At the beginning of the movement, it is the translation of “being good” into earthly terms that is most important. The modern State is the direct successor of the *polis*. Hegel drives this home by employing much of the same rhetoric. The Greek citizen knew that the *polis* was his *Werk*, better than we do. We have to comprehend that State-Power exists, because we voluntarily devote ourselves to public service. The State is, of course, an *authority*; we have encountered it in that shape as the Empire. But simple authority is necessarily *arbitrary*; it becomes *rational*, only because like the citizens of the Ethical Order, we consciously and devotedly create the *Macht* upon which the public authority depends. We *know* ourselves as English, French, Spanish (but not yet as Italians or Germans). “Popular sovereignty” is logically implicit in this knowledge of nationality, just as “democracy” was implicit in “citizenship.” But these two concepts are not identical, because the nation articulates free personal individuality through its more complex system of “masses” and “estates.” That will be the lesson of the French Revolution; and France is our model of the Nation because the dialectic of “Estrangement” moved more logically (or “purely”) and went further in that community.²⁴ In Germany and Italy the movement of the masses has been anomalous, so that they have not yet become Nations with a central *Macht* at all. In 1806 Spain and England were still mired in the dialectic of “Goodness,” “Nobility” and the “mixed identification” of the bourgeoisie.

In our bourgeois world, we are not *ethically* aware of how we constitute the *Staatsmacht*. Our *Werk* is invisible to us, and the State exists for us in an estranged form: it is a *utility*, or “being for others.” The world of utilities is where we acquire *wealth*. So we know the Substance under this self-dissolving aspect. The State-Power is the invisible “aether” (the fifth element in the classical theory of Nature) within which the whole movement of the spiritual elements (from the living Earth and back to it) is comprehended. The “heavenly fire” of which Faith and Enlightenment are just opposite faces, supplies the essentially socio-political direction and purpose for the world of *Bildung*.

“State-Power” is the common good of the community, and its increase is the object of desire for all who are “public-spirited” as we say. In this perspective we can see how it is the universal *Werk*, for even the most blindly selfish agents contribute to it as long as they are not wilfully criminal; and everyone who is devoted to the Thing Itself—the *res publica*, the public thing—is necessarily conscious of

the universal significance of what she does. The public good is the result of all efforts; but for the public-spirited consciousness it is also the “absolute foundation and standing (*Bestehen*) of all its action.” All of life is willing service, and hence “being for the other.”

But the worldly peace and prosperity that this ideal State-Power secures, is not just the “public thing,” but also the “Common-*wealth*.” There would be no virtue in devotion to the public Good, if it were not shared out and enjoyed by all individually. This is where actuality differs from pure thought, since in Paradise (and even in Dante’s Purgatory) there is no good whose enjoyment by one excludes its enjoyment by others. Life in our actual community is that enjoyment of “the things of this world” from which the Unhappy Consciousness could not escape. It cannot be spiritualized; and most of the work of the world is directly concerned with it. We collaborate; we work together, and we work for others as much as for ourselves; someone whose conscious motives are entirely selfish may do as much or more for the common welfare as someone who is public-spirited. Motivation is a matter of inner intention, and pure selfishness is as unachievable as pure altruism (in which there would be no element of primitive self-will). The impossibility of pure altruism was shown in the Unhappy Consciousness. Here Hegel concentrates on the impossibility of pure selfishness. What is always actual is the immediate identity of the opposites.

(e) *Self-Conscious Judgment*

- 12./495. Thus “public service” shows us what we implicitly are; and the “pursuit of happiness” is what we explicitly are. Because the world is out there (opposed to my negative unity) the pursuits are *alternatives* for my choice. But in this choice I return to the perspective of pure thought; so it is apparent that they are not simple alternatives. I can choose either, both, or neither, with good intent. The other (or both) will then have its value determined by my judgment.

Because of this essential identity of the public and the private interest, the problem of choosing a path in actual life becomes complicated. Public service is the *Ansichsein* of self-consciousness, the implicit essence that is the goal of its universalization as Reason; and Wealth is the rational goal of natural selfhood, the guarantee of its independence, or *Fürsichsein*. Spirit is the necessary unity of both aspects—the movement from *Ansichsein* to *Fürsichsein* and back again to their final harmony. Subjective spirit (the singular rational consciousness) is the “negative unity” of the two, i.e. it is the conscious awareness of their opposition; the subjective spirit knows itself to be separate both from the community (the Universal) as a self-determining individual, and from the objective actual world as a subject or self. The principle of Pure Insight makes its appearance here, precisely because of the alienated status of the State-Power and Wealth as actual objects for consciousness.

Rational Insight can evaluate the objects available for its choice in opposite ways. A decision between State-Power and Wealth is not necessarily a choice between

God and Mammon (as we might be told on Sunday); for we can all be Good Samaritans with the wealth that we have. The choice may even be for “neither.” We shall see an example of this stance later on in the nephew of Rameau. His position is “A plague on both your houses! They are essentially the same anyway.” Like Diogenes in his tub, the young Rameau prefers to stand by his insight. But the more obvious way of “choosing neither” before that insight has developed, is to take vows of poverty and chastity and withdraw from the world of actuality altogether into the cloistered life of religion. This choice takes account of the fact that “the life of this world” is always Bad; and in that way the “First Estate” is constituted beside the Second (the Nobility) and the Third (the Bourgeoisie).

In the subjective choice, it is only the thoughts of Good and Bad that are essential. As personal judges we have the “essence as *essence*” in ourselves; we define the world to be judged, the question to be decided. Am I to give myself to God, or to take all the gifts of Nature that I have or can acquire, and live as happily as I can for myself? Dante’s awakening in the “dark wood” is this sort of choice. He gives himself to God, but this does not involve his withdrawal from the world. Thus he offers us a model of the complex problem that “judgment” becomes in the actual world. The *simple* choice between the monastery and the world is the choice between *Ansichsein* (union with God) and *Fürsichsein* (expressing oneself). We have already seen (in the Unhappy Consciousness) why this is not a “*spiritual* judgment.” It involves the attempt to divide the Absolute Spirit from the finite spirit; and the result of that attempt is the insight that the abolition of finite spirit is the wiping out of Spirit altogether. Even the life of the cloister is a compromise.

The same applies to the choice of a career “in the world.” Dante’s choice was certainly in harmony with the “immediate determinations of the two sides of the actual essence.” But that did not make it the only possible “*spiritual* judgment.” Every choice, even the choice of the monastery, involves the reconciliation and identification of *Ansich* and *Fürsich*, the mutual recognition of God and man. Hence the concrete choices of individuals in the world cannot be simplified into the decision between Church, public service, and private life. Good and Bad become *relativized* in experience. God does not call everyone to leave the world; and if one is *in* the world, one may find that one’s estimate of the State-Power is different from that of those who exercise it, just as one’s estimate of “worldly happiness” will certainly differ from that of the monk. Good lives can be founded either on harmonized or on opposite evaluations of public and private life.

We have now reached the level of individual judgment proper. We began with the immediate (universal) thoughts of Good and Bad (no choice). Then we had the *particular* choice of being good either in public or in private life. But in using our *personal* judgment we have four choices. We must now examine them.

- 13./496. The Good is that in which I recognize myself; and the Bad is what is opposed to my selfhood. Goodness is harmony; evil is dissonance. Thus it is judgment which, in this second stage, creates Good and Bad. The judging spirit gives values their essence. But in the third phase the objects will declare themselves according to their own spirit.

In so far as it is an act of arbitrary free will, this *personal* judgment in which the individual “has the essence as *essence* in itself,” is only a *Meinung*. The belief that we are “Real Individuals,” is not borne out by experience. But the insight that we have a choice is a true one; and it is at this point that “good” and “bad” become thoughts in the ordinary sense. Originally *the Good* was “the *self-equivalent*, immediate and unchangeable essence of all consciousness.” This was a pure thought of the Platonic type.²⁵ What we have reached now is the ordinary thought of what is “good *for me*” or “from my point of view.” The Platonic standard has to be applied to my relation to the world. This gives us the logical formula that “the *good* is the *equivalence* of objective reality with consciousness, while the *bad* is their *non-equivalence*”; or, using Kantian terminology, the good is my “happiness,” the harmony of my social duty with my nature, and with nature as a whole.

There are four possible judgments about the two *particular* shapes of actuality. What I ought to do or to be can be harmonious with the pursuit and possession of *both* State-Power and Wealth (and then I judge *both* to be *good*); or it can be harmonious with one, and out of harmony with the other (and then two oppositely complementary, but *mixed* judgments follow); or finally it can be out of harmony with both (and then I judge them to be both *bad*).²⁶ I can make this last judgment and still be “happy” in a rational sense, because I am “the spirit, the negative unity of their standing, and the separating of individuality from the universal, or of actuality from self” (par. 495). But since this “separating of individuality from the universal” is only a *Meinung*, the “happiness” of this last choice will be radically unstable.

Paragraph 496 gives notice that the evolution of the four relational judgments will bring us to a third phase in which Good and Bad will be informed by their own Spirit. At present, we can only discern how this stage begins. The transformation of the Platonic Ideas of Good and Bad (involved in the total pattern of the four logical applications) brings to birth in each side a “spirit of its own”; and what they will then be “in and for themselves” will be different both from what they are “in themselves” (the simple ideals of Paradise and This World—the Air-Mass) and from what they are “in themselves for us” (the actual social world structured by the four judgments—the Water-Mass).²⁷ With the self-conscious arrival of the comprehensively *negative* judgment, the Fire-Mass will become visible in its dialectical, all-engulfing shape.

- 14./497. The consciousness that is in and for itself must necessarily reverse the simple judgment of the alternative values: state-power gives law and protection, which is good; but as sovereign, it is authoritative, and hence oppressive. Wealth, on the other hand, is general prosperity and happiness (even if somewhat arbitrary in its distribution).

In my commentary on paragraph 496 I set out the possible judgments of the insightful individual in an abstractly logical way. First, the harmony of both actual “powers” with the self, then the two mixed judgments, and finally the rejection of both. But Hegel takes them in an objectively logical order of appearance. The way that we constitute the State-Power is invisible to us; but our participation in the

working enjoyment of this world is necessarily visible. So although we recognize that the State-Power is necessary, it appears to us as alien to our own life activities. We know that the State-Power is our rational essence; we are estranged from our legal Stoicism, but it is still there. Our Real Individuality is a reflection into “the consciousness that is *in* and *for itself*.” We see State-Power as a general utility; but it is authoritative (and frequently irrational). It ought to be minimized (and centralized as little as possible). “That government is best that governs least” because at its best it is only a necessary evil.

This is the attitude of the commercial bourgeoisie who get rich by private initiative. For them, Wealth is “the good”; and the economic philosophy of the *Wealth of Nations* is their “insight.” State-Power is Bad; private happiness is Good. We cannot all be rich, and some of us live in need; but as long as riches are not achieved by conspiracies for the restraint of trade, the accumulation of wealth will always operate to make everyone happier. This “mixed judgment” is the essential bourgeois faith; so it is the proper foundation for the fourfold organization of the modern “civil society” that replaces ancient citizenship.

- 15./498. But it remains true that according to the intrinsic essence of consciousness, the public good is what is good. There ought to be law and government; and the pursuit of happiness is essentially transitory. So Republic is Good, Wealth, Bad.

Even the satisfied and prosperous merchant knows that the public service is necessary. His own “mixed judgment” requires the opposite one in order that the society of wealth-seekers may be stable. The honest merchant who has read Adam Smith, needs honest public servants. He (or she, for there have always been prosperous business enterprises run by women, and “equality of opportunity” is the rational imperative that ultimately revolutionizes the system of estates) needs public servants who share the insight that the best government is the one that governs least. But the “honesty” of a public servant consists precisely in knowing categorically that (in spite of appearances) the Public Service is the Good and private profit is Bad. (We had to recognize in Antigone’s case that one can “know” things in different ways. Here again the second member of the progression is second because she must have the sublated knowledge of the first stage.²⁸ But she knows that she is committed to the more fundamental social task of maintaining the system in which “liberal individualism” can flourish. The two “mixed judgments” form a social balance; and for both of them “bad” has a sublated or relative sense; government is seen to be “necessary” in the first case; and wealth to be “desirable” in the second. Thus paragraph 497 begins by conceding that the free individual consciousness “does find in the State-Power its *simple essence* and basic *standing*”—i.e. the *laissez-faire* liberal is essentially “law-abiding.” And paragraph 497 argues that the *laissez-faire* judgment is incomplete. Neither of the mixed judgments seriously maintains that one of the opposites is “bad.” In their mutual complementarity “badness” disappears altogether. Phenomenologically, the *result* must be a judgment that puts the two sides together and recognizes this.

- 16./499. We must now appraise this divergent judging. Where it finds harmony of self and estranged substance it is “good,” where it finds dissonance it is “bad,” since both the for-itself and the in-itself are essential moments. Both of the one-sided judgments are “abstract.” Only consistently divergent judgments are real shapes of consciousness.

Hegel says that “we must now *beurtheilen* this divergent *Urtheilen*.” This is not a dialectical trick, for it is quite true that the outside observer can see more of the game here; and our judgment is empirically well-founded. The logical reason for it can easily be seen as a result of our experience. The two mixed judgments are “abstract,” because with respect to the bad they are not seriously meant.²⁹ That is why they are “bad” themselves on that side. As soon as a dishonest trader arrives in the free market, the honest trader will appeal to the government; and as soon as everyone is agreeing that some regulation is “oppressive,” the rational administrator will change it. Thus the observed consciousness itself can easily learn (if it needs to) that “both *being-for-itself* and pure *being-in-itself* are equally essential moments.”³⁰

We must judge the mixed judgments at this point, and recognize that both of them are “abstract,” because only we can take the next step in the phenomenological movement. The market members and its administrators can each recognize the “abstractness” of their judgments; but that only serves the valuable purpose of stabilizing their lives. They may then produce someone like Sir Richard Whittington, a successful merchant who becomes a magistrate.³¹ This only short-circuits the dialectical movement that we are interested in. Sir Richard Whittington is a “noble” of sorts, but not a proper noble. Again, if their well-administered market is threatened by a foreign enemy, the merchants will tax themselves to pay for soldiers. But a *condottiero* like Sir John Hawkwood is not a proper noble either (though he was one when he fought for his king at Crécy); and Italy did not become a Nation, but only a battleground for the aristocratically governed communities that achieved Nation-status.

It is *our* insight that sets aside cases like these; and our insight shows *us* that the crucial positive judgment is the “noble” insight that sees Wealth as the “good instrument” of State-Power which is the Good-in-itself. Sir Richard Whittington’s judgment is “abstract” because it is *upside down*; and the same applies to that of the Republic of Florence (which hired Sir John Hawkwood, and put his statue in Santa Croce).

Hegel also mentions here the completely negative—or “contemptuous” judgment that both State-Power and Wealth are bad. These two consistent judgments both produce genuinely individual shapes of consciousness. But we shall find that the cultural journey from one to the other is quite lengthy. With the logical emergence of the Nobility we go backwards in time from Hawkwood and Whittington. The “contemptuous consciousness,” on the other hand, historically presupposes the full development of the bourgeois world.

- 17./500. The genuinely alternative modes of judgment either approve both—the “noble-minded” attitude that sees public service as its essence, and wealth as the essential condition of its existence;

- 18./501. Or disapproves both—the “contemptuous” attitude that sees the ruling power as oppressing its independence, and is inwardly rebellious; and wealth as a selfish, transitory good which it loves but despises.

With the opposition of the “noble-minded”³² and the “contemptuous” consciousness we have reached the Concept of Culture as a Disjunctive Judgment. The bourgeois world of the Water-Mass is substantially (and stably) constituted by the abstract (and necessarily complementary) “mixed judgments” of the private citizens and the civil servants. Historically it emerges out of the feudal world in which Lordship and Service is displayed in a whole range of forms; and when it successfully dissolves that Feudal World into itself (through the activity of the opposed “contemptuous consciousness”), the Fire-Mass becomes visible and the Revolution ensues.

As we have seen, the comprehension of “noble-mindedness” is *our* achievement. Even in the case of True Spirit we had to study the world in its “maturity” to find the key to its beginnings. When we come to the world of “pure thought,” and the dyad of “Faith and Insight” we shall find that we are doing this again; and the reason is the same in both cases. The Ethical Order achieves aesthetic intuition only at its perfect fruition; the Estranged World begins with Faith and develops Insight only gradually. But we ourselves are using insight, in order to gain more insight. We began by comprehending Faith in terms of the insight that we already have; that taught us that (regardless of what Faith thinks and says) it is the *actual* world that is important. We used the pure insight of our actual world to reach the point now where Faith itself has become *actual*.

The merchants and civil servants have faith in the “other world”; but the noble-minded consciousness must have faith in what it does here. For the “noble mind” (like True Spirit) must put life on the line for its “categorical knowledge.” This is the mind that commits itself to public service as its “simple essence” and has “inner respect” for it, not just “actual obedience.” Since the law-abiding disposition of the bourgeois (merchant and civil servant) is “actual obedience,” this “inner respect” means something more. It is just the commitment of the noble heart (*Mut*) “to the death.”

Wealth is necessary for nobility too; it is the essential *instrument* of the noble life. It cannot be an end-in-itself; so it cannot be a goal, and it must be received (in some permanent form) as a *gift*. The noble mind is *grateful* for this gift.

This is an interpretation of the personal fealty relation. A noble swore fealty to the Lord who granted him the landed estate that made his noble existence possible; but *he* remained the judge of what duty he owed. “Contempt” for the actual powers that be, is always a possibility for this wholehearted commitment. Hegel has certainly framed his description of the “contemptuous consciousness” with the “haughty vassal” in mind (cf. pars. 505–506).

Except as the inner antithesis of Noble-mindedness—the appeal to the “judgment of God” that is made possible by the fact that the Noble’s commitment is an act of personal judgment which is *simply* categorical—the Contemptuous

Consciousness is not so easy to identify in the actual cultural world; or at least, it is not easy to show that we have identified it correctly. But the first step is to realize that it should not be translated as “base” (Baillie’s word) or “ignoble” (Miller’s).³³

When we follow the logical evolution of “noble-mindedness” we shall see why (when the Nobility become the courtiers of the “absolute” Monarch) they are bound to become arrogantly “contemptuous” of everyone else. But they themselves are clients who receive their comfortable living for nothing except the production of courtly flattery; so their arrogance towards others is only the mask of self-contempt.

But not everything Hegel says about the Contemptuous Consciousness is literally true about the typical courtier. It is clear that some of the time, Hegel is thinking about the consciousness of Absolute Culture. That is the “comprehensive inversion”—i.e., the contemptuous consciousness into which the independence of nobility has returned: Rameau’s Nephew. Only of Young Rameau’s contempt can we say that “it clings to its disparity with the two essentialities.”³⁴ The Courtier has nothing against wealth; and in the “first inversion” the State-Power becomes simply the means for that.

Only the consciousness that still contains “noble-mindedness” in a sublated way can be “contemptuous” in the comprehensive sense that Hegel gives to the word here. So only Rameau’s Nephew satisfies the concept properly. He is no willing laborer, but an unwilling, self-despising, client of those who have freed themselves from labor: not an ant, but a grasshopper. Also, he is self-consciously responsible for his own insight; but he is not a simple Cynic—he is not just Contemptuous Consciousness as a *formal* disjunctive alternative to Noble-mindedness. He is the consciousness of Absolute Culture, because he has comprehended and sublated “noble-mindedness.”³⁵

When we compare Young Rameau with the ancient Cynic the secret of the Contemptuous Consciousness is revealed. No one could take Diogenes as the *Gestalt* of his world. He was at one extreme of the range of individual character that is possible in the “fallen” world of natural (i.e., pre-spiritual) philosophy. But we are required to take Rameau as the *Gestalt* of his *world* as a whole. How can he be that? To outward appearance he is simply an entertainer. He is a musician but a failure (that is the point of his being named through a relationship); he “sings for his supper” through his wit. Everyone takes him for a buffoon; he expresses his whole world by being its jester. He is the court fool of the world of Wealth; and his true ancestors are the Fools of Shakespeare’s noble-minded courts.³⁶ As a jester he is licensed to express a universal insight into what everyone feels, but will not allow themselves to admit; Diderot shows this by placing him in the company of an enlightened philosopher. The secrecy and hiddenness of the contemptuous consciousness as a *universal Gestalt*, is a matter of the Estranged World being a system of social self-deceit. All of the critical Enlighteners draw our attention to that; Reason’s contempt hides behind the equilibrium of the two *mixed* modes of judgment, and emerges only as a *joke*. All of the critical Enlightenment is the Contemptuous Consciousness; and those who do not deserve to be called “critical” (for instance,

Robinet or Frederick the Great) are part of its comedian's mask. They constitute its sycophantic accommodation.

Once we have recognized the whole world of the Enlightenment as the Contemptuous Consciousness, we can see why the Young Rameau is its complete shape. "Self-contempt" does not, at first, appear to be a logically necessary moment of the unmixed judgment that State-Power and Wealth are both Bad. This judgment is a very fair characterization of the insight that only universal cultural enlightenment is really Good. The quest for political power and for wealth are *both* mistaken when they are regarded as ends-in-themselves; and we might think that the consciousness that can see that has every right to be satisfied with itself. But if we compare Voltaire with the "proud vassal" we can see why this is a mistake. The "proud vassal" is a Noble whose naturally positive judgment of the two goals coincides with a genuinely negative judgment of both of them. When his own autonomous selfhood is at stake, he truly cares nothing for either of them. Enlightened (or "rational") contempt, on the other hand, is only "abstract." It may set itself above ambition or greed; but it continues to be dependent upon them both. So if it affects to despise them, it must logically despise itself also. It is the *radically* estranged intellect. It takes the lordly view that every thing is a "utility" for the common good. But it is hypocritical because there is no genuinely universal good within the utilitarian perspective. The Lordship of Universal Reason is the bondage of its preservation as Singular Life.

This contradiction explains why the world-view of "Absolute Culture" can only express itself as a *joking* consciousness. This is a world in which the governing class is at first a small group of landowners; but gradually this aristocracy melds with, and eventually it is absorbed into, a more general kind of plutocracy. It still remains essentially oligarchic; the great majority is excluded from it. And the whole system rests on (or in) an otherworldly ideology; everyone is incessantly pounded with the message that the "things of this world" (which the plutocrats have) are worthless.

The rational self-consciousness that comes to birth in this world must do rational justice to this ideology. The things of the spirit (for which the music of Rameau the elder is an inarticulate symbol set against the Eucharist bell of Unhappy Consciousness) *are* higher goods than physical welfare (or than the government which fitfully and inequitably secures it). Young Rameau stands logically at the end of the cultural process—to use his own metaphor, his words are the nudge that makes the old idol topple over. But the "secret" he reveals is that in the world of actuality there is no escape from contradiction. We can pass over to "pure thought"; but when we overcome the estrangement of that sphere from the actual world, we shall find that we have only made the logical estrangement of universal thought from singular existence completely explicit. The truth of Spirit remains inarticulate.

One thing that Hegel is *not* doing is the psychoanalysis of society. It does not belong to the phenomenology of spirit to talk about what is *really* hidden from view. The perfect shape of the Contemptuous Consciousness, is found in a literary work that does not enjoy the canonical recognized status of the *Antigone*. But we can grasp its significance (and justify it logically) through our judgment of the judgments.

Here, if anywhere, is a case of the imposition of concepts upon reality—for the imposition of concepts is logically what *must* happen in the Estranged World. Most of those who charge Hegel with a *priorism*, or with forcing the facts into the strait-jacket of his theories, are logically bound to read him the way they do, because they are themselves children of the Enlightenment, and they cannot conceive any relation between concept and fact except that of estranged “application”. In the case of the dialectical movement of their own conceptual world there is logically no answer to them; they must be allowed to laugh at Hegel if they want to, just as Hegel’s world laughed at the Young Rameau. One who is convinced that the concept of the Contemptuous Consciousness is elicited from the interaction and sequence of the explicit self-conceptualizations of those undeniable cultural facts which we call the Universal Church, the Feudal System, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Ancien Régime, and the Revolution, can only do as the Young Rameau does: have the last laugh by cocking a snook at the naive “honorableness” of these enlightened defenders of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. So if I end by striking the solemn attitude of Diderot’s Philosopher, and declaring that Hegel’s interpretation of *Rameau’s Nephew* is one of the greatest strokes of the only philosophical genius who ever came near to rivalling Plato, I trust the reader will know how to take that pronouncement.

- 19./502. The alternatives form the disjunctive judgment about what State-Power and Wealth are for consciousness, not what they are in and for themselves. For us the two are both posited and superseded. For them this has yet to happen. Just as the alienated thought and actuality of the two essences generated the two judgments, so as *Gestalten* they must come together as a syllogism (in which self-consciousness is the missing middle term).

Everything that has happened so far in this subsection (a) has happened for us, but not for the world we are observing. The section is called “Culture and its Realm of Actuality”; but we have so far only reviewed it in our thought. In fact, all we have done is to state the Concept of it (as a “Judgment,” which the whole world of Estrangement properly is). This is different from the “thought” of the Estranged World itself, because our thinking is the speculative insight and comprehension that has been formed by the whole process of Culture.

For the cultural world itself, its “judgment” is only fully conscious at the end of its historical development. The world of “Culture” is a bourgeois world, in the sense that it is run by the bourgeoisie; but its political unity was made by the Nobility, who survive in it as “clients”; and they are faced in the end by a bourgeois who has taken up the same “client” relation to the private bourgeoisie. So our observation of the *experience* of this world records the judgment of history upon the Noble attitude and values. The bourgeoisie (who have taken over the State-Power that the nobility bequeathed to them and have given to it an “upside down” but stable interpretation by making it the instrument of Wealth and the pursuit of finite happiness) are not structurally involved in this judgment at all. We shall see how their values come into play in the syllogism of Faith and Enlightenment, which is

the movement in which the Fire-Mass consumes this self-estranged World. What actually perishes in the fire is the nobility; what is before us already is the logical reason why the bourgeoisie will *not* perish, and the logical Concept of the Noble Consciousness. We are now about to observe how that concept inverts itself in experience.

The judgment expresses what the two essences (State-Power and Wealth, or “the common good” and “the pursuit of happiness,” to give them their familiar commonsensical names in the bourgeois world) are “for consciousness.” In order for the bourgeois world to come into existence, there must first be a Noble Consciousness that devotes itself to the “common good” and actualizes it as State-Power, while enjoying Wealth (which it receives as a given “estate”) as the means for securing its own actual freedom. Here in paragraph 502, just before the “experience” actually begins, we learn a bit more about the contradiction in noble-mindedness.

State-Power (or the existence of a centralized administration) and Wealth (or the enjoyment of private happiness) are simply essences to begin with—i.e., goals that personal judgment can set for itself. They are not actualized in any conscious institution; they do not have any enlivening consciousness. But we can see already that if a true noble has to receive his wealth, then there must be another consciousness that gives it to him; and it must not come to him as his pay or he will not be a noble at all, but a bourgeois public servant whose relation to the essence is compromised and “abstract.”

This other consciousness—the noble’s “benefactor”—is the middle term of the syllogistic movement through which the opposition between noble-mindedness and contempt emerges. The noble achieves his goal; he establishes the State-Power. But the conscious spirit that he gives to the essence is then revealed to be identical with the spirit of Wealth. This is a continuation of the movement by which the “pure thoughts” of Good and Bad were transformed into instruments for the personal judgment of individual Reason. What emerges from the syllogistic movement will be the recognition of the social whole as a divided image of the freedom of personal judgment. The two “sides”—the posture in which the noble mind begins, and that in which it ends—become what they implicitly are: moments of one self-consciousness that knows itself, and its world (experientially) in the way in which we know it (logically) already.

This unified consciousness in which the two sides coincide as an “infinite” (or contradictory) judgment is Young Rameau. Rameau is the self of Absolute Culture, the self-consciousness of the whole motion. The Contemptuous Consciousness as a sundered moment of the judgment, a separate self-consciousness unto itself, opposed to Noble-mindedness is the “noble courtier” who takes the place of the warrior noble whose function is fulfilled once the absolute Monarchy has been established. The judgment “falls apart into two consciousnesses” because noble-mindedness transposes its attention from one “predicate” (Power) to the other (Wealth). The King is the “spirit” of both.³⁷ The way that the noble courtier relates to the Monarch, is the way that Young Rameau relates to the world as a whole; but

Rameau is the self-conscious Concept of what is only *vorgestellt* in the triad of Noble—Monarch—Courtier.

Since Hegel himself refers to the whole logical movement through which the world of the free rational choices of personal goals develops, it is worth pointing out that Young Rameau's choice is a "return" to what is categorically imposed by the "determinate thoughts of Good and Bad." As an option for personal choice, the Church and the cloister still exist; and as a personal goal of life this choice expresses "contempt" for both State-Power and Wealth. But it does not express the rational egoism that emerges when the Noble becomes a courtier.

(f) *The Syllogism of Cultural Values i: Mute Service*

- 20./503. The noble consciousness initially confronts State-Power as a substance that is not self-conscious. But it is aware of it as its own essence and end. So it lets its own particular concerns vanish, and devotes itself to the service of the public good. It is the *Knight*.

We are now embarking on an account of how the Ancien Régime emerged historically.³⁸ But Hegel's first sentence does not look very historical. The Noble Consciousness that confronted State-Power was always actually faced by some "self." In Hegel's analysis this self is not the State-Power, but only the agent of it, who administers Wealth. The noble is "gratefully obliged" to this "benefactor." He swears fealty in return for the gift of his land; but it is God whom he properly serves. God is the Monarch over himself, and his feudal Lord equally. We can see the ideal of "noble service" best in the great religious orders of knighthood: the Templars and the Hospitallers. The Crusades are the right cultural context in which to begin the concrete exposition of Hegel's argument, because there the whole community of Western Christendom (i.e. the Estranged World of Culture) was united in forming a State-Power that had no self. Setting aside the younger sons who aimed at fiefdoms in the land "beyond the sea" (*Outremer* as they called it), the Crusaders who were on a pilgrimage, and expected to come home to the lands they had left behind, *did* (for the time being at least) "behave negatively towards their own ends . . . and let them disappear."

This attitude was part of the general ideology of *knighthood*. The knight was devoted to the service of God, and under God, to the service of the Lord to whom he personally swore fealty. By joining one of the great Crusading orders, one could avoid fealty to a human Lord; but outside of the orders, one could hardly be effective as a disinterested champion of the Good, whose own concerns were forgotten, unless one gave one's allegiance to a Lord who took care of those personal concerns. The "heroism of service" requires someone who is served; but that someone is not the State-Power. The "State-Power" means the constituted and effective sovereign power of a Nation.

- 21./504. Thus the universal good becomes interlocked with existence generally, and the (knightly) consciousness forms itself into an essential function. Because it makes the

purpose [the “in-itself”] of life visible it gains respect; and the thought of “common good” becomes an existing power. It is a *true* existence [cf. 444] and the true is made valid.

In paragraph 504 and paragraph 505 the transitional character of feudalism is explained. The noble consciousness faces a State-Power that is not just an *essence*, but a *substance*—i.e., there is a customary way in which everything is done. But the custom is estranged because it is not “our way” (as in the Ethical Substance); it is God’s way. Knight-service makes one the agent of this Heavenly sovereign. This has the double result of “linking the Universal with what-is-there generally” because someone is upholding the custom; and of “estranging the servant’s (pure) consciousness from his natural consciousness.” The knight is socially respected because he is seen not to be pursuing his own happiness. This is an estranged form of happiness itself since the natural life from which he is alienated in his “heroism of service” is “the *Ansich*.” The in-itself here refers to the Earth-Mass—i.e. to “earthly life” as the *Ansich* of all actuality. This *Ansich* is the Substance from which “State-Power” and “Wealth” are abstracted by thought as “sides.” Of those sides, it is the State-Power that is now the *Ansich*; and the noble consciousness moves towards that, not away from it. Its service constitutes the State-Power as a “Universal in being” instead of a “Universal in thought.”

The *service* relation (*Dienst*) indicates that unlike the heroism of the *Ethical Substance*, the heroism of service is devoted to a Universal that is always an *alien* object (whether as a thought or as a being). It is not the Substance of the consciousness that serves it; it is the “will of God,” translated from Heaven to Earth. So we have a situation that looks exactly like the one involved in the serf’s service. There is a doubled actuality. There is knight-service as the self-realization of the knight; and there is the State-Power as divinely ordained. The knight’s service is done according to his own judgment; it has “*true* actuality.” The State-Power is ordained by God: it is the true or valid standard.

But the situation of the one who is ordained to exercise the State-Power—any one, for just who it is can become a matter of personal judgment—is ambiguous in the extreme. On the one hand, he is God’s vice-gerent; but on the other hand, he is just another knight, another heroic servant. The State-Power confronts all true nobles. It is a present power, without question; but it is not a self. So it is always a matter of judgment to decide who can exercise it, and how it should be exercised. The substantial customs are there: and one of them, for instance, says that “the King (being God’s ordained vice-gerent) can do no wrong.” But the King may be very ill advised; and then he needs to be rescued from his evil counsellors—and they need to be punished for treason.

- 22./505. This service of self-estrangement does not make the State-Power self-conscious. There is law, but no executive; no person has alienated his *personality* [*Ansichsein*] for that. Personality, on the contrary, is just what has gained respect (*honor* for honoring the law). He is a haughty vassal of the State who can give counsel.

Since Hegel uses the word “vassal” for the relationship of “service,” it is clear that he understands that feudal service rests upon the oath of fealty. But he now makes clear that personal fealty is a very slippery relationship. Feudal monarchy is not yet *sovereignty*. The law of the land (which is partly custom, and partly made by the King in Council) is acknowledged to be authoritative, but not the King’s interpretation of it. Every one of the King’s “vassals” retains the right to decide what his oath means. This is the meaning of “peerage,” the equality of *Ansichsein*, i.e. of law-recognition. The *Sein* or *Dasein* that is put at the King’s disposal, is the legally stipulated and custom-bounded feudal service. The vassal must appear (with his definite or indefinite following) and follow the King to war. But the King has no certainly acknowledged right to interfere with the Baron’s court of justice, or with his administration of his estates. The Baron’s personal judgment is a “being-in-itself” that he has not “offered up”; and there is as yet no recognized distinction between political authority and property rights.

The baron’s *lordship* is unitary; his identification with State-Power and with Wealth are not separate. As the King’s “peer,” each baron is just as much the executive *will* of the State-Power as the King is. If their wills clash, “common opinion” (*der allgemeine Meinung*) will be what prevails—unless one of them (and in particular the King) can make his will prevail by force. Thus the “haughty vassal” is not just Noble-mindedness but Contemptuousness (as the antithesis contained in the resting Concept) because whenever his honor is offended, the baron can show that he despises both worldly authority and worldly wealth, by fighting to the death for honor’s sake. His own authority over his people and things—the immediate identity of political and economic control, governed only by *his* interpretation of customary justice—is for him the principle of an “honor” that is essentially “contemptuous” of everything, and everybody, else.

But if someone outside the jurisdiction of his court “touches” the baron’s honor in a way that offends him, the battlefield is not the only or the immediate recourse. The universal law of the land, to which he has sworn fealty in the person of the King, is guarded as a matter of honor by all the peers who have sworn the same oath. So either the King or the offended baron can appeal to the whole parliament of “peers” to recognize his right, and to aid him in obtaining proper redress for his honor. The Baron can appeal to his peers even if the offender is the King (although, of course, he will make his appeal by proxy, if he is afraid that the majority will support the King and that his person would then be subject to seizure).

The baron’s “honor” depends upon this general recognition of his peers; it is what *they* generally regard as essential, that makes him honorable, not the fulfilment of the oath that he swore when he was given his lands. That “gift” is what he is “grateful” for; but the bond of gratitude does not create any categorical obligation of submission. Hegel does not say anything yet, about the ultimate vindication of honor by the sword; but what he says about the baron’s “speech” is unintelligible unless we take the next paragraph into account.

“His speech . . . would be *counsel*.” Outwardly the contrary to fact conditional is very peculiar, because the feudal monarch did have a Council, and the barons gave

their “counsel” in it. But Hegel is claiming here that their speeches in the Council were not what they pretended to be, because the monarch was not yet recognized as the “own will of the State-Power.” When the monarch is absolute his Nobles can give him “counsel”; but at the moment they cannot properly be said to do that. Later on (par. 511) Hegel will contrast the “heroism of mute service” with the “heroism of flattery.” There again he is intimating that an “honorable servant” cannot speak. “The noble consciousness defined itself as one who could approach the universal power in an *equal* way” (par. 513). So the speech of “noble service” is only a pretence until we see how it relates to the Noble’s *mute* behavior with his sword.

The Noble speaks to God’s anointed representative; so he uses the rhetoric that his courtier-successor will use. But he is the King’s Peer. Whenever the King chooses to disregard what the Noble pretends to offer as his “counsel” it becomes an open question whether he will draw his sword in service or in rebellion (or more prudently *not* draw it at all). In our own logical perspective, the true noble “speaks” only with his sword.

This is the situation that we find in Shakespeare’s history plays (from *King John* to *Richard the Third*; *King Henry the Eighth* portrays a new situation). That Shakespeare is one of Hegel’s sources is certain. Certainly he was not the only one, but, except for Montesquieu, I cannot securely identify the others. For the *Gestalt* of the “proud vassal,” I think that the Percy family (and especially the young Harry Percy surnamed “Hotspur”) in *Henry the Fourth* and *Henry the Fifth* offers the most graphic model.³⁹

- 23./506. The sovereign will is lacking. Every estate can give “counsel” through its representatives, but it has a distinct will to pursue its own interest in spite of its talk of the *common* good. Barons do die for the nation; but as counsellors they have their own interest and can fall away into the attitude of contempt.

The State-Power is not yet *government*. The King receives “counsel” from all sides, but none of it is simply the loyal advice that it pretends to be. There is *no* constituted will that brings the deliberation to an end decisively. The bourgeois world (of the abstractly mixed judgments) organizes itself into the great parliament of the estates; and even here we meet with the same obstinacy (in the shape of a refusal to vote any money if the king does not heed their “advice”). All parties talk about the “common good” (*das allgemeine Beste*, what is best for everyone). In the bourgeois world that means “what is most profitable for most private interests”; and although the Barons do their knight-service in war, and so prove that they are sacrificially devoted to the Universal, they are just like the bourgeoisie when they come to Council: they have a reserved “particular will.”

There is a difference, however, between the “abstract judgment” of the bourgeoisie, and the concrete judgment of the baron. The bourgeois Estates will only put continued talk about “what is best” in the place of action (whether it be the action the King wants, or the one they want). The offended baron, on the other hand, may actually decide to rebel. Like the bourgeois Estates he will talk about his “honor,” and his legal or customary rights, when he does so; and it will be quite ambiguous

whether he is genuinely acting in the public interest, or in some private interest of his own. That does not matter, because when he decides to “speak with his sword,” the “No” that he says is a No to “State-Power” and “Wealth” alike (just as he says “Yes” to both when he follows the King to war, though he may have spoken against it in Council, or he may have supported it there for reasons of self-interest).

When the barons *generally* vindicate someone’s “honor” (or their collective honor) and the King has to concede what they want (as in the signing of Magna Carta at Runnymede) it is plain to view that “noble honor” is the real sovereign power; and it is necessarily in harmony with “common interest” (or Wealth). But when the offended baron takes it upon himself to vindicate his own “honor” with his sword it is equally obvious that “honor” is the principle of “contempt.” Thus “honor” is implicitly an “absolute contradiction.” So the “sovereignty” of this principle must be sublated; the State-Power must have a personal will and judgment of its own.

Hegel was a Württemberger and his father was an important financial administrator. Württemberg was still, at this date, officially a Grand Duchy within the “German Empire” (which claimed to be the constitutional successor of Rome). But by this time the Empire was no more than a legal fiction; and in 1808, Napoleon abolished it and made Württemberg into a Kingdom. As a Grand Duchy, Hegel’s homeland still had serious constitutional problems, because there was no universal agreement about the exercise of sovereign executive power. The “Estates” of Württemberg (which, oddly enough, did not include a “nobility”) claimed the right to exercise various liberties which in normal parliamentary constitutions reside only in the executive power; they had their own independent delegation at the Congress of Rastatt (1797–1798) for example. This is part of the background for Hegel’s sarcastic comments about the “chatter concerning what is best for the community (*die allgemeine Beste*)”; and his direct observation of the government of Württemberg was, no doubt, one of the things that convinced him that every healthy community must develop a strong central executive. One thing that he meant when he called himself a “Lutheran” was that he believed absolutely in popular sovereignty; but that is not the same as believing in parliamentary sovereignty.

Parliament in Hegel’s view cannot directly make itself sovereign. The “sovereign” must have the support of the Nobility; and there are always at least two sides in any discussion, so in any decisions reached by vote nothing can oblige the “noble” minority to accept the result; in the House of Peers, where everyone represents himself, a single baron can stand out against all, if he thinks his own power will suffice him in the life-and-death “judgment of God.” This is the situation that has to be changed.

In the evolution of parliamentary sovereignty in England, it was *bourgeois* support of the royal authority that effectively changed it. The barons in their home-castles were like little kings; but in every town the sheriff was an officer of the King—and as long as the King had the support of the Commons he could get enough money from them to support an army that would put any “proud vassal” in his place.

It is in the bicameral form of Parliament that the two aspects of the Good, polit-

ical authority and wealth, for the first time go asunder. It was not in the interest of Sir Richard Whittington M.P. (and by that time, already “thrice Lord Mayor of London”) that the wars of petty barons should interfere with the peaceful flow of commerce. But rather more than two centuries later his fellow-mercenary (for he had no actual descendants) were eager supporters of the cause of “Parliament” against “the King.” Between those two moments (1416 and 1642) there occurs in England the stabilization of executive sovereignty that interests Hegel. But Hegel is not interested in the evolution of the English Constitution after 1485 because it does not exhibit the logic of popular sovereignty clearly enough. The Absolute Monarchy, the Revolution and the Terror formed a sequence in which the advent of popular sovereignty in its rational form could be clearly recognized. The Napoleonic future would be dominated by the bourgeois imperatives of equality of opportunity and “the career open to the talents.” The British Constitution was still an aristocracy in decline, as Hegel viewed it (and since he was a firm supporter of Napoleon he did not view Pitt’s England very kindly).⁴⁰

- 24./507. Even in service unto death the contradiction is there, but in a different form. Death produces *unconsciousness* and so denies further service. Being-for-self must be alienated yet survive. It must surrender itself to another self; so the common good must be a self. Otherwise the ambiguity of serving a *particular* interest remains.

If a baron, or his son, follows the king to war and dies on the battlefield we cannot deny that he was true to his oath. But it is simply a fact that he fought, and that his body, his *Dasein*, now lies there dead. From the world of spirit, in which he took the oath, he has simply passed over to its “unreconciled opposite,” the world of nature. Back at home, the father or son (whichever did not go to the war) may be as stiffnecked as ever about his right to interpret what his oath means, and his right to give *authoritative* “counsel.”

What is needed is the universal acceptance of a more radical interpretation of the oath. The oath-taker must surrender not just the *Dasein* of his body (and those of his men-at-arms) but the *Fürsichsein* of his warrior-will. His self-will is *abgeschieden*. This can mean either “departed into seclusion” or “departed into the realm of death”; the first meaning must be replaced by the second. The “language” of absolute sovereignty (or “divine Right”) is the means by which this is achieved. The view that “honor” can justify rebellion against the King must become impossible, because all honor dies and passes over to him. The secluded self must come forward and *speak* its oath of commitment absolutely. Otherwise the free-will of the baron is like the secret resolve of a serf to run off and become a free townsman by hiding out for a year and a day.

(g) *The Syllogism ii: Self-Surrender through Speech*

- 25./508. Language is the means by which the surrender of all personal self-will to a universal actual self is achieved. For the self *is* its language. Speaking is an absolutely

transient motion which passes away at once. But the meaning of what is said is absolutely abiding.

Hegel wants to use the evolution of the *language* of Royalty as the middle term for a syllogistic transition from a world of free public service to a world in which the public service is a system of salaried public offices, maintained by the King's Treasury. The French monarchy is his model for this (and that is natural and necessary, because in the political sphere it is the *French* Revolution that he has to comprehend). In England, the centralized monarchy and the bourgeois Revolution came before the full onset of the Enlightenment. The commutation of all kinds of feudal dues and services from their "kinds" to money; and the increasing importance of the Commons (or Third Estate) who *never* served with their bodies from the first, enabled the monarchy to enforce its own absolute interpretation of the Coronation Oath. But in both developments the performative function of language—for an oath defines and *constitutes* a legally enforceable obligation—was vital from the beginning.

The obligation of the feudal oath is a *personal* one; it holds between the two natural self-consciousnesses who are parties to the swearing of fealty. The performative function of the language of insight, which is what Hegel is talking about in par. 508, is a universal or conceptual one. At this rational level, language has so far been either imperative (providing the *form* of the content that has to be realized, whether universally or particularly—i.e., laws and decrees) or optative (giving the form of what is regarded as desirable by a counsellor). But now language is going to be *definitive*. So in this paragraph Hegel begins a short summary of his philosophy of language to show how this is possible.⁴¹ The point that he makes here was implicitly referred to at the end of Sense-Certainty. Language is the free expression of what the pure self is. It is the element in which subjective spirit exists. It constitutes a new world (or level of *Dasein*), because what I say is perceived and understood by everyone. My speaking is a completely transient and singular phenomenon; but the knowledge of what I said—the conceptual meaning of it—is universal and abiding. Thus, in the matter of the oath, what counts is how the assembly that hears it takes it. The linguistic formula that makes the return to this paradox of Sense-Certainty relevant for us at this juncture is the famous definitive declaration by Louis XIV: "L'Etat, c'est moi." If a claim made in this form can be true, then all who speak of their devotion to State-Power, have passed over into another actual self "that has been heard and is universal."

- 26./509. Spirit can be actualized simply as speech now, because the sides [noble-mindedness and State-Power] face one another as selves that are purified into the unity of pure self-consciousness. This unity immediately exists; it is the *Sache selbst* as a *real* formal category. The two sides are implicitly sublated and broken up in it. It is the *concept* of both sides together articulated as a *Spirit*.

The basic theory of the performative function of language as constitutive of the self is now applied to our present situation. It is virtually unintelligible—or at least

I find it so—unless we read on over the next four paragraphs. The difficulty is that there are only the two actual selves (sovereign and vassal); and through what they say, their spiritual unity is to become incarnate in *one* of them.⁴² The word “State” means the whole community; and yet Louis XIV can truthfully say “I am the State” because the whole of the ruling class confirms this. Hegel’s theory of the rational self as the Thing Itself, the actual Category of experience, shows how this is possible; since Reason is incarnate in the personal judgment, it can alienate itself into another person verbally.

The Spirit (which is actual only as language, i.e. it is here simply subjective Spirit or Reason) achieves actuality because the extremes are broken up into “rigid sides.”⁴³ If we look at paragraph 510 we see that these rigid sides are (in the case of the King) “the abstract Universal that is obeyed” (the Law) and the executive will; in the case of the vassal they are honorable obedience to the law, and natural self-will unaffected by culture. These sides are now “conceptualized,” linguistically formulated in such a way that they match perfectly, they are recognizable as identical.

This involves a conscious separation of the two sides. The rebellious vassal has already learned to distinguish sharply between the two sides of royal authority. He never admits that he is rebelling against the sovereign principle to which he swore allegiance, because his own honor, which he is defending, is identical with his oath; but the King’s will is ill-advised and accidentally oppressive. What has to happen now is that the two sides of the vassal’s noble-mindedness must go apart in the same way into service and self-interest. Just as the King’s identity with Law already matches the vassal’s honorable oath, so the King’s will must match the vassal’s interest. The political good (State-Power) must be conceptually distinguished from the economic good (Wealth). The honor of service must be consciously dissociated (*zersetzt*) from the private interest of the estate holder; and the particular *will* of the monarch must match that particular economic interest as perfectly as the universal sides already match. Otherwise the undifferentiated unity of noble-mindedness (as honor) necessarily turns it into contempt (and the readiness to die in self-assertion) whenever private interest conflicts with Royal will.

What is significant about the establishment of “absolute monarchy” in France is the clear insight into this conceptual matching. There is a “sell-out”; the integral unity of noble honor is broken up into its two sides. The Monarchy is recognized as the middle term for these sides (service and wealth). The nobles leave their estates and come to the sunlight of this spirit which is the real power that unites their nobility with their wealth. They have to be completely *rational* in order to do this; the primitive impulse (which dictates that the integrity of the self should be *fought* for) has to be completely sublated. The nobility has to be able to see rational self-determination (the realization of Reason as the *Sache selbst* or the Category) as the true “shape” of human freedom. This is what distinguishes the Sun King from the Roman Emperor Elagabalus. Elagabalus identified himself with the Sun as a God, but a rational Stoic Senator would know that he was insane. The discipline of culture has now produced a monarch and a governing class who

all accept the authority of the social order because it pays off; and it is better to be a prosperous courtier, than to be a soldier and die.

This makes the Monarchy *absolute*: it is the “pure self as *immediately valid* actuality,” because the battle to the death is now seen to be irrational. The moments that are thus purified are the Universal (the State) and the Individual (Happiness or Prosperity). The language of the Court, which now replaces the military oath of the Camp, expresses the insight that State-Power is the source of all Wealth. This identity of public and private interest is “the spiritual whole breaking forth between them.”

- 27./510. Noble-mindedness dissociates both State-Power and itself into the public good and the pure self; thus purified by Reason, the extremes are identical. But the pure self gets only “honor” as the essence, not enjoyment; and the essence gets only customary service, not actual obedience as a will. The language of the feudal oath expresses only this inadequate conceptual unification; it is not yet the language of self-conscious spirit.

This paragraph simply recapitulates the feudal situation; but now the language of insight is used to describe it, instead of that of faith. On the one side there is the general good (which everyone admits to be sovereign) and the Royal Will (which does not yet belong to that sovereign power). On the other side there is honorable commitment to the service of the general good, and the unregenerate will of natural self-assertion.⁴⁴ When the two sides are rationally purified it is clear that the “pure self” that gives itself to the service of the good has to be the executive will of the sovereign power; this was what the language of service was too one-sided to express. It did not yet envisage the sovereign good as a self, or its obedient self as a sovereign will. So the process of identification and exchange described at the end of paragraph 509 could not take place. The mediating power of an adequate conceptual insight and language is the unity that “brings forth the fact that both extremes are already *implicitly* sublated and dissociated; and this unity is the process that locks both together syllogistically, exchanges their determinations, and locks the determinations together syllogistically in both extremes, what is more” (par. 509).⁴⁵

The extremes of nobility and State-Power are implicitly sublated because each is conceptually broken up or dissociated into the two sides (of public good and private interest). The motion of the concept of absolute sovereignty exchanges the determinations (of Good and Bad) both between the extremes and within them. This will give rise to the language of pure or absolute culture; there we shall finally have “the spirit in the mode where it completely knows and expresses itself.” The middle term for this syllogistic transition is “the State-Power spiritually enlivened into the self,” i.e. the monarch who can say “The State, that’s me.”

A few details should be noted: the noble consciousness has “self-respect and honor” as its being-in-itself; it is estranged from all natural enjoyment, and it is “respected” for that (par. 504). It receives wealth, and is “grateful”; but so far as it actually cares about that, enjoyment is only the object of the “will in ambush.” That the State-Power should pass over to it actually “is precisely what conscious-

ness lacks.” The State-Power, on the other hand, needs to be obeyed as the decisive self of “what is best for everyone,” not just as an “essence” to which everyone pays lip service. There must be one determinate will that is recognized as the State-Power, but which shares out the actual exercise of State-Power in the way that a feudal monarch shared out the land. The actual administration of the State is to be enjoyed by the noble estate as a community; if the King is recognized as the source of honor, he will be the real dispenser of both the power and the wealth that ought rightfully to belong to the honorable. The noble consciousness is where this movement has to occur; it must put itself into its language, instead of into battles. “The State is me” is not true because Louis XIV says it, but because everyone who hears him, agrees.

(h) *The Syllogism iii: Linguistic Absolutism*

- 28./511. It is in noble consciousness that the change occurs. The monarch becomes sovereign because the nobles tell him he is sovereign. The middle of language sets the extremes absolutely apart spiritually, but thereby reflects both will and essence completely into self. The monarch is now the *absolute self*. Everything is done in the *King's Name*. This absoluteness is the end of all “thinking for oneself.”

In the parliament of the Peers (with the King first, but equal) all selfhood belonged to the noble-consciousness; the nobles were the “extreme of the Self.” But now they heroically give that up and become courtiers. The nobility of the Roman Empire had already done that. But their surrender of nobility was not the same, because they were not the “extreme of the Self.” Self-assertion was natural, and it was the legions (quite common folks, not cultured into noble service of the Good) who expressed it. So the natural hunger for reward turned the sovereignty of law into military dictatorship.

But now the heroism of flattery creates a middle term between itself and the common good. The pacification of the Realm is important here; as soon as the sacrifice of life was not seriously involved, the oath could be taken literally. The noble consciousness reflects its self-will into its service (so that it no longer has a will of its own); and it reflects the State-Power into the self that it linguistically creates or establishes. Instead of the universal power, we have an “unlimited monarch”; but this unlimitedness is not the tyrannical arbitrariness of the Emperor of whom the jurists said that he was *legibus solutus*, free of legal control. The “unlimited monarch” is free of constitutionally identified counsellors, but he is the *Sache selbst* of Reason—the purely formal identity of singularity with the universal. The sovereignty of the Law is what he represents. His singularity is identified by his name alone; anyone who has a piece of paper with the King’s name “sealed” on it, has the Royal authority. Such a situation can only exist in the context of a completely reliable legal system.

The “refined universality” of the State-Power is produced by the language of flattery. The Royal authority is cleansed of all limiting rival powers. Louis XIV can

say “L’Etat, c’est Moi”; the moment of *Dasein* refined into spirit by speech is a purified self-equivalence. Louis XIV with his seal is the rational will of the stable system (the “self-equivalence” of Substance).

This “heroism” exalts singularity to the limit. “What the noble consciousness divests itself of on this side of the simple spiritual unity, is the pure *in-itself of its thinking*, its very Ego.” The free rational self gives up its absolute right of judgment; decisions cannot be critically revised. This is an act of conceptual “heroism” that puts the positive extreme into the Monarch, and leaves only the contemptuous (and contemptible) extreme to the Noble.

But the contradiction is only a formal one now, because the Monarch is only “absolute” in *name*. The name is what survives from Sense-Certainty as what is universally valid. It is a spiritual *Dasein*, a pointer that is valid for every consciousness; it “exalts singularity into its *daseiende Reinheit*.” The King is the pure will of the community. He has no “Peers” now; instead there are his courtiers, who adorn his Court, and continually tell him he is “the State.”

Because it is only the authorized use of his name that matters, this king can be a minor (which would certainly occasion civil war in the Empire, or in the feudal monarchy). But when he is adult the King can announce to the world that he is the State, because he has heard that for years; and the Nobles are coming to him for warrants appointing them to offices of State. That is their “service” now.

- 29./512. Thus language is the Spirit that interlocks the extremes into a self-conscious State-Power. Now the dialectical ambiguity of the State-Power reveals itself. The Sovereign shares out power as wealth. He is the absolute lord in thought, because he delegates the State-Power to the courtiers (with appropriate rewards). All *self* is his; the *essence* must go to those who alienated selfhood to him. The making of the monarch is the means for superseding the sovereign power; it exists now as wealth and as the instrument for distributing it. So the monarch, the supremely noble consciousness, becomes everyone’s servant.

This “unlimited monarchy” existed plainly in France in the long period during which the Estates General was not summoned (1614–1788). Louis XIV’s famous remark “L’Etat, c’est moi” was made to the Parlement of Paris in 1655. At that moment England had recently executed the last king who claimed to be God’s vice-gerent (Charles I); and was making its one experiment in republicanism. But it was in the *French* Revolution that the enlightened consciousness of the “rights of man and citizen” was properly realized. Protestant England might seem to be ahead in 1655. But in 1807, it was France who was leading the world. In the ideology of the “unlimited” (but enlightened) monarchy, Hegel identifies the conceptual middle through which the aristocracy managed its painless transition from feudal knighthood to plutocracy. The “third estate,” which intervened so decisively in English history in 1642, stays out of the political picture in France until 1789—except for its integration into the nobility as the *noblesse de robe*, a development which is paralleled in England under the Tudor and Stuart monarchy. That is the reason why the Enlightenment became a revolutionary force in France,

whereas—after the perishing of the feudal monarchy in the Wars of the Roses—the evolution of the English constitution was a conceptually muddled and confused affair, logically quite unclear.

In France the aristocratic constitution moved through the whole cycle of its conceptual development, perished dramatically between 1789 and 1793, and was in the process of being replaced by the new Napoleonic order. That was how Hegel saw the cultural situation in 1805/1806. After 1815 the story of France, and of Europe, turned out to be conceptually muddier than he expected. But, as far as I can see, that does not affect the validity of his interpretation of the “unlimited” monarchy and the Revolution.⁴⁶

Hegel’s interpretation of “unlimited monarchy,” which is now at last clearly stated, is that (as courtiers) the aristocrats let their “inward certainty flow together into the singular selfhood of the monarch.” They began consciously to rely upon the monarchy as the guarantee of their existence as an estate of *privilege*. The absolute Monarch is a “self-estranged independence.” His absolute power is exercised by others. He is only a symbol of the State-Power, and the “service” of the Nobility to the Monarch becomes a purely ceremonial activity. Like the Unhappy Consciousness, the Nobility surrenders its freedom of thought; to think outside of, or against, the Monarchy is not permitted, because the whole system of their privileges depends on it. Their privileged existence is the “actual universality” that they receive in return for founding the theoretical universe of social discourse upon the institution of the Monarchy. Unlike the Unhappy Consciousness, they do not do and say things under an authority of which they have themselves no understanding. They do not even do what Hobbes thinks necessary, and set up the will of the actual Sovereign as a *Sache selbst*, an *arbitrary* standard of “right Reason,” for it is they who hold the offices of state. Instead of quarrelsome and ambiguous service to an “essence,” they now have an actual State-Power; and it is they who actually exercise it. The whole process of self-surrender takes place in thought. The establishment of the sovereign is the symbolic middle term through which the Nobility as a community is enabled to exercise the State-Power.

To exercise State-Power, as opposed to serving it, is to realize the actual identity of State-Power (the common good) and Wealth (the private interest). The Noble administrator is paid a salary, or makes a monetary profit. The Nobility always were rich, because of the lands and estates for which they were politically responsible in the old system before the central State-Power became a proper sovereign; but at that stage they devoted their independent wealth to the service of the State. Now they receive wealth in return for their service (which is all too often courtly and symbolic, or what vulgar honesty calls a *sinecure*). Louis XIV did manage to subject the Nobility to some forms of direct taxation; but exemption from certain direct taxes was, in general, the most important of their “privileges.” So that (as Lefebvre puts it) “under the Old Regime the richer a man was, the less he paid.”⁴⁷ It is by becoming the great bastion of privilege that the State-Power “goes over into its opposite.” A French noble “derogated” to the Third Estate if he engaged in commerce, or followed a profession other than that of arms; so the public service was

his only recourse if his ancestral estate was small or decayed (as many were). Hence the monarch was the target of endless petitions, and the focus of a perpetual competition and tug of war for offices. It seems exaggerated to speak of Louis XIV, who clearly had a strong will of his own, as “the prey of every more powerful will.” But one of his most famous remarks was “Every time I give someone a vacant place, I create a hundred grievance-nursers, and one ingrate.”⁴⁸ Hegel is probably thinking of his successors, but even the Sun King was conscious of being manipulated.

- 30./513. The truth is that Noble Service was always self-willed, and involved a rending of the Substance. But now the Noble is not inwardly an equal Peer. Noble-mindedness has disappeared, and contempt with it. Contempt has achieved the subordination of Power under the Self.

The ideal of service has become completely corrupted. The peers of France are eager to be personal servants of the King (and of his mistresses). Originally the noble was always on the brink of rebellion in his “service”; self-will kept company with the “honor” of his oath. And since his honor mattered more than his life when he rebelled, he was really “contemptuous.” Now he is in conflict with himself in the opposite way. For he continues to think of himself as “noble” when he has abdicated his right of independent judgment, and is doing everything for the sake of material comforts and rewards, just like a bourgeois. When he had his own right to judge, because his life was at risk, he was a Peer. Then he was an unconscious contradiction, because his honor committed him to “service,” and the maintenance of his honor contradicted his service. Now he continues to maintain his honor but it is a fiction; his honor comes to him from the King, to whom the judgment of honor has been surrendered.

The Peer is now a subject outwardly, and a contradiction inwardly. There is no difference now between being “noble” and being “contemptuous.” Therefore, says Hegel, “the latter has disappeared too”; and on the surface, this is true. The Nobility are still visibly there, but there is no longer any possibility of a rebellious Noble.

But it is also true (as Hegel says) that the contemptuous consciousness has reached its goal. It said “No” to the independence of the “essence” (in both shapes) as a standard by which its selfhood could be measured. Now the opposite reduction of the “essence” under “selfhood” has been completely achieved; and what this means is that there are no longer any Nobles, there are only successfully Contemptuous Consciousnesses, selves who have made their denial of the essence *effective*.

This reading accords much better with Hegel’s *logical* account of Culture as “singular judgment” than a simple acceptance of the claim that “contempt has disappeared.” The first sentence of paragraph 500 says: “The mode of this connection is that of opposition: the one is the relating to State-Power and Wealth as to an *equal* [i.e. the Peerage], the other as to an *unequal*.” This “relating to an *unequal*” is exactly what has now appeared rather than disappeared. What has disappeared is what we can fairly call “*noble* contempt.” Contempt proper is now present; and in paragraph 499 Hegel said that “both of these modes of connection are to be held fast henceforth as *divergent shapes of consciousness*.” In the “noble contempt” of the

rebel the “divergent shape” is not “held fast” in any consciousness but ours (and we recognize it as the “secluded self” of Nobility, not as a distinct shape). The *shape* that has been “held fast” so far is that of “noble honor” as defined by the “general opinion” of the Nobility; and it is precisely this “general opinion” that has been transformed in the “heroism of flattery.”

What has disappeared, therefore, is “noble contempt” because the two words have coincided in meaning. Only the word “Noble” has effective use now, not “Noble in revolt” (or “Vassal who has renounced his oath”). But the coincidence of meaning entails that what has appeared is “Contempt under the name of Nobility” because Contempt has achieved its goal. We shall now see Contempt become both socially universal (which, by definition, Nobility could not do) and completely self-conscious. That will be “absolute Culture.”

- 31./514. Self-consciousness has absorbed State-Power and exists as universal beneficence. Only Wealth exists as an objective essence. *Gratitude* for free subsistence is all that remains of Nobility.

In one of his memoirs Louis XIV wrote “His good graces were regarded as the sole source of all possessions; one thought of raising oneself only to the extent that one might approach his person or rise in his esteem.”⁴⁹ This is the monarchy as “universal beneficence.” But wealth is still an *objective* not a subject. We have reached the world of the pursuit of happiness, but not yet the universal concept of Reason as Utility; we are still dealing with a self that despises finite utility, but takes wealth for granted as a natural right. One does not work for it, and one despises those who do; but one needs it. Wealth is what maintains one’s proper dignity. The feudal noble was publicly “grateful” just once for his estate; his “mute service” was the real expression of his gratitude. But now he is a lobbyist, and he must pretend to be “grateful” every day. The *Fürsichsein* of the noble, his consciousness of being independent, is now identical with his privileges (for instance, his being exempt from the basic tax called the *taille*). He has to be “independently wealthy” in order to maintain his noble status; so he recognizes the necessity of the monarch’s sharing out the public treasure, and is “essentially” grateful for it. But Louis XIV’s claim that even the successful applicant for a place was not grateful, indicates that “contempt” is now the “firmly held” shape of consciousness. The privileged class is only really “grateful” for their “privilege”; as the bourgeoisie comes to share in the privilege and rewards of government, the Nobility becomes openly and simply “contemptuous.”

(i) *The Spirit of Wealth (Arrogant Contempt)*

- 32./515. Wealth (as public office) is self-willed; it is the *power* that is fought over, clung to. In becoming a self wealth turns over from a means of enjoyment into something in-and-for-itself, a true essence.

Wealth, as the objective of one's life, has the moment of "being for self" in it by definition. It is the private good. The noble wealth that comes from public office is the State-Power privatized. The State-Power is no longer "selfless"; and Wealth is no longer a landed estate—"the naïve inorganic nature of Spirit" (cf. par. 519). The Monarchy sold offices of all kinds; and those who bought them had to be sure of a profit. Wealth is "the State-Power in the mode in which it holds fast to itself against those who want to take it over for their enjoyment." This makes sense if we take it to refer to the wealth that derives from public office held by noble privilege. The nobility could not engage in commerce; and those who went to Court could not manage their own estates (which was not usual in any case).

The problem about the enjoyment of wealth is easily stated. The enjoyment of material comforts lacks the "essence" of free rational activity, just as much as it lacks the more primitive "independence." The noble who schemes and petitions for (or scrapes together from his ancestral rents the means to buy) public office is turning the Monarchy over from being the spirit of State-Power to being the spirit of Wealth.

The Monarchy is Wealth as the "State-Power holding fast to itself." But wealth is the "sublation" of power as the "in-itself." It is essentially "for-itself" because it must be spent and enjoyed. The baron always did "hold fast to his wealth against anyone who would seize it." But now he does not have to, because the Monarchy pours out power and wealth steadily, so that the "for-itself" of enjoyment can become the "in-and-for-itself" of power enjoying itself, and what was originally only the sublated essence (the instrumental means) of noble life can become the true essence of "happiness." Wealth becomes the living "spirit" of the whole system. Hegel says that "the form of the movement" is the same (as it was for the State-Power). So we shall deal only with the new content.

- 33./516. The noble consciousness, as courtier, has to receive even its nobility from the monarch. As privileged, it is necessarily a *client*.

It is the *bourgeois* who relates to wealth as the "essence" generally. For her the "pursuit of happiness" is the end, the goal of life and liberty. For the true aristocrat the goal is "nobility," the devotion of being-for-self to the good of the whole. But now his being-for-self is estranged: his noble status, as well as the wealth that makes him free to devote himself to the noble life, is something foreign conferred on him by the decision of the monarch. The paradox of the absolute estrangement of self into service is now explicit. The self has to receive its own independent selfhood at the discretion of another self.

When the noble lived on his estate, the wealth that he needed to maintain his free noble status was directly his own. Now there is the King to be petitioned; or, worse still, one must deal with those "vile bourgeois" servants to whom the King, by his "unlimited" royal power, has given patents of nobility. At first the old nobility (the *noblesse d'épée*) despised these upstarts (the *noblesse de robe*). But soon economic pressure led to intermarriage. The fact that one could in effect buy one's

way into the nobility is the clear indication that Wealth has emerged as the estranged “for-itself” of noble consciousness.

- 34./517. Accidental dependence need not affect the noble awareness of independence. But the courtier is estranged from his own personality; he is not stoically indifferent but outcast and rebellious. The essence both of the world and the self has become contradictory.

Self-Consciousness is free and independent in its essence. Even the serf, who is subdued by bodily fear, must be contemptuous of himself in his self-knowledge. But now, in the consciousness that makes itself a “client” of the fount of riches, we have a self-made serfdom. The *universal* shape of this consciousness is Young Rameau, a bourgeois who becomes a “client,” just as those successful in commerce have become “nobles.” Rameau is the universal consciousness of the Water-Mass; and he has nobility in the rational mode of “universal human dignity.” Just as anyone could be a Stoic, so anyone can be “absolutely cultured.” But now the sense of rebellion keeps company with degradation, not with honor. The logical capacity of the rational self to abstract from any and every moment of action has been pushed to the limit. The self has consciously accepted its very being from another. But it remains the recognized *Sache selbst* of rational free agency in doing so.

We should look at this climax, first, as a “noble” achievement. So let us consider the difference between the courtier consciousness and that of Marcus Aurelius or Seneca. The Stoic retreat is not possible now, as it was for Marcus or even for the slave Epictetus, in the world of simple Right. Then it was Fate that put you where you actually were in society, and Fate that made you helpless (even in the Imperial Purple). Now, the noble mind lives in the world that it has itself made. It has voluntarily reduced itself to the dependent status which it despises. It does not accept bourgeois values; and it will not work for private profit like a bourgeois; but its freedom from that vile servitude is purchased through the servility of a personal servant.

On the one hand, the freedom of him who has money and does not work for a living, is true human independence. So the rational but self-estranged noble will defend his privileged status as the only condition that makes public service possible. On the other hand, he knows that he is no better than a beggar, he depends on handouts. This is what the “aristocracy” has come to. To die for honor no longer makes any sense; so how can one pretend that one’s estate in life is honorable? “The pure [i.e. rational] Ego is absolutely dissociated [*zersetzt*].” What a member of the old Nobility like the Duc de Saint-Simon perceives as the dissociation of his order into true nobility and “vile bourgeoisie” is the inner truth of consciousness.⁵⁰

- 35./518. The consciousness of privileged status is not only incomplete (like noble independence). It is a conscious contradiction. But the self now rebels against receiving its objective independence from another, and asserts its independence in the very receiving of it.

When we reach paragraph 518 we can recognize that paragraph 517 was a review of what *we* can observe in the Court of Versailles. The purpose of paragraph

517 was to show logically that a Stoic retreat from this world would not be valid. The Nobility is to blame for its own decadence and self-contradiction. They did it to themselves; and the world that they made by a self-surrender that has been pushed to the limit, is now visibly just a façade that covers a rational self-contradiction. It is waiting to be swept away.

Before that can happen, however, there must be a retreat into the realm of pure thought that is different from the Stoic retreat. The consciousness that recognizes the self-contradictory pass to which the world of Culture has come, must turn and despise *itself* (instead of despising the objective world which it has mastered by its self-destruction).

The self that despises itself, gets free from the contradictory situation that it has created. Instead of congratulating itself on escaping from the driven character of natural life, like the Stoic, it becomes an active drive to liberate the empirically trapped self. Everyone must be made to see and understand the contradictory character of aristocratic freedom and its values.

The consciousness that has this “pure insight” into its “disrupted” state, and into the contradictoriness of aristocratic values, is not an aristocrat, but one who has experienced “contempt” as his own relation to the whole world of culture. What Hegel declares as the truth “for us” in paragraph 517 about this *Zerrissenheit* in which “the pure Ego intuits itself outside itself and disrupted” and “at the same time everything that has continuity and universality, everything that is called ‘law,’ ‘good,’ and ‘right’ has come apart and gone to the ground”—none of this is consciously true for the courtier. At most, he may be conscious of *Empörung* when he has to beg (and when his petitions are rejected he is *verworfen*). The consciousness that clearly recognizes that it is rationally free and independent, but that it is freely accepting its independence from another, is the one that is at the end of the line, the bottom of the pyramid of privilege.

- 36./519. Here nobility and contempt coincide; and this happens to the benefactor as well as the client. It is not just wealth as means of subsistence that is handed out. Wealth is now status, imparting social position, nobility itself. The pride of status appears as arrogance; blindness to the fact that the status and subsistence that can be given is *not* the self of the recipient, hence blindness to rebellion. It stands on the brink of the inmost abyss (Absolute Freedom).

The immediate inversion of noble honor was into the contemptuous defiance of the rebellious baron. That was only the Concept spinning on its own axis. But now State-Power has been comprehensively inverted into Wealth, and service into status. So now we have, on the one hand, nobility that exhibits itself as arrogant contempt, and on the other hand a rational contempt that comprehends the falsified nobility. The “spirit of Wealth” (the benefactor), unlike the rational recipient, does not recognize what has happened. The Royal self which gives out patents of nobility along with the offices that bring in the wealth required by noble status, is now *arrogant*; and everyone who receives wealth and status, is arrogant likewise. They

ought to feel degraded, but they identify with the benefactor by becoming benefactors in their turn. The bourgeoisie who obtain the patents of nobility for their civil service, imitate the royal arrogance in relation to those who are not noble. They believe—as Hegel says with evident reference to Young Rameau’s patrons—that with their good dinners they can buy the client’s very ego.⁵¹ Why should they not think this, since they have already used their money to purchase what counts for them as their ego? The self has given itself up to create the monarchy; and the monarch is this spirit of universal beneficence. But he remains an alienated self—a mere shell—and so do all of his imitators.

“Arrogance” is the comprehensive inversion of “honor.” Honor was the recognition received for service, arrogance is that which is demanded for status. Here the distinction between “nobility” and “contempt” really has finally fallen away completely. But we should notice that Hegel does not *now* say that “contempt has vanished.” Instead, it has become universal. “Arrogance” is a contempt which, having surrendered its “self,” is without foundation; but on the other side, there has now arisen a contempt that is founded in Reason—and a “self” that is truly *rational*. Like the old noble contempt, this new “shape of consciousness” is rebellious. Selfhood is not concordant with, or “equal to,” any of this world of “status.” Selfhood is the abyss of “Absolute Freedom” into which this whole world of aristocratic privilege will be cast.

The whole spiritual world of aristocratic values has been torn up [*zerrissen*]. The view of the universal benefactor, the arrogant aristocrat, has been conceptually undermined: “He stands at the brink of this inmost abyss, this bottomless depth . . . and he sees in this depth, nothing but an ordinary thing, a plaything for his whim, an accident of his caprice. It is his spirit to be mere opinion without essence [i.e. truth], the outer surface that spirit has forsaken.” The subject of the sentence is properly “Wealth” (*Reichthum*)—for it is the *living spirit* of “wealth” that Hegel is explicitly discussing. But by ignoring that, and considering the Royal benefactor and all of his imitators together, we can uncover how Wealth can become a living spirit at all. Wealth came to life, not in the peasants, or in the acquisitive bourgeoisie; but in the aristocrats who perish on the guillotine, because they thought that the free self can be bought.

I have not hesitated to call this arrogance “contempt.” But Hegel does not call it that, and the reason is simple: “Arrogance” is an inverted, self-estranged, misdirected form of contempt. It is the “Spirit of Wealth”; having identified itself with wealth, the arrogant self naturally thinks that everything, the self included, can be bought. It is, of course, “contemptuous” of all the other selves that it can buy. But it does not realize that this is just an alienated contempt for itself, the self that has *willingly* allowed itself to be bought. Proper Contempt is directed at State-Power and Wealth. Only the *unwilling* “client” self can now find (in the negative will of its rebelliousness) a new selfhood which is properly contemptuous of the spirit of “State-Power as Wealth,” the “essence” that has taken over selfhood.

Wealth was always the passive essence that shares itself out. So whereas the Spirit of State-Power could only be an “unlimited One,” the Spirit of Wealth can

be a “many without limitation.” In the world of Wealth, the Monarch is, once more “first among his Peers.” Everyone who is rich, can be arrogant and have “clients.” That is why Young Rameau, whose patrons are rich bourgeoisie, can comprehend this whole world.

The pleasure of being “beneficent”—of sharing one’s wealth with “clients”—is the universalization of singular enjoyment. As the means for one patron to make everyone happy (like the King) Wealth has now become the essence “in itself.” It gives all happiness-seekers their “being-for-self.” But, of course, the patron is an arbitrary, independent self, who knows that she can do as she likes with her wealth (which is merely an external thing). Thus the arrogant self is “contemptuous of the essence” but not rationally so. The arrogance of Wealth is a kind of “Lordship” that has forgotten the Life and Death struggle altogether; this self does not know that its own life is now at risk, because only the fear of death could keep the supposedly dependent self in its subservient relation.

- 37./520. The language of this negative self-consciousness of wealth is an ignoble flattery which pretends that instrumental goods are essential beings. This misuse of heroic flattery leads on to the language of *disintegration*, used by the consciousness that rejects the whole system. The principle of Identity (“I am I”) now takes the (infinite) form “I am not any of this” (even though I know that “this” is my world and that I could not exist without it). This consciousness is *pure* self-formation, pure *culture*.

We turn now from the side of the “universal benefactor” to that of the client. There is, of course, a language for this spirit of Wealth. When the noble courtiers confirmed Louis XIV’s insight that “L’Etat, c’est moi,” their “heroic flattery” finally completed the task and destiny of the nobility. But when they now fawn upon him or his ministers, to obtain pensions or offices, they have become a social façade in which there is no truth. The consciousness that matters now is the inward one that they do not express, the contempt that they should feel for the ignoble pass to which they have come.

The noble consciousness that performs the service of flattery is a one-sided spirit. Like the serf in the world of natural self-consciousness, it recognizes a lord who has no equal. The Monarch’s “name” on a warrant (his “pure existence”) controls State-Power (pure being-in-itself), and is thus the source of all Good. But both he and his noble flatterer know that what is controlled is an “essence” without a self; and the outwardly subservient self is the one who will enjoy that essence. The Nobility with their guaranteed monopoly of the public service are “pure being-for-self,” they do all the business and enjoy all the rewards “in the King’s Name.” But it is all a matter of arbitrary decisions, and of privilege. There is no self-conscious awareness that this is the realization of human Reason. The pure Concept (of Reason as the *Sache selbst*, or of the Self as Category) in which the rational self and the public Good are known to be identical, is lacking. The King is *another* self, not the self of his “obedient servant”; and the same applies to the wealthy patron and the “ignoble” flatterer.

(j) *The Linguistic Disintegration of Values*

The rational identity of the Self as the *Sache selbst* comes to consciousness in the language of contempt and rebellion against the “client-status” of the Self. The nephew of Rameau is the “true, existing spirit of this whole world of culture.” Young Rameau says (in the true spirit of nobility) that “A certain dignity attaches to the nature of man that nothing must destroy.”⁵² This is the piece of “good sense” that makes it impossible for him to be contented and successful at the game of “ignoble flattery.” So he has become a jester, because in that role everyone can accept his quite unflattering truth. But because of that piece of good sense, he also suffers from a self-contempt which he says is “the cruelest form of remorse. Better a man had never been born.”⁵³ So this knowledge is “absolute self-equivalence in absolute disruption [*Zerrissenheit*].”

When Louis XIV says “I am the State,” he utters a tautology; but it is also an absurd infinite judgment, a category mistake, if the self that is the subject, is taken in the unique sense in which it has a “proper name,” and is rigorously opposed to all other selves. This infinite judgment is the absolute estrangement of the rational self from the actual world of culture. We return at the end to the simple judgment of *monkish* contempt: “this world is Bad.” But now we have the divided consciousness of the Unhappy Self. For “this world” is the object-side of “I = I.” This will provide us with the logical transition from the world of actuality to the world of thought; and the self that identifies with “thinking comprehension” will necessarily be an imperative drive to change the world.

- 38./521. Pure culture is pure self-estrangement. The essences (whether as actualities or as thoughts) are self-contradictions. The State, as represented by the Monarch, exists only in *name*; and, as such, it turns directly into Wealth. Nobility turns into contempt, and contempt into the new noble-mindedness of “pure culture.” Everything is inwardly estranged, and is not what it seems. The true spirit is the self that sees the dialectical character of the essence, and shows the honorable consciousness the truth of its world.

The spirit of contempt for noble wealth is “the absolute and universal inversion and estrangement of actuality and thought.” This second inversion is a comprehensive estrangement from the actual world. Rational insight confirms the primitive judgment of piety regarding the world of actuality: “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” There is no truth in this actual world. Neither the objects, Power and Wealth, nor the concepts, Good and Bad, nor the consistent conscious attitudes towards the objects, the noble-minded attitude that says both are Good, or the contemptuous one that says both are Bad, have any truth.⁵⁴ At every level, one opposite turns into the other. State-Power, when it is finally spiritualized as the Monarch, turns straight into Wealth. Surrender turns into selfishness, and service into enjoyment, because the Monarch is only the *name* in and through which the privileged status of nobility is secured and enjoyed. But this transition of noble service into courtly self-serving, through which the self becomes a thing (Wealth), this is the

moment of self-recognition, the birth of spirit for the world. What is born is the pure insight that despises the whole business.

In the birth of this Spirit the original judgments of Culture are reversed. What was determined by the noble mind to be Good (the public service) is Bad, because it now produces self-contempt; and what was determined to be Bad (Wealth) is Good, because it secures freedom, being-for-self. But this simple inversion is not the end of the matter, for the truth is that the noble and contemptuous consciousness have each become *both* noble and contemptuous. *Self*-contempt is the last reaction of the noble mind; and the freedom that comes from the enjoyment of wealth is the eternal and irremovable source of self-contempt. Thus none of the moments will stand still at all. What looks like flattery of the monarch is, for the noble mind, the very service that it owes. But this service is the surrender of the noble's own rational selfhood, the loss of a rational standard of judgment. On the other hand, this self-alienation secures wealth, and that is the means for doing good, and for being an enlightened benefactor. Thus the standard of rational self-maintenance, the standard of universal Utility, emerges from the wreckage of the noble ideology. But this new standard does not properly belong to the *Ancien Régime*. Absolute culture is a whirling cycle of rationally necessary dialectical transformations. The opposite moments "execute a universal justice upon one another."⁵⁵

The spirit of this absolute dissolution of the essential structure of the old aristocratic order is a bourgeois music teacher portrayed by a bourgeois "enlightener." Diderot, being the general editor of the *Encyclopédie*, has a good claim to be identified as the spirit of universal Utility. But his subject here is the model "outsider" of this aristocratic world. He was the nephew of Jean-Philippe Rameau, the greatest French composer of his time (which was the reign of Louis XV, and in music, the generation of Bach, Handel and Domenico Scarlatti). Goethe (and I suppose Hegel also) took "Rameau's Nephew" for a fiction, but in actuality he was Jean-François Rameau (1716–1767). The fictional conversation is supposed to occur in the summer of 1761. Diderot wrote it then, but revised it several times until about 1775. Goethe's translation (which was the only form in which the piece was publicly known until 1823) appeared in 1805. So this sceptical dissolution of the *Ancien Régime* is about the latest cultural phenomenon of his world that Hegel's "recollection" comprehends.

The young Rameau is not a *philosophe*⁵⁶ (still less a systematic philosopher in the German fashion). He is a *mit*. His talk is full of *esprit* (*geistreich* as the Germans say). Whenever Hegel speaks of his "spirit" there is apt to be a pun upon this sense of *Geist*. It is this witty insight which Hegel calls "true and invincible . . . the only veritable thing with which one has to do in this world." Against it Hegel sets "the honorable consciousness." He tends to treat the Philosopher in the dialogue as "the honorable consciousness," simply; but in reality that is the position from which "Diderot" seeks relief in the company of Young Rameau. He calls it "that tedious uniformity that we have introduced through our education, our social conventions, and our customary proprieties."⁵⁷ Diderot is certainly not the naïvely honorable consciousness that "takes every moment as an abiding essentiality, and is the uncult-

tured thoughtlessness of not knowing that it is equally doing the reverse.” In terms of the analysis of that “tedious uniformity” of culture which Hegel has given, the position presented by “*mein Herr Philosoph*” (as Goethe makes Young Rameau call him) is generally an intermediary one; and we can assume that what Hegel expects *us* to observe here is an insight that can be ascribed, at least partially, to Diderot himself as the author.⁵⁸

- 39./522. This discourse is about our values *being* a self-deceptive *sham*; and it is shameless because it sees that there is no alternative. This is the only *honesty*, the only way to say what is true. *Rameau's Nephew* is the model. His speech embraces *all* sentiments but with a ridicule that denatures the naïve ones and gives reconciling value to the rebellious ones—for the speaking self is almighty here.

The language of “disruption” [*Zerrissenheit*] need not deceive us, except so far as we let it do so. But since Hegel says that the “deception of itself” is included in the content of this discourse we must be careful. Young Rameau is torn between his sense of human dignity, and his own sense of degradation. Does the evident truth of the latter make the former a self-deception? Hegel’s analysis puts them at different levels, making Rameau’s fundamental honesty the condition of his self-contempt. Diderot seems to agree, making his Rameau say that since his wife’s death “I have taken minor orders and wear a skullcap.”⁵⁹ But for Rameau himself, it is only honesty to say that he deceives himself, and that he cannot help himself. He is not simply the “self” of “pure Insight” who wants to enlighten the world. He wants to be free in the aristocratic way; and for this he lets himself be bought. As for us, we do let him deceive us, because we take him for a buffoon, we laugh at what he says. This is true at all levels of sophistication, from the people who entertain him on condition that he shall talk only when they want him to, through the Philosopher in the conversation, to Diderot, Goethe and ourselves. “Shamelessness” is the inevitable concomitant of the honesty that seeks to disrupt both the conventional values, and the normal proprieties. Diderot associates Young Rameau with the Cynic Diogenes; and Rameau accepts *this* philosophical identity.⁶⁰

That the younger Rameau was a musician becomes more clearly significant in the *Phenomenology* than it was in Diderot’s dialogue. Diderot makes it evident that Young Rameau’s torment arises partly from the fact that he recognizes his uncle’s genius, and knows that he does not himself have it.⁶¹ If he did, he would be able to despise his patrons without having to despise himself as well. But Diderot’s Philosopher brings in other kinds of genius—especially playwrights—and Young Rameau shows the same envious admiration of them. So Hegel is quite right to pick out Diderot’s description of Young Rameau’s talk in operatic terms for quotation.⁶² The quotations that Hegel marks are partly paraphrases, and to some extent he has distorted the context in Diderot. One of the evident purposes of this distortion is to maintain the musical metaphor that interests him.⁶³

It is the Philosopher who describes Rameau’s talk (approximately) as a “mix of equal parts of cleverness and baseness, of Ideas as much right as wrong, of a perversion of feeling as complete and a shamelessness as unabashed, as the frankness and

truth is total.”⁶⁴ But, as I have said, the Philosopher is not really “the placid (*ruhig*) consciousness which honorably posits the melody of the Good and True in an equality of the tones, i.e., in *one* note” and which “will not be able to avoid shifting into all these tones, and from running up and down the whole scale of feelings, from the deepest contempt and dejection, to the highest admiration and sympathy.” The “placid consciousness” belongs to the community as a whole; for Hegel gets the “melody of the Good and True” from a prophecy by Young Rameau, and everyone in the café audience is obliged to go up and down the whole scale, when they all stop talking and playing chess etc. to watch the great display in which Rameau goes from Hell to Heaven, mingling thirty arias and imitating a whole orchestra.⁶⁵

The prophecy about the triumph of the Good and True is interesting because it is more sincere than Hegel’s use of it would lead us to expect. Rameau is speaking of the triumph of Italian fashions in music, and prophesying a return to the native French tradition. He speaks tongue in cheek, but at the same time he ambiguously prophesies a *romantic* revival (both musical and political) about which he is quite serious:

The good souls! They have given up their symphonies to play the Italian ones. They thought they could accustom their ears to these new instrumental pieces without the vocal music getting in too . . . That they could once experience and feel how easily, softly, gently, the Italian tongue, with its natural harmony, flexible prosody, easy ellipses and inversions, suited the art and motion of music, the turns of song and the measured pace of sounds—and yet still overlook the fact that French is stiff, heavy, pedantic and monotonous? Well, well, well, they persuaded themselves that after weeping with a mother bewailing the loss of her son, and shuddering at the decree of a tyrant committing murder, they would not be bored with their fairyland, their insipid mythology, their saccharine madrigals, which show the poet’s bad taste no less than the sterility of the music matched with it. The good souls! It could not and cannot be. The true, the good, and the beautiful will prevail. Their rights may at first be challenged, but in the end people come to yield their admiration. What is not stamped with this mark may be esteemed for a time but the end is a great yawn. Go ahead, gentlemen, yawn away, yawn to your heart’s content, don’t be afraid! The Kingdom of Nature has established itself quite fast, the Kingdom of my Trinity in Unity against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail. The True which is the father, engenders the Good, which is his son, whence comes the Beautiful, which is the Holy Ghost. The foreign god takes his place humbly on the altar next to the native idol. Little by little he asserts himself, and one fine morning, he gives his fellow a shove with the elbow, and bang! crash! there’s the idol on the ground. They say that’s the way the Jesuits introduced Christianity into India and China. And the Jansenists can say what they like, the political method that goes straight to the goal, without bloodshed or martyrdom, or so much as a queue of hair cut off, looks the best to my eye.⁶⁶

Young Rameau himself would be a soul saved out of his contradictory existence if he could write this new music. Hegel quotes the political prophecy (about the new Trinitarian God taking over from the old idol) later on in the chapter (par. 545). He agrees perfectly with the enlightened programme for the replacing of the

Trinity of faith by that of Reason; and it is plain enough that, by projecting Rameau's musical metaphor back to a supposed point of origin in "*one note*," he means to remind us of the simple "Goodness" of the naïve judgment of "Faith."

We should recall that Hegel described the Unhappy Consciousness as "a musical thinking that does not arrive at the Concept, which would be the only immanently objective mode [for its object]." The devotion (*Andenken*) of Unhappy Consciousness is a "pure Consciousness" that is the singular *feeling* of the "pure heart." It gets only as far as the threshold of thinking. But then, in the primitive "judgment" of Culture—the division between God's Heaven as Good, and this world as Bad—we move from feeling to thinking proper. It is true, of course, that this *objective* thinking is unselfconscious; it is a thinking that can only picture its own objectivity as another world, the world of faith. So in comparison with speculative thought, it was still only a kind of intellectual "music."

But now it has become the thinking music of the Concept, whereas the *Andenken* of the Unhappy Consciousness was the feeling music of simple faith. With the language of *Zerrissenheit*, we pass over from the objectivity of Faith to the subjectivity of Pure Insight. The simplicity of Faith is not quite lost; for in repose, Young Rameau has a mournful aspect. The Philosopher regards him as an object of pity; and he is looking for solace—not very hopefully—in religion.⁶⁷ Thus it is entirely appropriate for his gamut of all human feelings to be based on the monotonous keystone of divine Goodness; and quite natural for him to prophesy the eventual emergence of the "melody of the Good and True." But the actual "melody of the Good and True" will be something quite different from the *one note* to which the "placid consciousness" would like to confine it. This is clear as soon as we know that it is Young Rameau who forecasts its eventual triumph.

In Rameau's "shattered" discourse the Good and the True have lost their essence. Language is all "torn up" (*zerrissen*) into contradictory judgments in which every value is combined with its opposite. Rameau is both the disconsolate spirit of Faith (*dummpfes Wesen*—pars. 573, 574) and the spirit of dialectical Insight. He cannot articulate the unity as anything but a contradiction; but in his contempt and dejection we can feel the touch of the omnipotent Reason "that restores spirit to itself."

- 40./523. The simple spirit cannot argue with this cultured one. It can only strive to avoid the dialectic by appeals to the *wisdom of nature*. But since this "wisdom" makes evil the necessary condition of good etc. this defence concedes what the cultured critic is saying.

The "simple consciousness" opposed to this "torn consciousness" is Faith as opposed to Insight in the division of Culture to which we shall soon come. As I have already argued, it is a mistake to identify this "monosyllabic simplicity" with *mein Herr Philosoph*, who retails the conversation for us in Diderot's dialogue. *Mein Herr Philosoph* knows far too much about the cultural world to be reduced to any monosyllabic "Credo." He strikes the conventional attitude of pious disapproval at the beginning when he says "I cannot set much store by 'originals' of this kind."

But the irony of his conformity to convention is revealed at once by his claim that “originals” of this kind “break the tedious uniformity (*Einformigkeit*) that we have introduced through our education, our social conventions, and our established proprieties.”⁶⁸ Young Rameau points out to *mein Herr Philosoph* that he has himself experienced the situation of a social outsider.⁶⁹ So when he gives the “simple” verdict on Young Rameau at the end: “You are a no-good, a greedy-pig, a contemptible cur [*Niederträchtiger*], a shit-soul [*Kotseele*],” we can assume that he is quite prepared for the response “I have already told you all that myself, I believe.”⁷⁰

The “simple consciousness of the True and Good” is *foolish*, because it does not realize that the cultured consciousness, which it condemns as “contemptible,” is already contemptuous of itself and of finite happiness generally. The simple consciousness which takes itself to be faithful and pious is really only conventional and superficial. In the world of the “unlimited monarchy” of Mammon, the “honorable” values have become mere abstractions. These abstractions are one-sided. They *need* to be inverted, because only the recognition that each is directly identical with its opposite can restore any serious content to the concepts. Otherwise, the “simple consciousness” evolves into a *conventional* form of Enlightenment. The contrast that Hegel makes here is between the self-contemptuous hedonism of *Rameau’s Nephew* and the comfortably conventional wisdom of Robinet.⁷¹

Of course, the “wisdom of Nature” is by no means absent from Diderot’s dialogue—it is the Stoic philosophy which the Young Rameau loves to make fun of.⁷² But the Critical Editors are surely right in connecting what Hegel says about this wisdom here with enlightened platitudes such as the following: “the harmony of nature is the perfect accord of good and bad; its variety equals the sum of the combinations of these two essences which are contrary but always united”; and especially “the idea of its beauty is composed of the two notions of good and bad. The constant picture of this precise equality has made us suspect the necessity of it . . . we have become convinced that there [in the natural world] where one cannot have pure goodness, the good is necessarily allied to a bad that equals it in number and quality.”⁷³ It is only fair to point out that *mein Herr Philosoph* is as far from this sort of useless “wisdom” as Young Rameau himself; and we must suppose that Hegel was as conscious of this as any other intelligent reader of Diderot. This sort of stuff is cold comfort, indeed, for the faithful believer; and, as Hegel says, it is only an unwitting confession that what the “shattered” consciousness asserts is really the truth.

41./524. A particular case of naïve goodness (story or real) is one more “type” [cf. par. 489] in the whole picture offered by the cultured consciousness. Since one can’t get out of the world, one can only be a “type” in it—even Diogenes. We can’t go back to any pre-cultural “innocence”—only forward from here.

Both the fictitious and the real case of excellence that Hegel posits here can readily be found in Diderot’s dialogue. Voltaire’s rehabilitation of Jean Calas provides the “true anecdote,” and the story that *mein Herr Philosoph* tells about an anonymous acquaintance (the younger son who makes his own fortune, and rescues

his parents and sister from the ill-treatment of his elder brother) looks very like a fictional inversion of the parable of the Prodigal Son.⁷⁴ The philosopher's admiration for these examples astonishes Rameau; and the way that his own momentary assertion of his human dignity cost him his supper demonstrates for him the folly of believing that anyone who is consistently "virtuous" will be happy. One might as well be what one's nature allows one to be, and not deceive oneself with the dream that moral effort can make one better. *Mein Herr Philosoph* is only an idealistic enthusiast.⁷⁵

The conventionally "good"—who are not "good" at all, but only complacent because they are rich—call those who see through the social charade "types" (*espèces*).⁷⁶ But conventional morality itself is a mass of excuses and exceptions like the personal idioms in the essays of a good stylist.⁷⁷ The new Diogenes, who has understood what the gospel of a "return to Nature" really means, is certainly an *espèce*. He may seem to deserve contempt for not trying any longer to achieve a universal ideal of human nature. But he is also the Spirit of Culture itself now that its work of educational reformation is completed. His "worthlessness" achieves *greatness*; and in that perspective he is not merely an *espèce*.⁷⁸ For what is universally the case is necessarily the case; and it is folly to talk as if it could be different. While on the other hand, to preach that everyone must save her own soul, and let the world take care of itself, is the opposite of rational ethics.

Young Rameau, as the Diogenes of the time, is a rational critic of Rousseau. The "nature" we must follow is precisely the rational insight that *culture* has produced; it is not the "simplicity of the natural heart," any more than it is "the wildness and proximity to the animal consciousness which is called 'nature' and even 'innocence.'" Here, where the "simple consciousness" is represented by Rousseau, it is not Diderot but Voltaire who speaks for culture. For it was Voltaire who responded to Rousseau's *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts* with an *Open Letter* protesting that a return to primitive "innocence" was impossible.⁷⁹

- 42./525. The spirit of culture is now ready for this advance. The unity of singular and universal, the thinking self, has been formed. On its singular side it looks towards this world [as Insight]; but on the universal side, the thinking self looks not only inwards but towards the Beyond [of Faith].

The universal contempt (and especially the self-contempt) of the satirical consciousness, which all the simple "judgments" of the *Ancien Régime* regard as vile and contemptible, is, in fact, the implicit dissolution of the confusion. The whole social order, which claims to be a system of noble devotion and service, but is in fact a system of plutocratic privilege, is about to collapse. The spirit that the discipline of Culture has released is the spirit of critical thought. Rameau expresses the rational *comedy* of the Enlightenment. Hegel calls this "the doubled reflection of the real world into itself." On the one hand, it is strictly an experience of personal *insight*. It belongs to the singular outsider, Rameau; on the other hand, the insight is *pure* and universal, i.e., it is still the Faith that there is an inner world above this actual realm of hypocrisy. On its comic or critical side it produces one more moment of the

world of actuality, the *Gestalt* of the satirist laughing at everything. But the laughter is serious. it is aimed first at the critic himself. As I have already argued, the survival of the religious consciousness in the Young Rameau is important.

In fact, he is not reconciled with himself or his world. The shame of his selfish life haunts this universal comedian just as persistently as it haunts the tragically Unhappy Consciousness that found solace in the Beyond of Faith at the beginning of the movement of Culture. When we take our leave of him, Rameau is talking of his return to religion, since the death of his wife; and yet (like the Abbé de Canaye) he takes the Vesper bell as the signal that it is time to be on his way to the Opera. Here we can recognize the symbolic significance of the musical context in Diderot's dialogue; and it throws light upon Hegel's use of the same symbolism when he described the devotion (*Andenken*) of Unhappy Consciousness as a "musical" approach to thinking (*Denken*). Young Rameau is well aware that the Beyond of the religious tradition is empty. But he still has the religious yearning for the Beyond, and he finds in the Opera a "Heaven" that is still valid for him.⁸⁰ The crucial point is that he still needs to look beyond both this world and himself. He is not just the shape of Insight, but the shape of Faith disconsolate. He "looks heavenwards, and his object is the Beyond of the actual world."

- 43./526. This consciousness that all is vanity is itself vain. It understands the dialectic of language, so it knows how to express and judge every substantial moment in its contradictory aspect; but it does not know how to grasp the unity. It is the soul of this dialectic which it generates as its self-consciousness. It seeks power and wealth, which are the recognized powers, over which it has power. As the self of these powers, it is beyond them in its talk. This singular self becomes what is spiritually valid. The pure I is the positive object.

The "double reflection of the real world into self" is double, because the self that is the conscious controlling power of the world knows itself to be finite and mortal. The emptiness of things is its own emptiness. All is vanity. What everything is *in itself* is what it is for the human judges. That means that everything is a contradictory mass of possible judgments; but also the real world *in itself* is estranged from itself, sundered from this mass of judgments which is reality *for itself*. Rameau, the self for whom things truly are as they are universally, is just as much a finite moment in the whirl of vain opinions as any of the naïvely arrogant nobles and bourgeoisie whom he laughs at. He must live just as they must; and he will die just as they will. Only the truth of his thought survives.

Rameau laughs at everything; his part is that of the Fool. But that means that he is laughing at himself too. He sees and expresses the vanity of all the values in his world; yet he sees also that he belongs to that world, and that he cannot stand outside it. In his own eyes, he is as *vile* as anyone in his world; all that distinguishes him from those whom he most despises, is his open-eyed honesty about how everything in the cultured world is and must be. So when *mein Herr Philosoph* claims that it is his own "honesty" that distinguishes him from Rameau, Rameau retorts that it is not the philosopher's "honesty" that he envies, but his capacity to tell

lies.⁸¹ The one lie that Rameau himself will have nothing to do with, is the pretence that he is better than his world. But how he knows that this lie is what must be avoided he cannot tell us. He can only say that everything is vanity, including his own witty commentary upon the sycophantic world (a world which in all its vileness is preferable to any “possible world” that does not include him).

What Rameau (and Diderot) can express adequately is the *contradictory* character of actuality. Anyone who does not understand what Hegel means by his insistence that finite reality is based on contradiction, is directed by this paragraph to study *Rameau's Nephew*. Nothing simply is what we say it is. It turns round into its opposite, and this “contradiction” is the deeper truth about what it really is. Everything is “estranged” from itself, because it departs from its given definition (and, of course, it can be seen otherwise in the first place). The logical impossibility of any postulated stabilization is the *reality of contradiction*. Even if everything seems harmonious to us, and we cannot see any good reason for the harmony to be upset, there must be another point of view from which disturbance appears as necessary.

In this world of vain opinions, the freedom of the self that sees the truth must be maintained by the control of “power and wealth.” The political authority of the State has vanished from paragraph 526, because in the inversion of the “noble” world-view, the State-Power ceased to be the substantial end of rational activity, and became simply the means for guaranteeing the free possession of Wealth.⁸² We have now gone beyond the simple inversion that was involved in court-existence. We have reached the comprehensive inversion in which Wealth is not an end in itself either. All of substantial reality—private as well as public life—has been inverted into the free existence of the self. This self does not work for a living. It knows quite well that wealth could never constitute its substance, its “worth” in the world. Wealth is necessary, but it has no selfhood. It exists *for* the self; and it must be got freely, without the sacrifice of the self’s freedom. Rameau gets it by the “power” of his linguistic freedom. He gets it by his wit. He is not arrogant about possessing it, but there is a sublated arrogance in his laughing behind his mask at those who have it, while he gets it from them by making them laugh.

Even this sublated arrogance of wit, however—the superiority of seeing the vanity of the whole rat-race and its self-confident but contradictory judgments—is only another moment of vanity. The freedom that gets beyond social arrogance, goes to the same death as arrogance; and it is just as vainly selfish in struggling against that fate. How can the freedom of the truly universal insight into the cultural relativity of all positions and all values establish itself as *objective*? How can it be made stably visible as the abiding truth of this flux, the unity and oneness of the whirl of contradictions? This self knows that it is beyond all this contradictory relativity. The seriousness of all that effort to maintain actual values is an enormous joke. But how can the truth of this insight become something more serious, less evanescent, than laughter? The “pure I” is its only positive object. How can its insight become objective? The other aspect of the “double reflection”—the “reflection into thought” or “towards Heaven”—provides the answer.

Notes

1. J. Loewenberg (1965, 211) believes that Hegel's transition from the Roman Empire to the French Enlightenment is not a historical one. R. C. Solomon (1983, 495) takes the same view. My reading will show, I hope, that they are mistaken. (See S. Dellavalle [1992], chap. V for a reading that agrees with mine.)

2. I have followed J. B. Baillie in using "estrangement" always for this term. I use "alienation" for *Entäusserung* (and occasionally also "emptying out"). In most of the non-German literature, "alienation" (and its cognates) is used regularly for *Entfremdung*—and frequently for both words without distinction. For a study of the two terms in the *Phenomenology*, see J. Gauvin (1962). J. Robinson (1977, 23–26) provides a good brief survey for Anglophone readers. There is a fuller discussion by L. Dupré (1972). See also J. McCumber (1989, 55–58) and note 7 below.

3. In the *Phenomenology* the word *Bildung* has a general and a special sense. The whole book is our *Bildung* for comprehending the *Weltgeist* (see pars. 28–29). F. Chiereghin (1968) interprets *Bildung* as the perfect development of the Understanding. I believe there is a logical connection between the social task of *Bildung* in this section, and the "inversion" of the Understanding from the standpoint of Necessity to that of Freedom. "*Reason* operating as Understanding" is what we have in the Enlightenment.

J. H. Smith (1988, 399) is right in saying that *Bildung* is the key-concept of the whole book, but that the concept evolves. In Hegel's chapter VI B we are observing it in its own stage of self-estrangement. W. van Dooren (1973) provides a useful survey of the concept's uses. Many interpreters—U. Müllges (1972), Q. Lauer (1976, 194–199), J. L. Navickas (1976, 222ff.), R. C. Solomon (1983, 552–559) for example—discuss estranged *Bildung* only in the "demythologized" shape that it assumes in the Enlightenment. P.-J. Labarrière (1968, 128–134) avoids this mistake, but only by summarizing in Hegel's own terms. As is often the case, J. Hyppolite (1974, 376–425) makes the best showing. See also the essay of C. Hauser (1987). H.-G. Gadamer (1975, 11–12) is certainly right in connecting *Bildung* with the theological concept of the "image" (*Bild*) of God in every human. Heidegger offers a "purification" validated by paragraphs 77–78—cf. P. C. Smith (1971, 64).

4. Gibbon (Everyman, I, 132) calls Caracalla "the common enemy of mankind."

5. I have chosen him because the powerful echoes of Eteocles and Polyneices (and even of Jocasta) in the story as told by Gibbon, make it certain that Hegel would notice him. Gibbon even presents Septimius Severus as a wise and prudent monarch (like Oedipus)—see *Decline and Fall*, Everyman, I, 109–134.

6. Hegel says "*its* substance is its alienation itself, and the alienation is the Substance." This is *not* (I think) mere rhetorical repetition for emphasis. The two formulas refer to two successive phases in the historical evolution of society, or at least to two different aspects of the evolving world. "*Its* substance" is the social structure of the actual world of the Empire's "decline and fall." "The Substance" (capitalization is mine) is the ideal world of the Universal Church. *Entäusserung* is the process through which the transition from the substantiality of "actual consciousness" to that of "pure consciousness" takes place.

7. The words *Entfremdung* (estrangement) and *Entäusserung* (alienation, emptying out) both occur in this paragraph. *Entäusserung* first occurred in the Unhappy Consciousness (see par. 229). The fullest discussion of the terms in English is that of Richard Schacht (1971). His views are ably summarized by M. Inwood (1992, 37–38) who disagrees with them in part. (I do not perfectly agree with either of them.) There is also a book in French by C. Boey (1970).

Entfremdung was the problem in the *Phenomenology* with which the young Marx was most concerned (see C. J. Arthur, 1986, chapter 7, for a good account). Since the publication of his “Paris Manuscripts” in 1932, the concepts have been much discussed. See for instance, G. Lukács (1948 [1975, 537–68]); J. van der Meulen (1958); M. Franklin (1960); A. Massolo (1969); C. Boey (1972a); R. Racinaro (1975, chapter 8); J. McCumber (1989, 55–58). J. Torrance (1977, chapter 2) has put the historical development of the concept into its natural order.

8. The “knowledge” of Faith begins with the reconciliation of Unhappy Consciousness in the Confessional. It is actually “given” to us by the *mediator* who *advises* us about the Will of God. Thus, the *reconciled* Unhappy Consciousness is the axis upon which the world-concept of Faith spins (while it is at rest). Compare chapter 2, note 70. In Pure Insight the estrangement of “consciousness” from “self-consciousness” is overcome, but that between self-consciousness and actuality (“thought” and “matter”) is accentuated—compare Dupré (1972, 220).

9. The word *Bildung* has several meanings in Hegel’s usage (compare first *Pilgrimage* chapter 1, note 115). For a brief history of the evolution of the concept in Hegel’s thought see O. Pöggeler (1980). There is a more detailed discussion in F. Nicolini (1955). R. K. Maurer deals with the concept helpfully several times (1965, 49, 61, 160–161 etc.; 1980, 49). See also C. Boey (1972b), W. van Dooren (1973) and C. Hauser (1987).

I shall take the word in the sense of “self-formation” and let the context of the historical interpretation determine the specific sense. The general movement is from a “self-disciplinary” activity to a “self-expressive” (and absolutely critical) thought. (*Bildung* in the *System of Ethical Life* has the positive sense of self-enjoyment—compare *Night Thoughts*, 114–116. This sense occurs in the Preface (par. 4)—but even there the “laborious working out” and the critical “result” are dominant in Hegel’s mind.)

10. The word which Miller twice translates as “takes possession of” is *bemächtigen*. His translation is correct, but the sense of *active control* does not come through as clearly in English as it does in German. I have used “master” because in the world of *Bildung*, Self-Consciousness is divided between God and humanity in the same way that it was divided between Lord and Serf. God’s servants are moving from pure consciousness (of Him) to pure insight (of their own). Since no one in the world of *Bildung* is hamstrung by the unhappiness of her sinful consciousness, everyone is implicitly in the world of autonomous Reason. But this *implicit* rationality is only the stabilized shape of the Unhappy Consciousness—i.e. it only means that everyone goes to Confession regularly. *Bildung* is essentially “justification by works”; but it grows out of, and rests upon “justification by faith.” That foundation in Faith is what Insight will take away from it; for rational insight makes us aware that our *work* aims to transplant Heaven here on earth. Once we have “taken possession of” ourselves and our world we do not need the “leading strings” of the divinely authorized order. That is what the Enlightenment points out to Faith.

11. Hegel would certainly be delighted with the hypothesis that the *Characters* of Theophrastus were planned and written as part of a treatise on *Comedy* (see P. Vellacott’s introduction to his translation of *Theophrastus and Menander*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1967).

12. Compare especially the following early fragments: *Ausser dem mündlichen Unterricht* (Nohl, 30–32; Fuss and Dobbins, 59–61); *Christus hätte zwölf Aspostel* (Nohl, 32–35; Fuss and Dobbins, 61–65). These are from 1794, Hegel’s first year in Bern. But from the same year comes *Jetzt braucht die Menge*, which states in slightly more moralistic terms the thesis of the “Condition of Right” and “Culture” (Nohl, 70–71; Fuss and Dobbins, 101–103). So

perhaps the more reconciliatory view suggested in my *Toward the Sunlight*, 163–164 is correct—compare *inniefeln ist Religion* (Tübingen, 1793, Nohl, 355–357). In any case these Bern fragments should be reexamined in the present connection.

S. B. Smith (1992, 105–106) is correct in arguing that it is not the educational lesson of enforced labor, but the Christian ideology of life that leads to the abolition of serfdom.

13. *Paradiso* III, 85, and IV, 28–63. It is certain that at some stage Hegel excerpted *Paradiso* IV; he quoted lines 124–130 in his Berlin lectures on the *Philosophy of Spirit* (sec. 440 Zusatz; Wallace and Miller, 180n.).

14. This is from the Victorian hymn “All things bright and beautiful” written by Frances Alexander in 1848. The substitution of “rich man” for “noble” makes it a perfect expression of the climax of Culture where all distinctions have been quantified as Wealth.

15. The main fault of L. P. Hinchman’s treatment (1984, 107ff) is that he ignores this and interprets the whole movement of Culture as if “Absolute Culture” were present from the first. That is a bad mistake (which he ought to have avoided because he can see (1984, 112) that the “proud vassal” (of par. 505) is a “medieval” *Gestalt*.

16. Indeed, this is true at every stage of Spirit, because we are dealing with “ideologies” that can always be cynically manipulated by the natural self, rather than substantially adopted or identified with. But in the *estranged* world this option is explicit. (Hegel’s political understanding of the Middle Ages has been expounded by P. Hindler [1979].)

17. The Earth of Spirit is not explained; but it logically has to be the *actuality* of the Family, and of Divine Law. What the social structure of it is can be discovered in paragraphs 493–494.

18. As we shall soon see that is a *self-alienated* name for it. But an unambiguous “immediate” name for it is hard to find; it is the immediate “life-community” of paragraphs 169–172.

19. This is a sign that we are on the right path of interpretation. If we seek to connect the *masses* of the Substance directly with the four Estates then “the Earth” has to be the peasantry (who were certainly involved in the upheaval of 1789, and were affected by it). But the two masses of the Ethical Substance were the whole community seen as natural (families) and as spiritual (*polis*) respectively; and if we follow that analogy we can see how the Earth stands not just for those who cultivate it, but for the “living” that everyone has to secure, and for the natural life that must go on even in revolutionary times (the “fast knot of this articulation”).

20. In Hegel’s theory of the Earth-Process the place of Fire is at the centre of the Earth itself; and this is where Hell Fire is, in the popular mythology of the Universal Church. So we might think of the universal Unhappy Consciousness of our fallen condition—our Earthly City destined for damnation in Augustine’s image—as the “extant, still unspirited” universal community of Fire. Hell is the *fixed* value that drives the engine of Faith as long as the fire of thinking is confined to the Clergy. We shall soon learn (par. 494) that it is the “aether”—the comprehensive “heavenly fire” of the classical philosophy of nature—that is the “animating unity” of the whole. At that stage the dialectical character of the “fire of faith” will become apparent. Faith turns into “Insight” because its real objective is not the other world, but the establishment of a rational society in this world. Even the ideal community of the Church Triumphant is comprehended within the sphere of the *Staatsmacht*.

21. Miller mistranslates this as “Spirit is itself at once the essence and the actuality of the whole.” (Baillie is even worse.)

22. The doctrine of Earth as the “body” in which the *Logos* is permanently “incarnate” is stated in the “Triangle of Triangles” (1802?). For the full text of this fragment see *Hegel-Studien* 10, 1975, 133–135; a translation will be found in *Night Thoughts*, 184–188.

23. The prototype of *Entfremdung* in this form was the actualization of Stoicism in Law (the Good) and of Scepticism in Military Anarchy (the Bad). That was a complementary relation of simple “otherness.” It has become “estrangement” because of the explicit sun-dering of the world of pure Thought from the world of Experience.

24. Hegel changed his mind about this under the impact of the Revolution of 1830 (and by then he had been using Prussia as the best model for ten years). So the hypothesis that when he decided to revise and reprint the *Phenomenology* just as Revolution was raising its ugly head again in Paris, his planned apologia for the book as “an early work, peculiar [to my formation?]” and “relative to the prevailing time of its composition” (*G.W.* IX, 448) was a deliberate accommodation with the *Staatsmacht* of his own Prussia is very attractive. (Even if he was perfectly sincere, his supposed change of heart about the scientific status of the book, was based on an evaluation of his “experience” that has no *absolute* status and need not be valid for us.)

25. Calling it “the Good” (rather than “the One”) indicates that its immediate status is not *final*, and that its logical unchangeability will be *enriched* by development. We are following that logical development (in an alienated form) now. Faith and Insight *together* are “the Good” as Reason.

26. My judgment is determined by the object in which I *find* myself. So there need not be a conscious decision involved, because I find myself already in a certain “estate of life” when I am born. One could hardly enter the First estate without a *choice*; to *choose* the Second would be unusual (though it is quite possible to have entry into it as one’s goal). The case that shows up the problematic character of the “choice” language best is the judgment of the outsider who becomes “contemptuous.” Does Young Rameau “choose” his judgment of life? He seems rather to be *driven* to it. A rational choice for him would be the independence of Pure Insight (which he cannot achieve).

27. Students of the Introduction should note the recurrence of the terminology of paragraphs 82–87, and observe the following development carefully as an illustration of what it means.

28. Women could not get into the public service in Hegel’s world; but the imperative of Subjective Reason has put them there. And of course, the categorical force of the “mixed” judgments is “dispositional” as compared with the ethical knowledge of True Spirit. In Civil Society no one is required to *die* for what they “know.”

29. When Hegel says “the doubled judgment . . . presented the principles separately [*getrennt*]” he means that only the judgment of what is *good* is serious in each case; what is called “bad” is *ignored*.

30. The significance of the *reine* in “*reine Ansichsein*” is that the administration must be “rational” (i.e., just and evenhanded).

31. The original of Dick Whittington was only a “poor boy” in a very relative sense; and he was never a nobody. Born about 1358, he was the youngest son of Sir William Whittington of Pauntley in Gloucestershire. So he came from the landed gentry, but he had no estate of his own. His father died when he was thirteen, and at that point he went to London as apprentice to a rich mercer, Sir John Fitz-Warren. In view of his birth and background, his subsequent marriage to Sir John’s daughter Alice is not as remarkable as the folk-myth makes it appear. Eventually he became Mayor of London *four* times (1397, 1398, 1406, 1419); and he was an M.P. in 1416. He died childless in 1423, and left his considerable estate to charities. (The myth of the poor boy whose cat aids him in making a fortune appears in

German, Italian, Russian and Danish tradition; the English version has simply become attached to a suitable historical subject.)

32. Not simply *edel* but *edelmüthig*—compare the *megalo-psychia* of Aristotle (*Ethics*, IV, 3).

33. “Morally base or vile” is one of the meanings of *niederträchtig*—and it will apply here. The “arrogant” courtier who despises the “vile bourgeois” is himself morally contemptible. But he does not recognize the fact; and Rameau’s Nephew, who recognizes his own vileness, is not *simply* vile or ignoble. He has a new kind of nobility that derives from his clear-eyed honesty. L. P. Hinchman has fallen into this error (1984, 111); and so has S. Dellavalle (1992, chap. 5) who possesses the signal merit of having recognized the medieval aspect of *Bildung*. The right road was indicated in De Negri’s translation.

34. Miller mistranslates this. Baillie (525) had it right.

35. One might think it fair to object that (as in the case of the simple Cynics) there is nothing *secret* about Rameau’s malice, and that his rebellion is already explicit. But he masks his seriousness as a *joke*. So his real commitment *is* secret.

36. Compare Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 620; Bowen, 51. The world of *Bildung* is atomized, and abstractly reflective. But even in its return to itself as “absolute Culture” it remains intuitive at the level of *Vorstellung*. Hence even its best “philosophy” can be done in a literary mode; and therefore Diderot’s dialogue is its ideal *Gestalt*.

37. We are still anticipating, but we can now begin to understand Hegel’s prophecy at the end of paragraph 496.

38. J. Loewenberg (1965, 217–218) wants to maintain that the reference is not specifically to the Ancien Régime, but is generalizable to all regimes of that type. I think that Hegel was always interested in the *individuality* of social systems, rather than in “typing” them. But in any case, he regarded the French Revolution as *uniquely* significant; and in this section of his text he wants to understand how it came about.

39. This is an *openly* military world, so the rights of a female hardly ever amount to full “peerage.” Whatever rights law or custom may give her must usually be mediated in actual exercise through the will of some male representative.

40. For Hegel’s view of Pitt see N. Waszek (1986).

41. For a first approach to the *systematic* significance of Hegel’s conception of language see J. Burbidge (1982); for a systematic development of Hegel’s Logic on this basis see J. McCumber (1993). A useful discussion of what the doctrine means, at the level of Absolute Spirit, will be found in S. Deguchi (1984).

On Hegel’s philosophy of language in general see D. J. Cook (1973), M. Züfle (1968) and J. Simon (1966). On the focal importance of this paragraph see especially T. Bodhammer (1969, 94ff), C. Boey (1972a, 1972b). Flay’s note (1984, 360–361, n. 10) gives some other useful references. But the literature is expanding rapidly.

42. See the first sentence of paragraph 512 (two sentences in Miller’s translation).

43. A. Klein (1973) distinguishes between the *Dasein* and the *Wirklichkeit* of Spirit in language. This is an important distinction; and in the dialectic of the *Werk* (pars. 405–415) we have seen how speech can be a mere *Dasein*. But Hegel is showing here how it can become effective (*wirklich*) simply as spoken words heard by witnesses (or sealed with royal seal etc.). The comment of D. J. Schmidt should be remembered (1988, 181–184): “language must be recognized not merely as the expression of Spirit but as the embodiment of Spirit” (183).

44. Baillie’s translation of “welcher ihm aber noch nicht selbst zukömmt”—which, however, does not yet belong to the universal itself—is preferable to Miller’s “which, however,

does not yet conform to the universal”; and the “secluded inner spirit, the self as such” (par. 507) is now called “the will still remaining in ambush.”

45. Both Baillie and Miller translate as if the subject must be what precedes the verb (as in English). But it is more credible that the “unity” is the active agent throughout.

46. Perhaps his admiration for Napoleon affected his conceptual claims about “Monarchy.” But fortunately that difficult problem does not enter into our “Science.” The lesson of the “Science of experience” is clearly that no philosopher can legislate for another age (or even for his own).

47. *The Coming of the French Revolution* (trans. R. R. Palmer), New York, Vintage, 1958, 21.

48. Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*, chapter 26 (compare the translation by M. P. Pollack, London, Everyman, 1961, 278).

49. Quoted in E. R. Tannenbaum, *European Civilization since the Middle Ages*, New York, Wiley, 1965, 163 col. 1.

50. It was Saint-Simon, I believe, who said that Louis XIV surrounded himself with nothing but “vile bourgeoisie.” L. de Saint-Simon’s (1675–1755) *Mémoires* was published (garbled) in 1780—see Lucy Norton (ed.), *Saint-Simon at Versailles*.

51. Compare Rameau’s *Nephew*, Goethe, *Werke* (Berlin Edition), XXI, 583; Bowen, 20–21.

52. Goethe, *Werke* (Berlin Edition), XXI, 583; Bowen, 21. J. Hyppolite (1972, pp 404–417) is very good on this whole transition. Onay Sözer (1981/1982) asks whether the language of “Absolute Culture” is the model for Hegel’s language. He does not give a definite answer; but the answer is: No. (This is the triumph of *dialectic*, but not yet the language of *speculation*.)

J. L. Navickas (1976, 229–130) does partly follow the logic of the movement here. The natural self creates in its language a new “cultured” self. But then the grasping of linguistic freedom becomes the gateway for a comprehensive inversion of nature and culture through a breakaway into an inner world that belongs no longer to God but to the self. *Thinking* is liberated from its conscious mode of Faith into Self-Consciousness.

53. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 586; Bowen, 23.

54. The “mixed” judgments would already be contradictory, if they were not “abstract.”

55. Compare the fragment of Anaximander (D.-K. 12, B 1). I suppose that Hegel did not know this in 1807. But the coincidence of expression is “providential” because the “honorable consciousness” of the Understanding is here witnessing the birth of Reason.

56. He is firm about this himself (see Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 578; Bowen, 16). This is at the very point where the *philosophe* says that he is the kind of critic who ignores the fact “that he is repudiating his own *Dasein*.” (Young Rameau soon makes it clear that he is *not* blind to this. But if he were in any sense a representative of the proletariat—as M. Westphal suggests [1978, 165]—the accusation would be absurd. One thing he will never do, however, is work for a living.)

57. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 569; Bowen, 9. J. Hulbert (1983, 284) is quite right in saying that Hegel does not give the “Moi” equal treatment with Rameau. The interaction of concepts in Hegel’s dialectic requires a far more naïve respondent than “Diderot.” But when H. R. Jauss (1984, 173) says that Hegel “supremely disregards the rules of the game of citation,” one knows that this “game” must be too new for Hegel to be guilty of any sin by our familiar standards. Those who think that true dialogue *disappears* in a dialectical philosophy of Spirit, must be left to their sceptical sense of superiority—unless this commentary as a whole can persuade them to take another look. Hegel is not writing dialogue; he is only

observing a logical *dialectic* which shows us why rational life must always continue to be dialogue. But life is not this pseudo-dialogue in which *Diderot* (not Hegel) presents an unhappy Cynic as necessarily triumphant.

58. The author's own position comes near to the surface at least in his introductory judgment: "When someone of this kind comes into a social circle, he is like a bit of yeast that works in the whole, and gives everyone part of his natural individuality back. He shakes and stirs us, brings praise or blame to the lips, drives the truth out into the open, makes us know the upright folk, and unmasks the rascals. That is when a rational man pays heed, and sorts out (*sondert*) his company" (Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 569; Bowen, 9). But the relevant "uprightness" in this sorting is the possession of the rational insight that enables one to appreciate Rameau's "yeast."

59. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 665; Bowen, 89. Apparently this was not historically accurate. J.-F. Rameau's wife died shortly before the supposed conversation. But he was an Abbé already before his marriage (which took place in 1757, and was not the social triumph that Diderot speaks of earlier in the text [Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 569; Bowen, 9]).

60. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 571, 622–623; Bowen, 11, 86–88. But it is the "royal Dog" (as Diogenes called Aristippus of Cyrene—Diogenes Laertius, II, 66) whom Rameau most resembles. He comments negatively on Diogenes' austere diet; and his ideal of following nature is to keep the stomach and bowels functioning well (cf. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 587, 615, 622, 663; Bowen, 24, 47, 53, 87).

61. See especially Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 578–579; Bowen, 16–17. (Pure Insight, when we reach it, does not suffer from any self-contempt.)

62. The fuller context of Hegel's first quotation is as follows:

He heaped and jumbled together thirty different airs, French, Italian, comic, tragic—in every style. Now in a deep bass he goes right down to Hell, then straining in falsetto he tore to shreds the heights of the air, imitating the while the stance, walk and gestures of the characters; being in succession furious, mollified, lordly, sneering. First a damsel weeps and he reproduces her kittenish ways; next he is a priest, a king, a tyrant; he threatens, commands, rages. Now he is a slave and obeys. He calms down, is heartbroken, complains, laughs; never overstepping the proper tone, speech, or manner called for by the part. (Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 640–641; Bowen, 68).

63. Only the conclusion of the passage which Hegel marks as his second quotation is actually quoted verbatim from Goethe's translation; and the context in Diderot is the following:

One could not wish for more—in a delicacy of voice, expressive strength, true sorrow. He dwelt on the places where the musician had shown himself a master. If he left the vocal part, it was to take up the instrumental, which he abandoned suddenly to return to the voice, linking them so as to preserve the connection and unity of the whole, gripping our souls and keeping them suspended in the most singular state of being that I have ever experienced. Did I admire? Yes, I did admire. Was I moved to pity? I was moved. *But a streak of derision was interwoven with these feelings and denatured them.*

Yes, you too would have burst out laughing at the way in which he aped the different instruments. With swollen cheeks and a somber throaty sound, he would give us the horns and bassoons. For the oboes he assumed a shrill yet nasal voice, then

speeded up the emission of sound to an incredible degree for the strings, for whose tones he found close analogues. He whistled piccolos and warbled traverse flutes, singing, shouting, waving about like a madman, being in himself dancer and ballerina, singer and prima donna, all of them together and the whole orchestra, the whole theater; then redividing himself into twenty separate roles, running, stopping, glowing at the eyes like one possessed, frothing at the mouth. (Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 641–642; Bowen, 69).

Hegel quotes only the sentence I have italicized.

64. The “quotation” begins with a paraphrase of the following passage: “I was overcome by so much cleverness and baseness, by Ideas so accurate [*richtig*] and at the same time so false, by a perversion of feeling so complete, a shamelessness so unabashed, and a frankness so uncommon” (Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 586; Bowen, 23). (D. W. Price [1991, 226] has pointed out that Hegel makes the triumph “self-inverting” by adding this comment from what he calls “the Pimp scene.”)

The “melody of the Good and True” and “the whole scale of feelings” are discussed in the text. The expression “a hotch potch (*Faselei*) of wisdom and folly” seems to be all Hegel’s own.

65. Much of this is described in the excerpts cited in notes 62 and 63. But the whole passage should be read and studied in context.

66. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 638–640; Bowen, 66–68.

67. Compare the philosopher’s description of him at the beginning of the dialogue with his own account of his situation at the end: Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 567–568 (Bowen, 8); and *Werke* XXI, 665 (Bowen, 88–89). In Goethe’s rendering he is called first “eine Zusammensetzung von Hochsinn und Niederträchtigkeit” (568). The modes of Hegel’s cultural consciousness are *edelmuthiges* and *niederträchtiges* Bewusstsein.

68. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 569; Bowen, 9. L. Trilling (1972, chapter 2) discusses Hegel’s use of the dialogue, and faults him for not recognizing that a critique of conventional morality was Diderot’s *own* intention. But he ascribes to Hegel himself the view that “moral judgment [is] nothing but retrograde” (33); and this is, of course, a mistake, because the overthrow of “utilitarianism” is necessary in Hegel’s view to the *birth* of the “moral view of the world.” It appears to me that Hegel fully recognizes how *radical* the intention of Diderot as author was. But that, of course, is a matter of subjective judgment. (C. Boey [1972] says that Rameau is *implicitly* the moral self; this is the valid insight on which Trilling depends.)

69. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 590–591; Bowen, 26.

70. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 663; Bowen, 87. Compare especially Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 580, 584, 596–597 (Bowen, 18, 21, 31). But we should note that the final word of contempt—“Kotseele”—refers back to Rameau’s earlier characterization of the pursuit of wealth thus:

He: . . . I have put something by, the time has passed, and that is so much gained.

I: Lost, you mean.

He: No, no, gained. Every minute one gets richer. One day less to live, or one more dollar in the bank is all the same. The main thing in life is just this then: to go to stool freely, easily, pleasantly and copiously every night. *O stercus pretiosum!* That is the great outcome [*Resultat*] of life in all of its estates. At the last all are equally rich: Samuel Bernard, who by dint of stealing, swindling, and fraud

leaves twenty-seven millions in gold is no different from Rameau who leaves nothing. Rameau who will have a shroud from public charity to be buried in. The dead man hears no bells toll. A hundred priests making themselves hoarse in church are wasted on him, and so is the long procession of burning candles. His soul is not walking in step with the master of the ceremonies. (Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 587–588; Bowen, 24).

In this passage, the point that money is saved in order to be spent is only the material ground of the deeper claim that the real form of human riches is in the experience of life, lived, remembered, and appreciated. This is the comic *Aufhebung* in enlightened culture of the tragedy symbolized for Unhappy Consciousness by Luther's constipation (par. 225).

71. The "wisdom of Nature" is found in Robinet's *De la Nature* (Amsterdam, 1763). We shall learn more of it later on (see pars. 557, 578). But we have already encountered one form of this development in Virtue and the Way of the World, where the ideal of political and religious freedom declines into the political obedience doctrine of the enlightened despot of *Sans Souci*.

72. See, for instance, Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 577–578 (Bowen, 15–16); XXI, 606 (Bowen, 39); and XXI, 629 (Bowen, 58–59).

73. *De la nature* (Amsterdam, 1763, 67–68, 138).

74. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 603; Bowen, 37. Diderot actually wrote the same anecdote to Sophie Volland (12.x.1760) as the story of his Scottish friend, Hoop. But I think that Hegel would take it as a fiction, just as I did before I knew this.

75. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 606; Bowen, 39.

76. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 628; Bowen, 58.

77. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 597; Bowen, 31–32.

78. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 647; Bowen, 74.

79. Rousseau, "Discours" in *Oeuvres* (1782) XIII, 33, 37–38, 50, esp. 59–60; Voltaire, *Oeuvres* (1784, LV, 238). (When Rameau remarks that he will not give his own son the education of an ancient Spartan as a preparation for life in the culture of Paris, he is commenting on Rousseau's *Discourse* [Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 650; Bowen, 76].)

80. Goethe's text (XXI, 665) gives only the name of the composer, D'Auvergne, for the performance to which the bell summons Rameau. But his note (XXI, 667) conveys the further important information that D'Auvergne's opera *Les Troqueurs* (1753) was the first French opera in the new Italian style. Thus the connection of Rameau's musical "Beyond" with the hope of a political revolution—which was already made clear earlier—is recalled at the end again; and we can be sure that Hegel would be sensitive to this.

81. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 651; Bowen, 77.

82. L. P. Hinchman (1984, 274, n. 1) saw that the disappearance of the qualification "State-Power" is significant. But he was not able to say why it was justified.

Chapter 6

Faith and Reason

VI B.I(b): Faith and Pure Insight

We are now leaving the actual world of Culture, and entering its world of thought. This sublates the actual contradiction of consciousness—its self-contempt; and that is the key to the phenomenological transition here. The shattered consciousness inverts the judgment of the noble mind. State-Power and Wealth are not “good” but “bad.” That is the first or simple inversion, the substitution of contempt for noble-mindedness. But this contempt has to admit that it is part of the contemptible world; and the self that can turn both against itself and against its world in contempt, is necessarily beyond its worldly self. This knowledge is a second inversion, the reinstatement of nobility at a higher level. In the comprehensive assertion of the identity of Good and Bad, what is implied is that the world of actual finite things has to be comprehended within a wider concept—the universe of pure thought.

Even the perfectly cultured consciousness cannot formulate this proposition consistently. Rameau knows that everything is what it is judged to be; and he knows that opposite judgments are necessarily valid. But he cannot get beyond this contradiction. Yet he knows that as a free thinker he is beyond it somehow; his problem is that although he has these pure thoughts, he does not yet know what thinking is. So in this next phase the two sides of the contradictory Concept go apart; and they are contemptuous of one another. Each side is safely beyond the world—and hence it is not self-contemptuous.

The advent of Faith as “the shape of a world” was with the Lutheran Reformation. Hegel treats “Faith” and “Pure Insight” as the complementary opposite sides of the Begriff because he held that the French Enlightenment completed the ideological programme of the Reformation. Luther abolished the distinction between clergy and laity in the religious community; the Enlightenment required that the subordination of “this world” to the “other world” (i.e. the leading strings of a supposedly higher Reason) should be abolished.¹

(a) The Transition to Pure Thought

- 1./527. Beyond the estranged world of culture lies the world of *pure* thought; but initially it simply presents itself. Even the disrupted consciousness still operates at the level of presentation. We can see it as the principle of *thinking*, but it cannot grasp itself so.

For itself it is only an actuality. The forms of pure thought previously encountered do not involve *actuality* in the way that this one does: Stoic thought was formal, the ideal of virtue was not yet actual, nor were the law or the standard of practical Reason. The “essence” of which estranged consciousness is *purely* conscious [the Kingdom of Heaven] is actual, but it is outside the actual world of this life.

Pure consciousness—the universe of thought—is the “substance” that “absolute culture” has put in the place of the actually contradictory world of nature and culture. We have seen how the simple Faith of Culture presupposes its “other world”; now, the contradictory nature of the actual world has made the transition to that “other world” necessary. And because Culture is *consciousness* (the subjective awareness of an object other than the self) this substance retains the character of “actuality.” For consciousness, true thoughts are “ideas” that we have, which “represent” a reality that subsists on its own account, and in its own independent place—a world of “eternal objects” or “essences.”

This Faith-Consciousness is rational, not empirical; but like empirical consciousness it is “presented,” *vorge stellt*. Because the presentation is only in thought (“in the mind” as we ordinarily say, or “within the self” in Hegel’s language) it can be contrasted with the empirical presentation of the world of actual experience. Ordinary experience has its ultimate point of reference in something sensory so that it is never “pure”; and in the terms of the contrast between the sensible and the mental, the whole world of “pure consciousness” is non-actual (*unwirklich*). But “overall” (*überhaupt*) this mental world is “still in the sphere and determinacy of actuality.” It remains the same sort of thing as the ordinary actual world, and has only “been elevated into another element,” the element of thought. So it has a rather paradoxical status: it exists only for thought, and can only be thought of, but the community that posits it thinks of it as having an actuality which, like that of sensible things, is other than any thoughtful awareness of it.

This is exactly what distinguishes it from the “pure thought” of Stoicism, the ideal to be achieved by Virtue, or the laws and testing standard of pure critical Reason. It is a “supersensible world” that exists already, and is quite independent of the thought that is conscious of it. The true thinking of the Stoic sage is directly identical with the pure thought of the Divine Reason; and that Reason is here present in the actual world as the Spirit that sustains its life. Similarly, the standard of Law-Testing Reason is identical with the rational consciousness (even more completely); and it is the essential character of the ideal of Virtue and of Reason’s Laws that they are *not yet* actual, but ought to be actualized. The thought-world of Self-Estranged Spirit, on the other hand, is actual, and is quite other than my thought of it; it is only “non-actual” in the sense of not being *perceptible*. It is not Here, it is Beyond. At this stage there are two levels of actuality—the actuality that is here and now, and the one that is *not actually accessible*, but which must be sought in a flight to another *world* from the world of here and now.

If we ignore the reference to “the shattered consciousness” the paragraph makes perfectly good sense, in spite of the opening reference to the “world of pure consciousness” as *unwirklich*. The world of sense-perception is actual for us, but the

eternal world of Heaven and Hell is the *comprehensively actual* world for the pure consciousness of Faith (even though it is not actually present).

But there is a serious problem still, because for most of this paragraph Hegel is explicitly talking about *das zerrissne Bewusstsein*; and that is what he must start from if he wants to maintain the *logical* continuity of his Science of Experience. So we have to understand how what he says about the *necessary actuality* of the “world of pure consciousness or thinking” is true for Pure Insight. For even if, as I have maintained, the shattered consciousness still contains the moment of Faith, it embraces it only in the *disconsolate* form of the faith which has learned that it has no access to the Beyond, and no certainty of its actuality at all.

This enlightened form of “unhappiness” illustrates the difference between Unhappy Consciousness and Faith proper. The “Vesper bell of the Abbé Canaye” summons both Rameau and the Abbé to the Opera, not to Church; and they both know perfectly well that the world of the Opera is not an “actual” world. It is the “Heaven” only of this evening’s escape from boredom and self-disgust. If we try to pin Rameau down to his expressed faith in the eventual triumph of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, he will cheerfully contradict himself and have the last laugh on us. For he is well aware that no “triumph” (either in musical taste or in politics) can be the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven; everything in this world is essentially contradictory and self-inverting, including every hope for the future. Furthermore, this operatic Heaven of the imagination is quite consciously *imagined*.

The surviving aspect of Faith in the shattered consciousness is not an *actual* Beyond. The Faith of the *zerrissne Bewusstsein* is itself shattered. Rameau has a conviction that the salvation of his soul is worth more than the securing of “natural” happiness and the comfortably regular movement of the bowels. But he does not know where to look for this salvation. How does he actually visualize the world of pure consciousness, in which “the dignity that nothing must destroy” subsists? This is just what he does not know. There is something “supersensible,” and its nature is of a purely intelligible kind. It is an order of “natural law,” and of “natural rights.” One can call it “God” (and be a “Deist”); or one can call it Matter (and be an “atheist”). But it makes no difference because in any case this purely intelligible entity, upon which our actual world of contradictory judgments is founded, is beyond the grasp of our minds. This is the fundamental “shattering” or “disruption” of Rameau’s world—the conviction that all knowing activity is directed towards something that is necessarily *actual*, but equally necessarily *unknowable*. It is Rameau’s concept of *knowledge* that is shattered; and because of that his open-eyed rationality is just as much a form of Faith as the religious confidence of the most simple-minded believer. There is a Beyond that he thinks of as “actual” too. But he does not know how it can be actual as anything except his free “self.” He has a kind of “rational faith”—or at least he knows that he needs it. He *postulates* his own rational *dignity*.

The fact that Rameau’s faith itself is shattered, so that he has returned to the unhappiness of consciousness, is what gives *us* a different perspective upon his situation.² Thanks to the circle that we have made from the Sceptical overthrow of

Stoic rationalism to the consciousness of “pure culture” we can see that the shattering of enlightened rationalism into absolute contradiction arises from the shattering of the concept of knowledge itself into the form of “consciousness.” Pure thought knows *itself*—and the shattered consciousness that recognizes the universally necessary contradictoriness of all finite consciousness of “actuality” must still accept itself—as the “self-equivalence of pure thought.” That is what it already is “for us,” and we must now watch the whole process by which it comes to be so “for itself.”

We have been observing the process by which the simple commitment of the “noble mind” is transformed into the noble-minded self-contempt of rational insight. But now this antithesis must be syllogistically mediated into a self-conscious identity. The whole syllogistic process happens in the same cultural world; and it happens precisely because Insight does not know that it is a phenomenological *outcome* of the movement of Faith. We had to follow the cultural dissolution of Faith as the sustaining power of the actual social order first, in order to become clearly aware of this.

- 2./528. This is *Religion as Faith*. In the Unhappy Consciousness Religion was without *substance* [see par. 217]. In the ethical world it was part of the present world (family cult). Now it is consciousness of substance as estranged (being elsewhere).

The whole world of self-estranged Spirit rests on the *fulfilled* Shape of Self-Consciousness in chapter IV. “Faith” is primitively the *reconciled* shape of the Unhappy Consciousness. In this aspect it is the acceptance of an immediate revelation of the “Kingdom of God”—the supersensible realm of pure consciousness. The Unhappy Consciousness is unhappy because it knows itself to be cut off from the objective substance of reality; this knowledge is for it the rational self that is Beyond. All of its efforts to achieve unity with that self are failures; and the logical inevitability of the failure becomes ever more apparent. It comes in the end to the comforting knowledge that its own endless struggle is absolutely necessary, and hence rationally justified; and for this comfort, the intervention of another finite consciousness like itself is essential.

“Faith” proper is the *rationalized* shape of this empirical reconciliation. Faith does not need the external third voice as its mediator; it thinks for itself, but it still does not realize that it is doing that. Far from being cut off it is perfectly secure in its access to the Beyond. It does not need to express the essential truth of its situation by the use of an alien tongue that belongs to a world of the past, a tongue that is understood only by the external mediators. On the contrary, it knows that the real mediation between the finite self and the absolute (or Unchangeable) self is within the finite self, and is the work of Reason. So it expresses itself instinctively in the vernacular. That is why Dante’s *Comedy* is the perfect *Gestalt* of “the world of Spirit in self-estrangement.”³

In Dante’s poem, death is the abolition of empirical actuality, and the gateway to the eternal world of the higher actuality. In the *Antigone* or the *Eumenides*, on the other hand, death is only the passage to a new actual status in *this* world. The Furies that pursue Orestes are the spirit of vengeance that governs the natural

world of family feuds. The Furies are recognized and given their proper place within the community of the immediate consciousness of natural Reason. There is no rupture in this community between “empirical” consciousness and “pure” consciousness. The unity and self-equivalence of thought is mirrored perfectly in the variety and multiplicity of nature. Daughter succeeds to mother in the course of nature, and sons die for the City in the course of politics; but the unity of the City abides safely with the statue in Athena’s temple; and the identity of this generation with its forebears abides similarly in the shadowy, hearth-lit darkness of every home. The harmony between the Sky Father and Mother Earth is everywhere plain to view. In the justice of the daylight “war is the Father and king of all”; but the “unwritten right” of the darkness dictates that even our enemies are our brothers and must be returned reverently to the Earth. Here, beneath our feet, on the very battlefield where they fell, is the “underworld” to which they now belong; it is in the earthly homes from which they came that the reverent memory of them will maintain their presence in the ethical “substance” of which they were, still are, and will remain, individual moments.

In Dante this Underworld becomes the place of eternal torment. But even the direct inversion of the harmony of nature is only a symbol of the estrangement of pure and empirical reality. In Dante’s faith, the heaven and earth of this present world will pass away; but the real Heaven and Hell are eternal (only Purgatory belongs properly to this transient world). Dante’s Heaven and Hell have “gone forth out of the substance,” and the souls that he sees are *essences* estranged from their *Dasein*, their embodied being. He, the poet, *gives* these thought-worlds, and these intelligible essences, a *Gestalt* that makes the vision present to us likewise. But that, again, is only a symbol. The blessed and the damned, whom we see only “through a mirror and in a riddle,” are radically different from visible things generally, and from our embodied self-consciousness in particular. Dante embodies his faith in unforgettable pictures. But Faith itself asserts—and Dante shows brilliantly in his last Canto—that the *real* beatific vision “face to face” is something quite different. Faith is the *belief* in a knowledge that we cannot *now* have.⁴

- 3./529. Pure Consciousness seems only to be opposed to the actual world; but because opposition is thus essential to it, it is equally opposed to itself. This internal opposition is between its two shapes: Faith, and Pure Insight. Pure consciousness is rationally *universal*; it is the universal self as the negative might of the Concept. The *simplicity* of the thinking self, to which absolute culture reduced all social differences, is (for Faith) the rational soul in its union with God as a positive universal being. But the same dialectical movement that dissolved the social world into the thinking substance now dissolves the many souls into the identity of the pure self. Faith, or the pure consciousness of the thought-world, has a content that is shown to be imaginary; its objectivity is dissolved into the spiritual process of the self of Reason (which has the certainty of being itself all truth).

The definition of Faith as the belief in a knowledge that we cannot now have, is just what Pure Insight will drive into contradiction and *Zerrissenheit*, by forcing the

faithful believer to take it seriously. My explanation of what Hegel means by saying (at the end of par. 528) that "Religion here . . . is essentially *only* a faith" is concordant with the description of the primitive stance of pure consciousness: "This pure consciousness seems initially to have only the *world* of actuality opposed to it; but since it is the flight from this world, and hence the *determinacy* of the *antithesis* [to this world], it has this [determinacy] with respect to itself, and Faith makes up only one side of it." The pure consciousness of Faith seems at first to be the consciousness of the *other world*, and to have only *this world* opposed to it; but because it is defined as *not* of this world, the *pure* consciousness of Faith cannot in itself be like the consciousness of this world. It has itself the determinacy of antithesis with respect to itself; it is estranged *from itself*, and not just (as Faith naïvely assumes) from the world. Faith takes itself to be a kind of *knowledge*; but it also insists that it is *not yet* knowledge, that all of its expressions are merely symbols. Thus it flies not only from the world, but from its own self; and this is *necessary* because it knows (in a purely intellectual or thoughtful way) what it is not. It is *pure* consciousness; and just for this reason it knows that it cannot be what we call consciousness in the ordinary sense at all.

This alienated shape of Faith, this pure consciousness which knows that precisely because it is *pure*, it cannot be a proper consciousness at all, is the naïve form of the "shattered consciousness" (which knows all the substantial realities and values of the social world of culture to be contradictions). "Simple faith" already knows everything that Rameau can tell it about "the things of this world." It knows that the Good Samaritan is only an *espèce* at best; but it sees the motion of the substance of the actual world, and its "masses," as part of the Divine Plan. The faith in "Providence" is identical with Rameau's "prophecy"—and both sides know that the vision cannot literally come true here in this world.

The self of Absolute Culture is precisely the *Begriff*, the Concept of Reason, appearing for the first time in a self-conscious shape. It appears in its dialectical phase, as the absolute self, the simple thinking consciousness for which all the distinctions of the Understanding exist; and it appears "in the might of its negativity." It makes all the fixed distinctions (especially that of clergy and laity, which is resolved in universal literacy) reveal themselves as merely moments in the process of culture. Rameau and the Abbé Canaye meet at the Opera.⁵

This pure consciousness of the self as thinker is the "absolute distinction" of pure consciousness from empirical consciousness, and of every thinking consciousness from every other one. It is the Concept, it is "pure thinking," but like Faith it is self-estranged. It cannot *conceive* its own (unified) "being." Being, for it, is the world of *Vorstellungen*—but the actual world, not another one. The distinction is absolute here, because everyone must think for herself; and *mein Herr Philosoph* certainly claims to think quite differently from Rameau. But this absolute distinction is at the same time *no* distinction, because as thinkers we are all equal, and the truth of Reason is what is equally valid for all of us. It is in this sense that Reason is "the certainty that knows itself immediately as all truth." Rameau's "insight" is "the *absolute movement* and *negativity* of Spirit's own appearing." Hegel has already

shown why the nullification of all finite differences is the distinctive characteristic of the “absolute difference,” so Rameau’s contention that no one can really think differently about the social substance and its masses is a true rational insight. The way Rameau thinks is the way that the *vorgestellt* “essence” *is* for all thinkers. The thinking Concept will have to be self-consciously in control of itself, before we shall “know any better” than this.

But the “simplicity” of the absolute distinction is equally directly affirmed in the fundamental positive claim of Faith (“the inwardly *satisfied* essence and positive *rest* of Spirit’s appearing”). Faith says that every thinker is a soul, and that the salvation of the soul (in a resting union with God) is to be preferred to the gaining of the whole world. The world of pure consciousness is where everyone is recognized equally as a child of God. When Rameau insists that although he may willingly degrade himself, he will not submit to be degraded by someone else, he is asserting this fundamental position of Faith. The Spirit of culture is “driven back into itself out of the essenceless merely self-dissolving world of actuality” just as Faith is; and the cultured spirit knows that all selves are “rational beings” (or essences), just as Faith knows they are unique immortal souls.

Thus there are necessarily two shapes of pure consciousness: the simple consciousness of Faith, and the *self*-consciousness of Pure Insight. Spirit is the unnumbered unity of both, but in its present dialectical phase, they are necessarily separate, because of “estrangement” (their common conviction that “to be is to be *vorstellbar*” applied in opposite ways). Pure Insight concentrates on the necessary identity of all self-consciousness, and Faith upon the absolute “being” of all rational essences in God—their positive community. We can see already that in any conflict between them, the self-conscious moment which comprehends Spirit as a moving process must triumph. But we can see also that no simple triumph will be final, since Pure Insight, being “pure,” has no content. Its only concern is with the Concept of rational Self-Consciousness as the living and moving *form* of universal Reason. That is why Hegel’s careful account of the properly *rational* status of Faith is important. The content of Faith is the proper content of Reason.

Faith is a mode of thinking; and since it is “pure consciousness not pure self-consciousness,” it is a form of the Understanding. It takes itself to be thinking about a world outside or beyond the thinking consciousness itself: God’s Kingdom of “rational beings” or “essences.” We know already, however, that *Vorstellungen* are interpretations that exist only for the rational self-consciousness that formulates them. When Faith projects its thoughts in the *Vorstellung* of a substantial community of “rational essences” (i.e. Heaven) it is thinking with an impossible intention; it is trying to think of a *world of self-things*. This world can exist only “in the element of pure Self-Consciousness.” It is not, and cannot be, something other than self-consciousness.

Faith does, indeed, know that it is operating “in the element of pure self-consciousness,” for it asserts that “in God we live and move and have our being”; and by “God” Faith means precisely the absolute self-consciousness—or the “element” in which we live and move. But Faith does not know what the universality of Self-

Consciousness is (i.e., how it can “be”). That is what it has to learn from Pure Insight. It does not realize that “thought-essences” cannot be *presented* in the element of pure consciousness, in the way that things are presented in the element of empirical consciousness. We have seen that that mode of presentation is itself absolutely contradictory. Heaven and Hell are as “imaginary” as the beautiful world of the Opera.

Pure Insight resolves all the objective differences of the world of pure consciousness into the identity of the absolute Self. But as a concept of God this absolute Self of Pure Insight is completely inadequate, because it is a pure form, and hence completely empty.⁶

- 4./530. Both faith and insight are modes of thought and of retreat from actuality. So they are (1) in and for themselves; (2) related to the actual world; (3) related in thought to one another.

This paragraph sets the agenda for the discussion that follows. Perhaps the only point to be explicated in it is the way in which Pure Insight is withdrawn from or “returned out of” the actual world of Culture. Jean-François Rameau is very much a part of his culture. This has the important consequence that his absolute contempt for it is equally contempt for himself. The withdrawal from the cultural world into pure consciousness overcomes the contradiction of this self-contempt. Rameau insists that “a certain dignity attaches to the nature of man that nothing must destroy.”⁷ This is the self that is contemptuous of the ignoble flatterer and the world of flattery. Rameau’s departure to the Opera signals the withdrawal of this self from both flattery and contempt. His insight is necessary and universal. The conversation with *mein Herr Philosoph* is the beginning of the active transformation of the world that has produced it. Contempt turns into the project of salvation through enlightenment. Young Rameau would laugh if we took his revolutionary hope seriously; but Diderot—the thinker who comprehends both Rameau and *mein Herr Philosoph*—was serious enough. His is the “pure consciousness” that is now the “subject.”

Faith always insisted on the need for withdrawal from the world, and Rameau’s claim that every day is another dollar in the bank of experience is an enlightened rendering of “laying up treasure in Heaven.” So the two shapes of thought-withdrawal stand together in opposition to the actual world. We must observe first, how each of them “sets itself forth” (*sich darbietet*) as “in and for itself”; then how each relates to the world of ordinary actuality; and finally how they relate to one another. We shall begin with Faith; and as soon as we reach Pure Insight we shall find that our Judgment-Concept has completed itself, and the new phase (of “experience”) must begin.

(b) *The Gestalt of Faith (Pascal)*

- 5./531. (1) The self-sufficient Being of Faith is the real world raised into the universality of pure consciousness [i.e. God in his Kingdom]. For us God’s three persons are stages

in the evolution of the actual world; but for faith, he simply is and reveals himself by stages.

That Faith “does, of course, have its content in the element of the pure Self-Consciousness, in the same way [as Pure Insight]” (par. 529) is powerfully underlined when Hegel says here that “the side of *being in* and *for self* in the *believing* consciousness is its absolute object.” The assertion that Faith in and for itself is its own absolute object has to be interpreted in the context of the doctrine that “we live and move and have our being” *in* God. If we start from there we can make sense of the very peculiar assertions that follow.

“According to the concept of Faith its object is nothing but the real world raised into the universality of pure consciousness.” This is certainly the concept of pure consciousness that we have methodically arrived at. But how can it be reconciled with any familiar concept of the object of Faith? The answer is that it is a philosophical translation of the main article of the Faith: that God became Man “to the end that all who believe in Him may be saved.” This entails that the *Gegenstand* of Faith is not just the “other world,” but “this world, raised into the other world.”⁸ And when we reflect that the reduction of all finite experience to contradiction produced the transition to “pure consciousness” by rolling up all objective reality, all of the “actual world,” into the finite judging consciousness, we can see that the “world” of “pure consciousness” is the universe of mutually contradictory (and self-contradictory) judging selves inverted into the unity of the absolute consciousness that is both the “Body of Christ” and the universal self of Pure Insight.

On the side of Insight this universal Self is no longer self-contradictory or self-contemptuous, precisely because it knows itself to be universal; it embraces all judgments equally in the last judgment of rational Enlightenment. On the side of Faith, God is the absolute Self “in whom we live and move and have our being”; identifying the God of Faith with the “Kingdom of God” in thought, is Hegel’s way of distinguishing Faith as “consciousness” from Insight as “self-consciousness.” Our living and moving in God accounts for the claim that Faith “has its content too in the element of pure Self-Consciousness, of course” (par. 529); and this enables us to recognize the underlying identity between Faith and Pure Insight (which would otherwise not be at all obvious). “Pure Self-Consciousness” is both the Church Triumphant in Dante’s Rose, and the Brotherhood of Man brought to fruition by the Enlightenment.⁹

The rest of the paragraph is a programme for the interpretation of the assertions of Faith in accordance with the logical relation between the world of actuality, and that of “pure consciousness.” It is the identity implicit in self-estrangement that is the determining factor. There are not really *two* worlds, there is only one world *doubled*. This “doubling” is exactly what distinguishes Faith from Religion proper, just as it distinguishes Insight from proper rational comprehension.¹⁰

It would not be sensible to discuss the “organization of the world of Faith” in abstraction from the concrete details given in the next paragraph. But the comment that for Faith the moments form an eternal triad which has mysteriously

happened to move in its relation to the actual world, whereas for us the sequence is *necessary* (and therefore the motion is *essential*) makes a logical connection with the Unhappy Consciousness (see pars. 214–215); so a very brief review of the relation between Faith and Unhappy Consciousness is needed here.

The designation of the Body of Christ (the community of the faithful in God) as the object of Faith “in and for itself” makes Faith into the *third* relationship of the Changeable Consciousness with the Unchangeable. The Unhappy Consciousness reached its stably reconciled shape in the maintenance of the second relationship (voluntary dependence on the living Savior) through the “apostolic succession” of Peter and the Popes. Anyone (and specifically Dante) who can at need dispense with the mediation of a divinely ordained priesthood, is in the *third* relationship.¹¹ In theological terms, the crucial distinction is between those who rely on the chain of direct connection with the “shaped Unchangeable” and those who put their faith in the “witness of the Spirit” present always in the community here and now. One does not need to know the history of the Church in any great detail, to be aware that this distinction is not directly reducible to a historic succession of different confessions.¹²

- 6./532. First, God is absolute being as Substance; but secondly, he is the Son who sacrificed himself. Third, he is the Spirit of the Risen Christ.

After the difficult identification of God with the thought-world, the specification of the moments of the Trinity is relatively orthodox. But we are given a clear indication that the three Persons are to be identified with the moments of Culture, since Hegel begins by making an explicit parallel between God the Father and State-Power or the Good. This implies that the Son is analogous with Wealth. Hegel may well have wanted to point this out without saying it. What the Spirit as Third Person is analogous with is not obvious; but both the sequence of the three “moving masses,” and the history of Power and Wealth imply the right answer.

Here (as in par. 531) the ontological *priority* of Spirit is insisted on. God *is* Spirit, and His three Persons are all “spirits that have returned into themselves.” This directs us back to the parallel between the “masses” of Culture and the four elements. Spirit is not really *third*, but rather both first and fourth as it was there (par. 492). We should think of the Body of Christ as the whole, for which the Father represents the unifying *authority* or law of its public or substantial being, the Son represents the cycle of private life (and death), and the Spirit represents the universal diffusion of Insight as Enlightenment.

When we make this parallel we are already embarking upon the second “side” of Faith in the agenda set out in paragraph 530; and Hegel is now almost ready to pass on to that. What he says in paragraph 533 shows that he regarded the scholastic-theological doctrine of the Trinity as the strictly estranged mode of “pure consciousness.” In this aspect, the content of Faith is a mass of purely objective thoughts. This provides a justification for characterizing Faith as the “world of pure consciousness”; but it is also the reason why the assertion that the world in

question is just the *actual* world is so disconcerting. The universe of theological doctrine is about as far removed, or as radically *estranged*, from the actual world as it can be. But the sundering of the actual world from “the Beyond” belongs to Unhappy Consciousness in its “*second* relationship.” *Faith* (though it is estranged from *itself* as knowledge) is not estranged in that *actual* way. As a mode of thinking it mediates the radical sundering of “this side” from “the Beyond,” and because it involves actuality it does achieve “objectivity” in its own way.¹³

- 7./533. As the eternal Trinity the being of these Essences is the *thinking* of their oneness. But beyond that this Trinity of Spirits lives and moves in the actual world.

According to Aristotle, the life of God is the intuitive knowing of intuitive knowing.¹⁴ Hegel’s articulation of the formal doctrine of the Trinity (“changeless, eternal spirits whose being is: to think the unity that they constitute”) makes this peculiar formula a bit less intuitively opaque than it has always seemed to me to be in Aristotle’s text. But I do not think it is a really sound formulation of Christian doctrine (and it is certainly not an adequate one) because the New Testament puts far more emphasis on loving than on knowing, so that the early Fathers who formulated the doctrine of God’s Trinity naturally envisaged it as an eternal *love* relation, rather than a relation of knowing.¹⁵

The relation of perfect knowledge and mutual recognition, however, is logically involved in the Divine Love (and sublated in it). As I read him, Hegel thinks that the doctrine of Divine Love can only be explicated at the level of Religion proper. It is only the Aristotelian God of pure self-knowledge who does not need the finite world absolutely, so that the movement of his love towards it is a mere “happening.” Thus the World of Self-Estrangement is not yet logically entitled to a God whose essence is Love. That essence cannot be adequately comprehended by Faith (as a mode of knowledge at the level of “pure consciousness”). Faith does indeed speak of God in that higher way, but that uncomprehended concept is the moving force of further progress. Our task as logical scientists of “experience,” is to observe accurately both what Faith understands and what it does not understand.

The fundamental position of Faith is that God is completely self-sufficient as the *necessary actuality* of pure thought. But in this self-sufficiency he could never have become known to the finite selves who know themselves in him—“the essence . . . would remain foreign to self-consciousness.” It is only by Faith that we know that God has acted and does act to maintain the actual world of finite experience: “The *kenosis* (*Entäußerung*) of this substance, and then its Spirit [in the Church] has a moment of actuality.” The absolute estrangement of what can be understood (God’s self-sufficient perfection) from what is certainly known by Faith, but not understood (the realization of his love in the movement of finite self-sacrifice and return to self) is the divided or alienated character of Faith itself.

Faith is a species of “knowledge” because it is genuinely existential (or actual) thinking. All of its terms have reference to actual experience in this present world, and this actual life. The Unhappy Consciousness was *Andacht*, Devotion; it thinks

abstractly about another world, and another life. In its *Andenken*, its reverent commemoration of the One in whom that other “Kingdom” and that other life were once present here and now, it comes to the verge of actual concrete thinking, the thinking that begins with self-certainty. Faith has that self-certain foundation; it knows that the Kingdom of pure thought, and the life of true salvation, is “within.” But it remains a “species” of the Unhappy Consciousness too. It still has an estranged concept in which the “inner and outer” worlds, the “Kingdom of God” and the “life of this world,” are opposed. The Kingdom of “pure thought” is self-sufficient, the inner life is enough. But that is contradictory, because living is acting, and doing God’s work here and now is the happiness of Faith. The “third relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness has replaced the second one; but the “first relationship” remains the “element of the whole” (see par. 210). Faith lives in this contradiction between its “unhappy” concept and its “happy” experience. The Insight that appears as its enemy, is its own thinking motion (in which the contradiction is resolved through the self-realization of speculative Reason). “Faith” and “Reason” (the subjective Reason of Hegel’s chapter V, which appears here as Insight) are simply the opposite sides (the content and the form) of actual Spirit. The contradictory situation sketched in this paragraph, and made explicit in the next, is the key to the helplessness of Faith in its struggle with “Enlightenment.”

- 8./534. (2) God is *in* the world, but also the world is fallen and opposes him. Faith does not *laugh* at this (like pure culture) but strives to *conquer* the world by *devoting* itself to God [cf. par. 228 second half and par. 217] unceasingly in “service” and “praise” [pars. 219–222]. The community is “saved”; but the singular consciousness cannot experience complete fulfilment in this life now and here. God came and *died* for me, but far away and long ago [cf. par. 217]. Still he rose again and he is present even now in the inner world of Faith.

Now that we have arrived at the second stage of the agenda sketched in paragraph 530—the relation of Faith with the actual world—we can see that it is precisely Faith that Rameau’s insight has to turn into, in order to become active in the salvation of its fallen world. Faith makes the very same appraisal of the world that Rameau offers. The actual world is a great mass of vanity. Rameau’s witty spirit must turn inwards and recognize that its human dignity comes from its destined unity with God. Absolute Culture must stop laughing and admit its own “unhappiness.”¹⁶

The continuity of the present discussion with the section on Unhappy Consciousness—the identity in difference signalled, for instance, by the description of the three Persons of the Trinity as “changeless (*wandellose*) Spirits” in paragraph 533 (whereas *das Unwandelbare* in par. 208 was an “essence”)—becomes even more evident here. This second “side” of Faith corresponds to the moment of “desire and labor” in the Unhappy Consciousness. We have already dealt with the desire of the Noble Mind for the Good, and its labor for the State-Power. In the realm of pure consciousness Faith overcomes the inversion of desire and labor into selfishness—that principle of Wealth which was evident enough in the actual world of Culture, and which tormented the Unhappy Consciousness. But as far as the actual

world of culture is concerned, Faith is still recognizable as the Unhappy Consciousness without its despair; what it now “knows” gives it confidence that the goal will be reached.

Otherwise, the singular consciousness is in the same situation as before. The doing of God’s Will is an endless labor, and the Kingdom of God is always coming, it is never here. Faith “serves and praises God” just as the noble consciousness serves and praises the State-Power. But whereas the Unhappy Consciousness needed a human mediator, the faithful consciousness knows that God is present in the community; and the community (not as the voice of an Other, but as the sustaining “universal self” of pure consciousness) is already in communion with the Church Triumphant. Every Christian can be her own priest.

But it is only in the *inner* life that this blessedness is experienced; Faith cannot pretend to itself that the actual world is in any way sanctified. Actuality is “spiritless”; there is no sensory intuition of union with God. Faith is in perfect agreement with Pure Insight that *pure* consciousness must *be* pure; there must be no sensory impurity in its pure thinking. Again we can see why the triumph of Enlightenment is inevitable, since it is still taken for granted that the actuality of thought is in *Vorstellungen*. And since the Enlightenment triumphs in France, we can also see that it would be a mistake to think that Faith is only a Protestant phenomenon. The whole world in which the Enlightenment triumphs accepts both the primacy of the “inner life” and the essential alienation of the inner from the outer life. Faith is the Unhappy Consciousness that “has the joy of finding itself in Spirit, and becomes conscious that the singularity is reconciled with the universal” (par. 210). But its goal is not reached perfectly in the present life.

This alienated conception of the inner life of thought is exactly what makes Faith superior to the contemptuous consciousness of “absolute Culture.” Rameau is in a state of *self*-contradiction, because he cannot recognize any actuality except the life that Reason obliges him to despise. Faith despises the world, and the self that is in the world, just as much; but it has found a place to stand in the other actual world, the world of pure consciousness.

So Faith is not the “honorable” consciousness that is reduced to speechless silence by Rameau; for it agrees with him from the first about “this world.” But it has a “doubled world,” and it can stand firmly on the other side. Logically, Faith’s thought-world is the “experienced result” of the estranged world of Culture. Historically, however, by the time that the cultural experience is complete, and Rameau appears, Faith has been reduced to speechless silence (not by Rameau but) by Pure Insight. Pure Insight demonstrates that Faith cannot say anything positive about its *other* actual world either. The nemesis of Faith is that its own direct access to the inner life, and to the saved community of that life, is through Pure Insight. For Pure Insight is the thinking Self, the active Concept of pure consciousness. Rameau is the *appearing* of “pure thinking” in “actuality.” The return into thought is the logical result of his “experience.”

- 9./535. (3) Faith is the *object* of Pure Insight. Insight is the actuality of the *Begriff* as inner. We must now look at the same three sides of Insight.

Faith is conscious of its thinking status negatively, for it does adopt the policy of rigorously rejecting what is *not* “thought.” It keeps itself “unspotted from the world.” We can recognize this attitude, for instance, in Pascal’s *Pensées*, as well as in the iconoclasm of Cromwell’s Puritan army breaking the statues and whitewashing the walls of churches. Pascal is more likely to be in Hegel’s mind than any English experience, but it seems clear that the consciousness-raising policy of the New Model Army belongs to the level of Faith rather than that of Culture. Both Faith and Pure Insight are the “result” of Culture; but the cultural process has to reach the limit of absolute contradiction, before we can clearly observe their logical connection. In experience the two extremes of Faith and Insight are born independently, without any clear awareness of their relation either to Culture or to one another. *We* need to observe “absolute Culture” in order to comprehend that Pure Insight is the living soul of Faith, and that the realization of Faith’s “content” is the goal of Insight.

Salvation *from* the world is just what Faith wants, because it rests on the “pure insight” that spirit and matter are absolute opposites. Faith *has* Pure Insight. This is a logical truth, for without the sharp intellectual sundering of spirit from matter in actual experience, it would not be Faith but still Unhappy Consciousness. But Faith does not know what the “purity” of its insight is. The one who has Faith knows, for example, that “having faith” is a matter of insight into God’s Word; and that no matter how much help one may get from others, one must achieve this for oneself in one’s own thought. But she has no clear concept of the self-conscious universality of this thought.

Faith holds hands with Reason on the right; and with Unhappy Consciousness on the left. The *book* that it must use its own insight upon, is still an external “counsellor.” So the “pure thinking” that has come to clarity about itself comes down upon naïve Faith (which itself makes a rigorous separation between the salvation of inward thought and the damnation of outward actuality) “like a wolf on the fold.” The story of this Assyrian onslaught—in which the “gleaming of purple and gold”¹⁷ will not be lacking, since the Enlightenment in its “truth” gains control of the power and wealth of the cultural world—is the topic of the next section of Hegel’s discussion.¹⁸

(c) *The Gestalt of Insight (Diderot)*

- 10./536. (1) Insight is the selfhood of Spirit. It seeks to turn all other forms of independence into *Begriffe*. it is self-conscious Reason [cf. par. 233] and it knows that [cf. par. 394].

As the universality of all selves in the Self of Reason, so Pure Insight is the selfhood of Spirit. It is bound to take a negative attitude towards Faith, because Faith is the simple consciousness of Spirit as Substance. According to the Preface (par. 17) the main thesis of Hegel’s book is that Spirit must be comprehended “*not* as Substance, but equally as Subject.” So this paragraph effectively tells us that the Enlightenment is the emergence of Spirit as Subject in *opposition* to Substance; and

that the task of speculative idealism is to integrate the opposites properly. The most important lesson of this paragraph is the clear identification of Pure Insight as the “certainty” of Reason; for this implies that the “truth” of Reason is to be found in the evolution of Faith rather than in the scientific conquest of Nature, as Reason naïvely supposed.

Reason becomes “Insight” when it ceases to be “instinctive” and becomes the self-conscious Category (par. 394). Insight “aims to sublimate . . . the independence both of what is actual [Nature and the Ancien Régime], and of what subsists *in itself* [the world of Faith].” But the concept of Utility—which is the guiding light of the Baconian scientific revolution that the Encyclopedists sought to bring to fruition—is the only full-fledged *Begriff* that the Enlightenment manages to formulate. The enlightened concept of God as the Supreme Being is only the final shape of thought’s *estrangement*; we must recognize Utility as the first phenomenal shape of the “pure Concept.” This means that Hegel’s own philosophy is genetically (and practically) rooted in the Enlightenment.¹⁹

- 11./537. But it is only a project when it first appears. It is a singular insight that has to be shared by everyone. It is “pure” (i.e. it can only be *rationally* communicated). Everyone is to know himself as and in the universal Self. That *everyone* must do this is a result of the actual revolution made by culture. The world of actuality retains the aspect of a spiritual animal kingdom in which every animal has its own place and special genius [cf. pars. 401–418]. But individuality claims more than a specific functional significance [cf. par. 489 and par. 403]. It has to *form itself* [as image or child of God]. This is the absolute task that “pure culture” has bequeathed. “Pure insight” reintegrates the disrupted world as the simple essence of universal enlightenment, the simple substance of Reason [cf. par. 446 and especially par. 447].

Pure Insight is the result of *Bildung* (as the discipline of Faith). The balance will now shift, and a new *critical* phase of *Bildung* will begin. As far as its actual appearance is concerned, Pure Insight evolves gradually. At the level of ordinary discourse, we can say that Faith evolves with it; for it is really the (reconciled) Unhappy Consciousness that provides the thought-world of Culture in its early stages. But Hegel has now shown that Faith and Insight are the antithetic moments of a Judgment-Concept. So he will now concentrate our attention on their fully developed opposition.

Faith is always a communal experience, if only because it is by definition the awareness of Substance. The best cultural marker for the transition from the “second relation” of Unhappy Consciousness to the “third” (Faith) is the vernacular translation of the Bible. I am not sure what “*fortuitous* and *singular*” phenomenon Hegel has in his eye as the first appearance of pure Insight. Looking back from the *Encyclopédie* as its universal realization, we might be tempted to pick on Bacon’s *Novum Organum*. The *one concept* to which Insight reduces everything in all consciousnesses is certainly that of Utility—which points back to Bacon’s dictum that “human knowledge and human power meet in one.”²⁰ But Hegel’s insistence that the only content of Pure Insight is the Self, and that Faith is the “object” of Pure

Insight, points towards Descartes' concern with the thinking self and its relation with God, rather than to Bacon's concern with power over nature. Certainly it is Descartes' *Meditations* that have a "fortuitous and singular" air. Both Bacon and Descartes show the same missionary urge to make their insight universal; they typify the "two sides" of Pure Insight as a *project* (*Absicht*). Bacon's scientific instrumentalism really does give "everything objective the significance of the *being-for-self*, or of self-consciousness"; and Descartes, who cheerfully admits the estrangement of thought from extension (or of pure consciousness from ordinary actuality) is anxious to make entry into the world of thinking self-consciousness as universal as possible.

Certainly it is Descartes whose *Meditations* have "pure Insight as content." Cartesian doubt leaves us with the pure thinking "that has no antithesis with an object"; and when it reaches "God" it is "not limited in itself." But the "second side of the intention" is more completely illustrated in Bacon. Descartes was not concerned with reducing the objective world to "*being-for-self*" (i.e. to utilities); and he explicitly denied any intention to transform the structure of society. But Hegel's "pure Insight" is set against "the distinctions of originally determined nature as well as those of objective spirit." These do not literally "tumble to the ground" until 1789, but in pure Insight's thought-project they have already done so.

It is interesting to see that Hegel clearly identifies the cultural world of naïve Faith as the "spiritual animal kingdom" of the Real Individuals; and at this point the "mutual violence and confusion" of real social life is allowed to enter the picture. The universalization of Pure Insight in the Enlightenment overthrows the conservative religious view (which can certainly be found in Luther) that God has ordered us in our "estates" by giving us all our different gifts. The Encyclopedists agreed with Bacon that there was a great mass of real knowledge hidden away in the secret lore of the different mechanical arts and crafts. Diderot wanted to collect as much of it as possible, and *publish* it. Differences should be sublated, and the common patrimony of Reason should be available to all.

In the normal evolution of English speech the Latin word *ministerium*, which covered every type of service needed by and offered to the general public, turned into "mystery" upon the Elizabethan tongue of Shakespeare's groundlings. This accident of language was also conceptually appropriate because every calling for which special knowledge and training was needed had become a closed fellowship with its own trade secrets.²¹ The *Encyclopédie* aimed to turn the "mysteries" back into public ministries. I have availed myself of this historic pun produced by the *Weltgeist*, in order to make clear the connection that exists between the conversion of government from noble service into salaried ministries, and the ideology of the wider world of bourgeois economic life. The irony of Rameau is directed at the conception of a public service that is confined to a privileged class, but well paid for; and this critical attack embraces every guild member who contributes something distinctive in the way of professional service or products for sale in the marketplace.

In its relation to the actual world of Culture, therefore, Pure Insight is directly continuous with the evolution of the *noblesse d'épée* into the *noblesse de robe*; and

“absolute Culture”—in everything except its self-contemptuous aspect—is the final stage of the work of Insight itself in the cultural world. The downfall of the word *espèce* into an expression of contempt, and the emergence of the “absolutely qualitative” distinction between the dignity of the self and the insignificance of things, the distinction between mind and its instruments—or Faith’s original distinction between “Spirit” and “flesh” clearly understood—is the active work of Insight. All of the differences between Estates are reduced from divine ordinances to accidents of fortune. The only differences recognized are in levels of rational capacity and understanding. The social ideal of Insight is that of “the career open to the talents.” The only “other” that Insight recognizes is *intellectual capacity*—i.e. the “other” is itself.

It is clear that “equality of opportunity” and “the career open to the talents” are the *Sache selbst* with which Individuality is satisfied as “something universally valid, namely as [fully] cultured.” What the “non-actual *Sache selbst*” is, we must discover by inference. If we were allowed to give it a *religious* interpretation, we could identify it as Mrs. Alexander’s God who “made us high and lowly, and ordered our estate.” But “Reason” has no religion; so we must identify the “non-actual *Sache selbst*” as the conventional attitude. It is that “wisdom of nature” to which the “honorable consciousness” appeals, in its attempt to prevent the downfall of the “actual world” of the privileged classes.²² People like Mrs. Alexander—who are plentiful in every social world—will of course use the older religious language of Faith; but that is now dismissed by the enlightened self-consciousness as “superstition.”

Pure Insight lives in the kingdom of man, and recognizes “the perfectibility of man.” The Reason that *knows* it is “all reality” is what sets Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Rights of Woman* beside the “Rights of Man and Citizen.” It is as active and as unselfishly committed, as it is optimistic and confident. In this respect Insight is at the opposite extreme from Rameau’s laughing hopelessness. Rameau does part of the work of Pure Insight; but his “absolute Culture” is only a sublated moment in the gospel of Enlightenment. It has to go through the double inversion which makes it first a genuine *faith* in the Beyond, and then turns it into the insight that the Beyond is simply that *inward* life of thought which all rational beings share equally. But the overarching presence of “Self-Estrangement” makes the basic thesis of Insight into the “infinite judgment” of Observing Reason: the universal Self identifies itself directly with the universe of finite things.

Insight can formulate the “infinite contradiction” *purely* because (unlike Rameau) it is no longer caught up in it. It is the spirit of universal Enlightenment which received its most famous definition from Kant:

Enlightenment is man’s release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man’s inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* “Have courage to use your own understanding!”—that is the motto of enlightenment.²³

VI B.II: The Enlightenment

The formulation of the Concept of Insight “in and for itself” is what results from the dialectic of Bildung. The Concept of Bildung is now complete, and its experience as a Judgment can begin. Pure Culture found its simple inversion in Faith, and its comprehensive inversion in Pure Insight. Now therefore the experience of this result can begin. This experience is the evolution of a different kind of Bildung in which the Pure Concept reforms Actuality; previously it was the conscious self-reformation of the actual self that formed the Pure Concept.

At the methodic level of continuous conceptual evolution we have only arrived at the formal Concept of Pure Insight. This must complete itself by comprehending its own antithesis (the “impure insight” of actuality). Only when that “struggle” is complete, shall we reach the comprehensive Concept of the Truth of Enlightenment. Our commentary aims to display the methodic continuity of Hegel’s Science as fully as possible. So we shall continue to focus attention upon the immediate flow and sequence of the argument. We do not need a new section heading of our own at this point because the exposition of Insight continues in direct parallel with that of Faith.

- 1./538. (2) Insight’s relation to actuality must be characterized before we turn to its [battle] relation with Faith. The insight of actuality is inverted, and its projects are impure.

There is a natural temptation to regard paragraph 537 as the beginning of Hegel’s discussion of the “second side” of Pure Insight. But it is clear from what Hegel says here that that paragraph is the climax of the discussion of what Insight is “in and for itself.” “In itself” Pure Insight is the rationally courageous project of an individual thinker; “in and for itself” it will be the universalized awareness of human rational equality and perfectibility. All of the references to the actual world in paragraph 537 are contributions to the negative definition of Insight, by contrasting it with what it is not. For the most part, the aim is to show that in its fully developed shape Insight is the “Reason” of chapter V.

The actual definition of Pure Insight “in and for itself” is the climax and result of the first stage of “B. The Self-Estranged Spirit: Culture.” That first stage was called “The world of Self-Estranged Spirit.” The estranged world had two “sides”: cultural actuality and pure consciousness. Pure Consciousness itself also has two estranged “sides”: Faith and Pure Insight. The methodic progress by double inversion continues at every stage. “Absolute Culture” is directly inverted in Faith, and doubly inverted in Insight. Faith is directly inverted in Pure Insight as a project, and doubly inverted in the realization of Insight as universal Enlightenment. Hegel is careful to show us that the universal realization of Pure Insight *envelops* the “bad infinite” breakdown of Faith: the “Truth of Enlightenment” brings the Heaven of Faith down to earth.

With the definition of Enlightenment, the double inversion of Faith has been completed at the conceptual level, i.e., in the sphere of “pure consciousness.” The Enlightenment is an ideology that calls upon us all to be for ourselves what we are in ourselves: to do it now and here, and not wait for Heaven to unveil for us the

pure essences that we really are. This is the logical climax of “pure consciousness.” But in the evolution of the total Concept of Culture it is both the moving point at which the Concept splits into a Judgment, and the agency that brings about the rupture. Faith itself, on the other hand, is what holds the world of the Self-Estranged Spirit together.

Thus the two sides of pure consciousness serve to explain, on the one hand, why Culture is a stable world-shape, and, on the other hand, why it must give place to a new one. The Enlightenment and the Revolution are the real process by which the new world-shape arises.²⁴ So, in order to display the structure of the total world-concept of Culture properly, the “phenomenology” of Pure Insight must be interrupted after the simple statement of its Concept. The aesthetic “insight” of the actual cultural world must be characterized briefly before we study the experience of pure consciousness. Why the “second side” with which the new phase of Culture begins is a relation with what is “impure” and “inverted” we shall see in the next paragraph.²⁵

- 2./539. We have already mentioned the *peaceful* consciousness of pure culture [522]—this is pure insight. It has no *partisan* insight, but it is a *third* in the dialogue in that it puts the whole story together and tells it to us all.

Hegel himself tells us here that the model spokesman for Pure Insight is Diderot as the *author* of *Rameau's Nephew*. The insight of Rameau's “pure culture” is the sum of all the “impure” and “inverted” insights in the world. All views are valid, because all are possible for some rational self. But a peaceful, *non-partisan* view of this world of partisans, is possible for the consciousness that is no longer one of the “clients” among all the competing interests. This consciousness has no “particular” or “sundered” (*besondere*) insight. It apprehends the whole picture unselfishly, and so turns the struggle into the insight that the world is there for us to use and share rationally. Our Reason should be directed towards the general interest. We can all be brought to see this, and our *Bildung* should lead us to it. Reason will then be the actual *Sache selbst*. This “tranquil,” non-partisan consciousness, and this unselfish goal, is what Diderot himself has. His standpoint is the comprehensive grasp (and consequent inversion) of the “experience” of Culture that Young Rameau has.

Rameau is tormented by the recognition of how inevitable self-interest is. But it is his *world* that is undergoing Crucifixion. As far as Rameau himself is concerned it is an exaggeration to call this torment “the feeling of being on the rack at every moment of being [*Dasein*] and of having every bone broken.” In the world of triumphant Enlightenment there will be no Faith left to experience “pure culture” as if it were a torture. Rameau himself is an india rubber man; he stretches to fit the rack and his bones do not break. He does say at one point that the torment of his self-contempt is such that “It would almost have been as good not to have been born”; but in the next moment he is telling *mein Herr Philosoph* “not to take my condition too much to heart.”²⁶ This inconstancy, which Hegel here calls

“the raving of this instant,” is his *real* despair; and he *is* in despair, just as Diderot’s consciousness is really tranquil.

Mein Herr Philosoph produces *Kotseele* as his last word for Rameau. *Kot* is a nice basic monosyllable that can be used for any kind of “muck”; but just as English farmers use “muck” as a regular synonym for manure, so the Germans use *Kot* typically for excrement. To call Rameau—with all his musical appreciation—a “shit-soul” seems exaggerated. But all of that operatic enthusiasm is “muck” compared with the editing of the *Encyclopédie*. Diderot means it, and Rameau’s only response is that he said it first; this both shows that self-contempt is his final stance, and establishes his agreement with Luther at the limit of Unhappy Consciousness. Diderot, as the author who put the ravings of all the moments together in this pattern, recognizes that Rameau’s insight is absolute (though inverted); if it is translated back into a *universal* insight it can become an engine for change. So Diderot is tranquil precisely because his indignation as a participant is a pretence, while his indignation as author is the self-certainty of Reason. This paragraph demonstrates clearly the difference between Diderot (in or out of the dialogue) and the “honorable consciousness” of someone like Robinet.

- 3./540. This will resolve all the confusion. For culture has already resolved itself into this critical whirlwind of talk; and the individual talker knows he is as vain as the world founded on all these verbal distinctions. By writing the dialogue Diderot turns the wit of the single critic into universal enlightenment.

- 4./540a. Faith in the essence, however, remains to be overcome.²⁷

Pure Insight is so far in agreement with “absolute Culture” that it can declare that “the interest of having a content for this arguing and chattering, alone preserves the whole and the masses into which it is articulated.” Hegel is writing with the advantage of hindsight, and he wants to present the *ancien Régime* as a mere social façade that was rotten to the core. But we must remember that we are observing how this world of culture appears to itself and why. No actual society exists simply in order to make a cynical conversation among the chess players in a café possible. People who could believe that will find themselves riding to the guillotine; for they themselves are just part of the café conversation.

But the speech of pure Culture does present the whole existing structure of society as a system of irrational privileges in which only money talks; and it condemns its own irrational selfishness likewise; and the (ideal) perishing of the whole babble of conflicting judgments about society makes room for the genuinely “pure” Insight of the Enlightenment. This is what is achieved by Diderot in writing the dialogue. But the belief that revolutionizing and reforming the world of pure thought is enough to reform the actual world is mistaken.

We might even wonder whether the recognition that all *actual* judgments are subjectively biased affords any *valid* transition to the insight that in universal Reason we have an objective standard. This is simply a matter of logic; if we can *see* Rameau’s point, then Reason *is* the actual *Sache selbst*. To hold that the objective

truth is only the formal concept of a reality to which we have no genuine access is to circle back to Scepticism. What may still be doubted (and what has indeed shown itself to be false) is whether the absolute standard of Reason can be embodied (or “realized”) in the singular consciousness. In that respect, Rameau will eventually prove to be wiser than his tranquil author.

All that Hegel does in paragraph 540a is to make the transition from the second to the third aspect (see par. 535) of our consideration of Pure Insight: its relation to Faith. Pure Insight takes its own realizability to be intuitively obvious—in spite of Rameau, and partly because Rameau’s self-contempt is successfully conceptualized in Diderot’s dialogue. It is Diderot’s self-possessed self-concept that advances into the realm of thought to overthrow the God and the Heaven of Faith.

We can see now, that the world-progression by “determinate negation” is from the Noble’s World to the Courtier’s World; and from the Courtier’s World to the World of Contradiction and Self-Contempt. This is determinately negated by Enlightenment (which has Faith as its “estranged” internal *Gegensatz*); Enlightenment actualizes itself as a Concept in the “Truth of Enlightenment.” Only *then* does its “experience” take place (in the Revolution and the Terror). The problem in following the methodical sequence arises from the estranged character of this “world-shape.” Faith holds on to a speculative identity which it cannot conceptualize properly; and Insight is the Concept that still contains the “infinite judgment.” This contradiction must be resolved before Faith can be conceptualized successfully (in VI C).

VI B.II(a): The Struggle of Enlightenment with Superstition

Hegel has articulated his “B II” and “B II a” in two conflicting ways. The headings themselves are coordinate with “I” and “I a.” But according to the programme of paragraph 530 they are both stages in the unfolding development of I b (Faith and Insight). We have organized this chapter of the commentary in accordance with this implicit logic. So in this note we must examine the explicit logic of Hegel’s own headings.

The simplest and clearest analysis is: First position: Struggle; first inversion: Peace; second inversion: Revolution. But this analysis proceeds at too high a level of generality, and the concepts are simply “actual” not “actual-theoretical” as they ought to be. So the object-level sequence of concepts will not fit neatly under this schema. The concept we have reached is “Universal Insight” as the result of the actualization of Culture through the discipline of Faith. That concept contains within it the antithesis of “pure and impure” Insight. We are now embarking upon the “experience” of that antithesis within the Concept. First, we shall have the formal experience, i.e., we shall watch the Concept clarify and explicate itself for itself; then, in “The Truth of Enlightenment” we shall have the real experience: the clarified and self-realized Concept will divide internally. At that point—where its emptiness is fully apparent—the “second inversion” of the whole process of Culture can ensue (in “Absolute Freedom and Terror”). The Concept of Universal Insight reaches back and envelops the whole system of “the World of Self-Estranged Spirit.”

When the “Battle” begins, the Concept of Faith, which has Insight as its necessary internal antithesis, has just turned over into the Concept of Reason, i.e., the Concept that can successfully mediate and comprehend this inner contradiction. That gives us the appropriate title for the next section of the commentary.

(d) *The Concept of Universal Reason*

- 5./541. (3) Scepticism, Observing Reason and Self-Actualizing Reason are subordinate shapes of pure Insight. For it is born of Substance, and *knows* itself to be Reason. Hence it has the self-confidence to attack Faith and the God of Faith. This attack is only on the *form* of Faith, since Faith is consciousness of the Substance and Insight is the Substance as Subject. The struggle will give Insight a content.

At the beginning of his discussion of the “relationship of Insight to Faith” in their own world of thought (par. 530, par. 535) Hegel confirmed that Insight is identical with the *mature* Reason of Real Individuality. Scepticism, Observing Reason (“theoretical idealism” here) and Self-Actualizing Reason (“practical idealism”) are the immature forms. Reason is now a World-Spirit. We are no longer dealing with a singular *Gestalt*, but with a universal community of Insight. This is “Enlightenment”; all the thought-substance of the older world of the “masses” with their “essences”: the Church, the State-Power, the Estates, etc. has been recognized as mere “superstition”—the left-overs of the Medieval “age of Faith.” When Insight is universalized, the substance of Faith disappears. All of its content becomes superannuated rubbish that has to be swept away.

The struggle to clarify this situation, is a “battle” in the realm of thought. Enlightenment has to avoid confrontation with the actual Church, State and social order. In its negative relation with them, it is bound to appear just another “partisan” (or “particular”) insight; but its project is just to be “universal light.” I have already said that if we refused to go on to use the standard of pure Reason positively (once we recognized that it is implicit in the “contemptuous” standpoint of Rameau) we would be circling back to the position of Scepticism. Rameau differs from the Sceptic in his unhappy awareness that being rational is a practical imperative that he cannot live up to. He has already come to grief at the first step on the path that Hegel sketched for “practical idealism” (i.e. Self-Actualizing Reason). He married a naïve young girl, led her a dog’s life for some years, and now she is dead.

One thing that one might do in the modern world on the foundation of a complete pessimism about the inescapable irrationality of practical life, is to become an observational scientist. But the rationally collaborative vision of scientific inquiry got its inspiration, its power of attraction, and its control of the necessary social resources, from the promise of a practical transformation of life. So any such scientific pessimist would willy-nilly become part of the optimistic forward drive of the Enlightenment. The rational observation of *human* nature, however, was the experience of a defeat just as radical as the experience of the “absolutely” cultured consciousness. So a return to the point of transition from Scepticism to Unhappy

Consciousness might prove inevitable. In one way or another the shattered consciousness of “absolute culture” must make the leap of Faith. The Enlightenment is a Faith.

Rameau’s doctrine that every moment of experience is another dollar in the bank of memory reveals how Insight can match the traditional Faith; but initially they are simply opposed. Faith has the whole bank of memory, and Insight is consciously spring-cleaned and empty. Bacon declares that “the wisdom of the ancients is the wisdom of boys and has the characteristic virtue of boys: it can talk but it cannot generate.”²⁸ But Bacon, like Hegel himself, valued experience in every shape. He is a Faustian thinker; he wants to move from theory to practice. It was the systematic attempt by Descartes to clear his mind of everything he had hitherto believed that uncovered the principle of Pure Insight: the Cartesian thinking self knows itself to be a “substance”; and its intuited finitude and imperfection refer it to the absolute thinking substance, God, as the necessary origin from which it was, as Hegel puts it, “born.” Both Bacon and Descartes would have agreed that “Faith and Insight are the same pure consciousness”; both wanted to establish the true Faith as a matter of Insight. Neither foresaw that Insight would fight a battle against Faith, insisting that it was really “superstition” and must disappear. If Descartes was the inventor of the criterion of Pure Insight, it was Bacon who forecast the rational content that Insight would generate for itself out of this clash with its “substantial” opposite. The “struggle” generates a rational content for Insight that appears to both parties to be independent of Faith altogether; and, indeed, it is independent. But just for that reason it will show itself to be quite inadequate.

- 6./542. The *battle* arises in the absence of this self-recognition however. Insight sees Faith as superstition, propagated by hypocrites in order to maintain political despotism (which unites the actual world with this ideal realm of error artificially).

The conception of the Enlightenment as a battle against the traditional religion (regarded as a mass of mere superstition) was by no means universal. But it was neither exclusively French, nor was it confined to the generation of Voltaire, Diderot, D’Holbach and Helvétius on which Hegel chooses to focus our attention. The earlier leaders of enlightened thought such as Thomas More, Bacon, Descartes and Locke were *reconcilers* of rational insight with the religious tradition. Historical circumstances even made More into a saint and martyr, though one can hardly suppose it was really the Apostolic Succession that the author of *Utopia* died for. But Hobbes was older than Descartes; and Spinoza, who was universally recognized as the greatest leader in the “battle,” was an exact contemporary of Locke. Hegel’s insistence on a French model—for it is D’Holbach from whom the conception of the existing order as a great conspiracy between kings and priests comes—is determined simply by his concern with the *ancien Régime* as the particular social order that ended so visibly in the Revolution.

Enlightenment is bound to *appear* as a partisan, because in Rameau’s world, the social order is run by partisan interests. D’Holbach’s *Christianity Unveiled* (1767)

speaks of an “eternal alliance” between “superstition and despotism”: “the priest subdues the subjects by the terrors of religion, so that the sovereign may be able to devour them.” In his *Common Sense* (1772) he quotes Montaigne’s analysis of the psychology of superstition: “‘Some,’ says Montaigne, ‘make the world think that they believe what they do not; others, in greater number, make themselves think that they believe what they do not, not knowing what belief is.’”

Montaigne’s distinction is the key to the “conspiracy theory of history.” The priests and kings, who have the “inverted insight” of Young Rameau, create the illusion that they are pious believers. But they only organize the “universal mass” of consciousness—the beliefs that everyone shares because they do not know what “purity” of consciousness is—in the way most advantageous to themselves:

Oppressed by the double yoke of spiritual and temporal power, it has been impossible for the people to know and pursue their happiness. As religion, so politics and morality, too, became sacred things which the profane were not permitted to handle. Men have had no other morality than what their legislators and priests brought down from the unknown regions of heaven. The human mind, confused by its theological opinions, ceased to know its own powers, mistrusted experience, feared truth, and disdained reason, in order to follow authority. Man has been a mere machine in the hands of tyrants and priests, who alone have had the right of directing his actions. Always treated as a slave, he has contracted the vices of a slave.²⁹

Hegel has already pilloried this conspiracy theory of history as the ultimate arrogance of the pure Heart—the “Frenzy of Self-Conceit” (par. 377). Here he treats it as the extreme form of the estranged intellect. In order to be effective in history at all the polemic had to have both an emotional and an intellectual side. For it is the pure *heart* of Faith that is misled by the priests according to the Enlightenment (and misled by the Enlightenment itself in the Frenzy of Self-Conceit). D’Holbach gave the properly alienated intellectual account of how the universal deceit operated. He insisted with his typical brashness that the human “conscience” could accept *any* customary content—the killing of aged parents for example.³⁰ Any reader of his *Common Sense* can soon discover that D’Holbach was sure that (precisely because the human conscience is so absolutely plastic) an enlightened education can make it perfectly rational. The difference between the Heart’s Law and Enlightenment is all in the “estranged” point of view of “Reason as Understanding.” D’Holbach does not have Rousseau’s faith in natural feeling, but he is perfectly certain that rational government can secure a perfect harmony between natural self-interest and the universal interest of Reason. The “honorable” desire for the approval of our fellows gives every rational atom this universal interest.

- 7./543. Enlightenment distinguishes the three aspects of its enemy. Stupidity and Superstition it can enlighten. *Selfish* insight it cannot touch, so it does not directly attack priest and despot. It must develop the natural Reason and love of honor of the bourgeois mass generally, and so take their power from its insightful enemies.

D'Holbach's works were published abroad (mainly in London). There are obvious reasons why a frontal attack upon the priests and kings united in this authoritative synthesis of politics and theology was not possible. The "enlightened despotism" of the *Ancien Régime* is a "synthetic conceptual unity" (par. 542). As we saw earlier Louis XIV's dictum, "L'Etat, c'est moi," is the same "infinite judgment" as "the Spirit is the skull." There is no living Concept here; there is only the *Vorstellung* of Reason that is offered by the authoritative resolution of the problem of the Unhappy Consciousness in the Confessional. Reason does not set itself up directly against this.

For the most part the Encyclopedists (of whom D'Holbach was one) spread their political and social doctrines by indirect methods. Their appeal to the educated audience—who are clearly the *spiritual* "mass" of Culture (in par. 492)—was intellectual and theoretical. Hegel calls the insight upon which Enlightenment operates *willenlose*. It is passively conventional. Pure Insight addresses the "honorable" insight of the cultured mass that prides itself upon its good sense and rationality; this respectable Insight is the self-deceit of the spiritual animal kingdom, where every Real Individual concentrates attention upon her own contribution to the public good. The Real Individuality of Culture (par. 489) has not yet risen into the sphere of pure thought. The "reality" of individuality there would be the conceptual comprehension of oneself not as this or that *espèce* of "worthy," but as a rational human being—a self possessed of enlightened common sense. This conceptual comprehension of one's own universal humanity is the "individuation" that Enlightenment produces. The Real Individuality of Culture is the *Dasein* of rational Individuality without its concept. The "rational self-consciousness that is not yet present as Concept" is the plain "common sense" that has to be "wrenched away" from its moorings in tradition—which is a mass of "prejudices and errors." "Being-for-self" is identical with "having a will of one's own." The honorable insight of the general public has no individuated will, but is content to maintain the whole system of ecclesiastical and noble privileges in a spirit of simple obedience to God and the anointed monarch. Thus the already cultured mass only needs *theoretical* Enlightenment in order to take possession of its own rational will. It is only a matter of "raising consciousness" to use a current expression that has its origin in the Enlightenment.

"Honor" is simply the enjoyment of the good opinion of one's community. D'Holbach's conception of rational education rests upon the capacity of everyone except those who are very stupid to appreciate the moral approval of others. This enjoyment of approval is a self-centred pleasure that makes every rational atom a member of the enlightened community. Thus "honorable insight" is conceived very differently from a community of the "Heart"; but they are "sides" of one "judgment."

- 8./544. .Insight and faith both know that the absolute essence is the Good. But faith thinks that the Good has its own realm, and renounces its own activity. Insight has to make it *realize* its own ideal self.

The relation between Insight and Faith now becomes *double* because of the “non-conceptual” character of Faith. As the sense of being substantially founded in a traditional community, Faith is mere “superstition”; but as the “naïve consciousness of absolute essence” Faith is implicitly identical with Insight. “Living and moving in God” has to cease being a condition of *resignation*, of not having a will of one’s own; for it is precisely this willing resignation that the selfish insight of the priesthood can manipulate in the interest of “despotism.”³¹

The faithful self *is* a self. It *has* a will of its own, and it has knowingly resigned it to God. For Faith, only the Will of God is properly rational; its own will is sinful. Implicitly, therefore, Faith is identical with the rational will of the Enlightenment; but its voluntary resignation is a surrender to superstition. If the deceit can be unmasked by Pure Insight, the faithful will can be moved to take possession of itself. The agreed rationality of “God’s Will” is the “element” in which Pure Insight can make itself real in place of the falsified otherworldly insight upon which the priestly deception operates.

- 9./545. So communication between them is easy. Insight spreads irresistibly and insensibly. One is only aware of it when it is well established; awareness comes then because of its revolutionary character. Faith only starts to resist when it is already too late (and anyway nothing can be done). The revolution need not be bloody, if insight has had time to spread properly, so the repression of isolated outbreaks is in its interest. Wisdom *is* a serpent.

From the point of view of Insight, what Faith regards as the “will of God” is just the universal community of Reason. This is our point of view, too, even though we agree with Faith about the *positive* character of human community (or “Universality”). So we can readily understand and agree with Hegel’s memorable description of the diffusion of the Enlightenment. Faith is already a memory by the time there is any resistance to Insight. Those who resist are conscious that in the triumph of self-consciousness as a *form* they have lost the content of Faith, the “essence” that gave a substantial unity to their old lives. But the loss must be suffered, before it can be felt. The rational selves receive their own Reason (“the simple self-equivalent essence”); but then they are *alone* in the world. This is what Hegel refers to as the “simplicity of the negativity that is reflected into itself.”

The sense of loss is well founded, but there is no going back. The self of Faith, the self that knows “the Kingdom of God is within,” must accept the consequences of this knowledge; which means first that it must accept the rational identity of the self that it is. The Enlightenment knows that it is proclaiming God’s advent as “Man.” The Kingdom of God will become our human kingdom. Bacon’s vision is especially important in Lamettrie. This return to the Garden of Eden is how the “simple knowing . . . knows its counterpart as sublated within it.” But the implicit doctrine of the natural goodness of man is also how “the self-equivalent essence develops into something opposed to consciousness, and reminds it of its former state.” Hegel uses the story of the brazen serpent raised up

by Moses in the wilderness to symbolize the impending repetition of the Fall and the expulsion from Eden.³²

In the meantime, the Calvinists may burn Servetus at Geneva in 1553. Giordano Bruno may be burned at Rome in 1600 and Vanini at Toulouse in 1619. But the suppression of these “isolated eruptions against the content of Faith” only has the effect of teaching the Enlightenment to be as cunning as the enemy. It learns to go underground, to hide itself from the priests and kings, and not to attack the established order of the actual world directly. The revolution in the actual world will come secretly and silently.

The existing order is to be taken by surprise. Rameau’s clowning is part of it; but the enlightened use of laughter is older than Diderot and Voltaire. It was Shaftesbury (1621–1683), I think, who suggested that some opponents should be laughed out of countenance rather than argued with. Laughter sheds no blood; so Rameau naturally hopes for a revolution that will come in that way. He foresees “the foreign god” giving the native idol

a shove with the elbow one fine morning . . . and bang! crash! there’s the idol on the ground. They say that’s the way the Jesuits introduced Christianity into India and China. And the Jansenists can say what they like, the political method that goes straight to the goal, without bloodshed or martyrdom, or so much as a queue of hair cut off, looks the best to my eye.³³

But what actually emerged from the cast skin of this “serpent of wisdom” was the Revolutionary Goddess of Reason; and she presided over the guillotine. So poor Rameau did not get the last laugh after all. The sight of this serpent brought death (not life like its Mosaic original).

(e) *The Negative Enlightenment*

- 10./546. But apart from this secret spreading in the dark, there is a great uproar in the daylight.

Since Faith has a double aspect (par. 544), Enlightenment has to have a double aspect likewise. Inwardly, it silently infects the faithful with self-consciousness. But outwardly this hidden operation of Enlightenment is accompanied by what Hegel calls (in *Faith and Knowledge*) a great “flurry” (or “hubbub”) in the cultural world.³⁴ It is only the flurry that can bring what has happened inwardly to light. All the *propaganda* of Enlightenment (of which D’Holbach’s works were a notable part) belongs to this hubbub. Thus it was obviously the *shock*-value of *Rameau’s Nephew* that made it significant. Voltaire’s ever-active pen was largely devoted to the making of sensations. All of this must be distinguished from the secret penetration of the vitals and members of the old idol itself.

Hegel gives an important hint as to how to identify the works in which the *secret* penetration of the idol is accomplished by calling it the “silent onward-weaving

(*fortweben*) of the Spirit.” This is the first appearance of a metaphor that he will soon use in an apparently opposite sense. Here he applies it to the penetrative activity of Enlightenment; soon he will use it to refer to the melancholy—and outwardly passive, or at least ineffective—brooding of Faith after its defeat in the open by the “flurry.” His point is that these seeming opposites are really identical.

For the understanding of the paradox it is helpful to recognize the source of the metaphor. Goethe used this same word (*Weben*) to describe the primordial activity of his Earth-Spirit: “In floods of life [*Lebensfluten*], in the storm of action/ I range up and down,/ I weave [*Weben*] back and forth!/ Birth and Grave,/ An eternal ocean [*Meer*]/ A changeful weaving [*Weben*]/ A glowing life,/ Thus I create upon the humming loom [*Webstuhl*] of time/ And fashion the God-head’s living garment.”³⁵

Hegel is here following in Goethe’s footsteps—I think the reference to the “Serpent” shows this. But the “new serpent of wisdom” is invisible to the worshippers of the old idol, because it is identical with the “Spirit of God” moving upon the waters in the primordial darkness before the creation of a new cultural world. What this means in concrete terms is that the agents of the secret spread of Enlightenment are writers like Malebranche and Pascal—writers who were quite sincerely and indisputably pious, but who certainly helped to raise Faith to the level of rationally critical self-consciousness. It is in Pascal, perhaps better than anywhere else, that we can see the confident weaving of Reason united with the melancholy weaving of Faith. Of course, there were also others, like Montaigne, who were not orthodox believers, but serious cultivators of the “inner life,” not propagandists in a noisy and flamboyant war upon superstition.³⁶

Rameau is a warrior in the noisy war. But his music—about which he is unmistakably serious, in spite of all the clowning and miming through which he expresses his own sense of failure—is the symbol for him of the inner life; and it is a musical revolution that he is actually speaking of when he prophesies the downfall of the old idol. He represents not a simple “inversion” of Faith but the moment when the comprehension of the “Truth of Enlightenment” begins.

11./547. In this uproar Insight negates itself and becomes merely sophistic criticism.

Once we recognize Pure Insight as the development of self-conscious responsibility, and Faith as the religious cultivation of the inner life, it is clear that the identification of Faith with a superstitious reverence for ecclesiastical traditions and structures is an error. Thus the *propaganda* of the Enlightenment—and especially D’Holbach’s sustained attack on the alliance of Church and State—involves a falsification of Pure Insight itself. The polemic is a direct *inversion* of what Pure Insight actually is in its silent and secret diffusion. In the public flurry, “the naïve consciousness of absolute essence” (par. 544) can recognize “something opposed to it” (par. 545) that is in fact just a libel upon it—the most “impure” Insight that is possible.

- 12./548. The insightful critic takes seriously the view that he is attacking something external (rather than a moment of his own being). The actualization of Insight is partly the clarification of this mistake and so the gaining of true *content* for Insight, and the overcoming of its alienated relation to actuality. This is the replacement of Faith by self-conscious actual Reason. But before this happens Faith can counter-attack against Insight as false and evil-minded sophistry.

In the overt “battle” relation against “superstition,” the Enlightenment becomes *partisan*, and so violates its own essence. As usual, Hegel approaches the self-contradiction of Insight on its formal side first—i.e. from our standpoint as scientific observers. This makes the argument harder to understand because it involves the use of a conceptual framework that the Enlighteners did not use. So the “contradiction” appears to be imposed on them by our way of looking at things; and what is worse, the contradiction or absurdity seems to be precisely in *our* way of thinking and talking, because the position of the Enlighteners is that of the most ordinary “common sense.”

But if we read this paragraph in the light of the next one, we shall see that the contradiction of which Insight is accused is not an ordinary one at all; and further that it is inevitable. The commonsensical belief in ordinary contradiction is exactly what is mistaken about the procedure of Pure Insight. The belief that Faith can simply be contradicted is just what is “contradictory” in the concept of Insight itself. The polemical Enlighteners do not have the concept of “determinate negation.” They do not realize that what is “wiped out” must also be preserved.

The enlightened attack on “superstition” is an attack on a certain kind of “thought.” But the idea that there is a purely critical or “free” thinking that is not a thinking of something—i.e. a kind of “belief”—is a logical error. This does not mean that belief cannot be suspended about some empirical question. To take the assertion that way is to look in the wrong direction. What is meant, rather, is that self-conscious thinking—the activity of “Pure Insight”—occurs in the context of some *categorical* beliefs; and Faith is the “consciousness” of these same beliefs. Faith, therefore, must not simply be denied, but reconstructed as the self-conscious formulation of these categorical beliefs. The struggle with Faith makes Pure Insight clearly aware of what its own categorical beliefs are; and it will turn out that, at this categorical level, the “impurity” and the “self-interest” are all on the side of the Enlightenment. For it is the pure rationality of the Enlightenment, its devotion to universal human welfare and the “perfectibility of man,” that is essentially this-worldly, secular and utilitarian. It is essentially negative towards the “inner life” of spirit and of pure thought. All of the self-interested manipulation of the cultured “mass” of the faithful, which it denounces as the bad intention that perverts the insight of the priests and despots, belongs also the Enlightenment itself. It is unwittingly denouncing itself.

By adopting a polemical attitude against the *bad* (otherworldly) insight of the people, and the perverse (selfish) intention of the despotic ideologues, Pure Insight actualizes itself. First, it makes Faith conscious that Insight is essentially identical

with its declared enemies. Neither Faith nor Insight can recognize itself in the other, so the actualization of Reason as the categorical identity of both sides comes into being quite slowly. At the end of this present “battle” each side will recognize itself in the other as “nothing.” Only after that, will the positive identity begin to emerge for Faith and Insight themselves. “Insight’s own self-recognizing Concept” is, in the first instance, the Guillotine.

At their first encounter, Faith can only recognize the *impurity* of the polemical Enlightenment. Everything that the Enlightenment says about Faith, Faith directly knows that it is *not*. The polemical accusation itself is a stimulus that spurs Faith to this self-knowledge, thus contributing to the secret or silently imperceptible diffusion of Enlightenment which is the side of its original “purity.” But the real spread of the Enlightenment, and the growth of the *categorical* identity, is not perceived by either side. Faith recognizes just that side of Enlightenment which the Enlightenment does not grasp—its identity with finite self-interest, with lying and bad intention. The content that Enlightenment itself finds in Faith, the errors and prejudices that appear to be an alien body of “thoughts” that must be cancelled and got rid of, are the content of enlightened insight itself—that natural selfishness is evil, and the love of our neighbor good, and so on.

This does not mean that there are *no* hypocritical priests or bigoted laymen. Who is a “hypocrite” or a “bigot” is a matter of ordinary empirical judgment where the concept ranges over good and bad instances. But the view that *all* priests are hypocrites, and all pious laymen are benighted fools, has its truth *only* within the perspective of a pamphleteer whose “insight” is perverse, and whose “intention” is bad.

- 13./549. Enlightenment treats the content of faith as pure insight, and on that basis declares it to be a simple error. Faith has *invented* this Divine Mind. But the existence of Reason is Enlightenment’s own truth, so Faith does not find the new gospel enlightening. The faithful one already knows himself in God; so Insight cannot “save” him. The faithful believer even knows that his salvation is *by* his faith. He does not see that it is his own faith that *produces* the saving power; but it is only through that faith that God becomes the saving “spirit” of the community: and this faith is only *one* moment in the process. It does not produce God, or the Absolute, which is in and for itself.

That the Gospel of Reason is identical with the concept of Faith is what Hegel seeks to show in this paragraph. Reason is the one “shape of consciousness” that has nothing analogous to Religion (par. 673). It knows *itself* to be “all reality” (pars. 233, 235). So when the (wo)man of Pure Insight (i.e. mature subjective Reason) meets someone who says that God is a spirit in whom we live and move, but who is “above and beyond” our world, she has to dismiss this sort of talk as a simple mistake. This divine spirit is just an alienated *projection* of the faithful believer’s own thinking. Thus, according to D’Holbach, the “God” of Faith is an imaginative projection of the human mind on a grand scale. But Pure Insight is itself the recognition of Reason as the universal community of self-consciousness; so the only real problem concerns how we ought to understand this “projection” of the universal community of the faithful in God.

“Insight” is the realization of the project of Reason. Reason experiences or encounters only itself in the object—i.e., in the world-order of other selves and things. “Faith” (as the experience of living and moving in God) is just this mode of experience expressed objectively (or as a mode of “consciousness”). What is distinctive in this “objectivity” of Faith is the characteristic of *trust*. Faith experiences God as another (greater) self in whom the believer has perfect confidence. The certainty of God’s self is a confirmation of my self-certainty. Looking forward to Absolute Freedom, we may notice that the certainty of identity with the Revolutionary Goddess of Reason is an experience of absolute *distrust* or of universal Hobbesian suspicion. This shows us why the experience of Faith is regarded by Hegel as a necessary aspect of the concept of Spirit as the concrete existence of Reason. But just how the identity between Faith and Insight that is here asserted is to be understood, remains unclear.

The word *Erdichtung* applied to the God of Faith points fairly definitely to D’Holbach. But he would certainly have disputed the identity of the fictional divinity with the universal insight of Reason to which he was appealing; and I suppose he would hardly have found the claim in the first sentence of this paragraph that Enlightenment grasps Faith as “Pure Insight” intelligible. He did not grasp it that way himself at all. So it may help to go back more than a century and consider Pascal’s critical reaction to Descartes. This is certainly justified in the present context, because the concept of “rational self-certainty” is unmistakably Cartesian.

Descartes agreed that God was the necessary object of “Pure Insight.” It was one of his most earnest concerns to demonstrate this. Yet Pascal (who shared the Cartesian spirit and understood it as well as anyone) found the demonstration “useless and sterile”:

The God of the Christians is not a God who is simply the author of geometrical truths and of the order of the elements; this is the concept of the pagans and of the epicureans . . . All those who seek God apart from Jesus Christ and who stop at nature, either find no light to satisfy them or arrive at forming for themselves a way of knowing God and of serving Him without a mediator; and thereby they fall either into atheism or into deism, which are two things that the Christian almost equally abhors.³⁷

Pascal’s language here is the authentic voice of “Faith”; and his forecast of the outcome of the pilgrimage of Pure Insight agrees exactly with Hegel’s analysis of the “Truth of Enlightenment.”

What Pascal did not find in the God of an enlightened philosopher who was far removed from D’Holbach’s aggressive atheism is the encounter with the humanly incarnate self of the Risen Christ. This is the God in whom Faith achieves the confirmation of its own self-certainty. Only the tiniest glimmer of this self-recognition can be ascribed to “Pure Insight” (which is, after all, not just *theoretical*). Insight is “conscious of itself as *doing* and producing”; and in Faith “*obedience and doing* form a necessary moment.” But what does it mean to *see* the identity of this divine “other self” with the rational universality of Pure Insight? The injection of that one word “obedience” makes a great barrier.

Hegel himself insists on the differences between Insight and Faith. Insight involves not merely the “self-recognition of intelligence in the intelligible other” but the awareness of the recognizing self that it *is* the source of the whole movement, that it “produces the object”—the “other” in which it recognizes itself. “Producing the Object” is just what Faith does according to D’Holbach’s “anthropomorphic fiction” theory of religious experience. But it is certainly not the way a faithful believer is aware of the experience; and Hegel insists that Faith is right. The *eternity* of God, his “being in and for self,” ultimately *comprehends* the moment of “production.”

Faith, however, is a knowledge of God as “spirit.” That is to say it is not the unconscious projection or postulation of an object that is simply “other.” God is the “spirit of the community.” My own real being is involved in, and sustained by, this “Spirit.” The God of Faith does not exist by Himself (or in Heaven). He exists here and now in my voluntary recognition of membership in his community. Faith *does* know that “the spirit of the community is the essence *only through its being produced* by consciousness;—or rather *not without* having been produced by consciousness.” This is what has to be “comprehended” within God’s “being in and for himself.” Neither Insight (i.e. Subjective Reason) nor Faith has achieved this. D’Holbach’s theory is one-sided; but what the whole truth is, we cannot yet see. We can see, however, that Descartes’ “grasping of Faith as Pure Insight” was not enough.

- 14./550. Insight is essentially *other* than its object. So the *otherness* of the faith-world misleads it. Faith knows that the talk of priestly deception is nonsense. For the supposed hocus-pocus offers as truth what insight itself teaches [that we must achieve the community of Reason]. Before we ask whether it is permissible to deceive a people we should ask whether it is possible (especially about its own rational essence).

What leads Insight to reduce Faith to “superstition” is its own structure as an “infinite judgment,” its willingness to identify Spirit as a “bone.” But Insight is the *truth* of Pure Culture: that the traditional world is a self-contradictory system of selfish “clients” produced by “impure insight.” The validity of this opposition between *pure* and *impure* insight is not in dispute. The Monarchy and the Clergy *do* use the “noble essences” to mislead the “simply honorable” consciousness about the wealth-driven social order. The question that arises, is whether the “essences” are *inverted* by this misuse. This is not yet consciously recognized in the case of the *actual* values of Government and Honor. But in the case of God, Heaven etc., the Enlightenment says it is so. This essence, however, was identified long ago in the process of culture as the Good; and that is the living force of the Enlightenment itself. So the naïve consciousness knows that Enlightenment itself is lying when it claims that God is only a “noble lie.”

The absolute “otherness” of the object of rational consciousness is precisely what defines the “purity” of Pure Insight. We can see why Hegel chose D’Holbach, the most outspoken atheist among the *philosophes*, as the voice of Pure Insight.

Only the materialists maintain the otherness, the alienation of thought from its object, consistently. This may seem to make the defence of Faith easier for Hegel, because the resulting misrepresentation of Faith (which articulates the identity of thought and object) becomes quite obvious. But the reference to the Berlin Academy's Prize Question of 1778—"Whether it is useful for a people to be deceived?"—makes an indirect comment on the famous dictum of Voltaire: "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him."³⁸ Hegel's response is that the people's God never could be "invented." The God of Faith is the necessary being that rational consciousness itself needs; even the account that philosophical atheism gives of the origin of "superstition" reveals this. On the other hand, when the Deists try to defend their Supreme Being as "useful," they only confess both their own implicit unbelief, and their complete misunderstanding of what they are talking about. The atheists (or materialists) at least avoid the error of supposing that what is not true could be universally useful.

The remarkable success of anti-rational ideologies in our own century might lead us to dispute Hegel's confidence that a community cannot be deceived about what everyone needs to believe. But at least his argument is free of any dependence upon the wish-fulfilling aspect of Faith. Enlightenment will take Faith's dearest *wish*, and demonstrate that it cannot be fulfilled, and that Faith does not even know what the wish means. After that, the wish will be reformulated (in VI C) as the necessary knowledge which its faithful form only disguises. Hegel's argument that the people *cannot* be deceived, only applies properly to this necessary knowledge which (according to his historical analysis) is directly implied in the rationality espoused by all parties to the discussion about the potential usefulness of ideological deception. If he underestimated the power of wish-fulfilment to inhibit the evolution of Reason—as I think he did—we must note first, that everyone else in his time did likewise, and secondly that he deliberately framed his argument in the terms set by the opposing view that rated both the force and the danger of irrational wish-fulfilment at the highest limit then conceivable.

On behalf of the Deists, however, it should be noticed that they do recognize the logical problem created by the necessary *otherness* of Insight's object. The one thing in the world of physical necessity which rational insight cannot explain, is its own presence; and if we make rational insight one of the functions of matter itself, as the Materialists did, then the rational universality of theoretical consciousness in a world of necessarily self-preservative motions remains an uncomfortable article of blind faith. This shows why the Truth of Enlightenment is bound to break up into a *Gegensatz*. One reason why Enlightenment is presented in the absolutely estranged form that it assumes at the extreme of Materialism is that the Materialist hypothesis (in its developed hylozoist form) is closer to Hegel's own spiritualism, than the Deist hypothesis of the Supreme Being. The unitarian monism of the Materialists can readily be shown to have a trinitarian spiritualism logically implicit in it.³⁹

15./551. Let us now consider in detail how the Enlightenment perverts the moments of faith: God, his presence to me, my worship.

Pure Insight *inverts* Faith. We shall not learn very much that is novel from Hegel's detailed discussion of this inversion, but we shall get a clear view of what he means by "Faith." There is no need for further commentary at this point. We should only notice that "the absolute essence" is the object of my "pure thinking"; and that God's presence in Faith is called a "*connection* with the essence as a knowing."

- 16./552. *God*: Faith says the Absolute Essence is an objective reality. Insight takes it, therefore, to be guilty of idolatry. But it condemns its own object here, not the God of Faith (or the Mass).

Under the name *absolute essence* Hegel describes God in the terms of his own Logic. The God of Faith is "pure thinking posited within itself as object or as the essence." We can see from paragraph 551 that the active thinking is that of the believer; the believer becomes united with God in thinking of him. But God's thinking far transcends the believer's faithful thought; and in that aspect (of being "more") God acquires "the form, but also only the empty form, of objectivity." God's thinking is what creates and maintains the believer's self and world. The believer *represents* God as an objective essence (because the thinking of Faith has the form of "consciousness"). But Faith never forgets that this projected object is really the comprehensive Subject who truly does the projecting. Faith *uses* the structure of sense-consciousness; but it no longer needs the external sensible mediator of the Unhappy Consciousness.⁴⁰ God is within its thought, and it is within God's.

The whole relationship of Faith to God is in *pure* thought. The experience is all inward. It does not involve the sense-world at all. Faith itself appeared in a polemical shape as the iconoclasm of the Puritans; but just as Hegel argues that Insight falsifies itself in its polemical concern with external objects, so he means us to see that iconoclasm is a falsification of Faith. The best *Gestalt* for Faith that I can discover is Pascal—hardly more of a Catholic than a Protestant, but critically wary of all extremes. He formulates the sublation of all actuality in thought perfectly: "Man is only a reed, the frailest thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed . . . Were the Universe to crush him, man would still be nobler than what slays him. For he knows that he dies and that the Universe has the better of him. But the Universe knows nothing of this." Or again: "By its space the Universe comprehends and engulfs me like a point. But by my thought I comprehend it."⁴¹

So when Insight interprets Faith as concerned with visible things, this is a direct falsification and inversion of what Faith is. D'Holbach knows that the *Vorstellung* of the "thinking reed" is not meant literally; but his fundamental ontology does not supply him with a *real* referent for the implicit "wind of the spirit" that shakes that "thinking reed." The reed certainly needs an Other to shake it; but the "Other self" of Pascal's religious consciousness is not other than the thinking reed in the way that the wind is other than the reed on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Pascal must portray (*vorstellen*) that other self (the Risen Christ) for himself in thought; and the thought-models (*Vorstellungen*) of pure *Denken* are among the most untranslatable entities in our experience. When we formulate them in terms of

Locke's theory of "ideas" we are already guilty of D'Holbach's inversion of their nature. We should remember instead, Hume's discovery that he has no "idea" of his "self"; for then we are on the trail of "the Concept."

- 16./553. Enlightenment, which pretends to be pure Insight, here degrades itself into sense-certainty. The object of faith is not a crucifix, statue, or bread. It is *also* that, but that is not relevant. What matters to faith is the *meaning* of the sensible sign.

At the end of paragraph 552 Hegel explicitly admits that Faith must "anthropomorphize" the "absolute essence." The "world" of Faith is a world not of *things*, but of *conscious interpretive processes*. This is a deliberate concession to D'Holbach, and an implicit criticism of Puritan iconoclasm. The necessary "anthropomorphism" is exactly Pascal's point in his criticism of the God of Descartes. The Risen Christ is far removed from the Divine Mathematician and Architect. But apart from the image in stone or wood which expresses this, Hegel specifically mentions twice the "dough" of the Mass. Much more vividly than the sculpted or painted image—which is most naturally taken as a permanent "thing" of Perception—the dough that is cooked into Communion-wafers typifies the transience of Sense-Certainty.

Unlike the Unhappy Consciousness, Faith is not caught up in the problem of the long-dead Savior; the Savior is living and present. But in its harvesting, milling, baking, eating of the bread, its excreting and returning of the night-soil to the earth, it presents the enlightened atheist with an important lesson about the thought-status of her own "Matter." The language of sense-certainty and Perception cannot be given the protocol status that the materialist wants to give it; for the matter that truly *is* throughout the whole cycle of transformation from soil to soil, is a "universal" of the Understanding—"the essence of pure thought." Even the materialist (who supplies the thinking in her own scientific Understanding) needs the "essence" as a conceptual object.⁴²

The symbol of the dough also deepens the significance of Faith's anthropomorphism. Hegel's insistence (in par. 552) that the consecrated wafer comes from and returns to the cultivated land (*Acker*) recalls Luther's terror of "eating and drinking damnation." But Faith has overcome that; the "anthropomorphism" of the Mass implicitly returns the spiritual reference of Faith to the life of this world. The Risen Lord is not a pure intellect, but the reconciled wholeness of actual life and death. The iconoclasm of the Puritan Reformers would seal off the inner life of pure thinking in a way that falsifies the real meaning of Faith. The falsification of Faith by Enlightenment does, at least, have the merit of pointing towards the truth.

- 18./554. *God's Presence*: For faith God is present immediately. But there is also a *mediation* through the "witness of the Spirit." Enlightenment reduces this to belief in the historic testimonies. Faith however is the knowledge of Christ risen in me. For Enlightenment this "Spirit" is another known thing, because only things can be known. Pure Insight does not yet know itself as a motion. This knowledge of Spirit is something that it must develop, but which Faith has. The Gospel story is less certainly

established than an average newspaper report; the records have survived by accident, and subject to copying mistakes; anyway the meaning requires interpretation. Faith however depends on the inner witness, and the communal witness. When it starts arguing about the testimonies etc., it has been corrupted by Enlightenment.

The Concept of God is immediately present to Faith, as the absolute thinking that comprehends and sustains both the world and its own thought. But there is also an experience of God. This is the “witness of the Spirit with our spirit”⁴³ of which St. Paul speaks. It is a mediated knowledge of God, that comes especially through the reading of the Scriptures. But the enlightened critic finds it hard to understand how this strange record of partly fabulous events can be the ground of a knowledge of God. The answer is that, for Faith, what matters is not something that happened (or did not happen) in a far away place at another time, but what happens to the reader here and now. For Insight this is incomprehensible. The Book is only an external testimony about certain events (including, for example, at the point where the reference to the “witness of the Spirit” occurs, the curious psychology of a small community who thought that “living after the flesh” was evil). Some of the “witness”—the testimony about this bit of social psychology perhaps—is highly plausible; but the record also contains factual assertions that simply cannot be “true”; the miracle stories, for instance, can only be significant in a psychological sense.⁴⁴

“The Spirit” here is the divine Spirit; and its relation with “our spirit” is the same comprehensive one that the absolute thinking as an “immediate essence” has to our finite consciousness. But pure Insight takes this “simple self-knowing Spirit” to be an alien being once more. In so doing, it fails to recognize itself. Insight takes itself to be not a motion of interpretation, but the immediate activity of intuiting “objects.” In that intuitive shape, as we know, rational Insight can only be cognizant of the so-called “laws of thought,” and of a ragbag of faculties and psychological phenomena; but the interpretive experience of a believing mind in reading the Scriptures is what Insight really is.

What appears to Insight to be only psychology is just that; but this “mere psychology” is the medium of the *inner* life, the life of the spirit.⁴⁵ The identity between Faith and Insight is important here. For Faith this psychological experience is the presence (in “hope” to use Paul’s word in that same context) of the world of pure thought. The felt reality of that other world (the vital importance of it which motivates the attack on “the flesh”) has nothing to do with the factual truth of any stories, and does not depend on the exact empirical meaning of any text, or on any supposed perfect reliability in the transmission of the record (which would be empirically incredible). The psychology is reliable. We can confirm that empirically now if we want to. And the historical record shows—at least to Hegel’s satisfaction and to mine—that the most important (empirical) witness, the best testimony to the “events” that we have, did *not* take the most crucial of the “stories” to be the account of an ordinary empirical event. Paul’s encounter with the Risen Christ was “psychological.” No one else on the road to Damascus with him would

have seen what he “saw.” But that was, for him, exactly what made his vision into “the witness of the spirit”; and anyone *nom*, reading the text, can have *that kind of* experience.

Behind Hegel’s argument in paragraph 554 lies the most famous of Lessing’s polemics, the little essay “On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power.” “Accidental truths of history,” said Lessing, “can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason . . . that is the broad, ugly, ditch which I cannot get across.”⁴⁶ But this difficulty applies both ways. If there are any “necessary truths” made manifest in the Christian experience, then the fallacies involved in their first discovery are irrelevant (just as it would not affect the validity of a powerful mathematical theorem, if its discoverer was led to it initially by some logically invalid psychological process). The supposedly historical Resurrection is for Lessing the invalid step in the historical “proof” of the metaphysical truth of Faith. It is clear that Lessing himself did not (and could not) accept it, though he did not say so outright. But he recognized the Resurrection story as the mythical shape under which an inward conversion experience was expressed by a culture that did not possess his concept of “historical truth,” and for a mass audience which could only think of eternal truths, by *pic-turing* another “world.”⁴⁷

This interpretation of Lessing’s position is based on my reading of “The Education of the Human Race.” Whether it is the correct reading of Lessing himself or not, I am certain that it was Hegel’s reading of him. At the level of Faith Hegel cheerfully accepted the “ditch” between the empirical facts of history (which are essentially “uncertain”) and the eternal truths of Reason; he only insisted, like Lessing, that Faith was a kind of rational knowledge, and that it was already on the “eternal” side of the ditch. The problem of “Lessing’s ditch” is for Hegel the problem of reconciling the eternity of the “necessary truths of reason” with their historical appearance; and I believe Lessing’s “Education of the Human Race” was in fact the first important clue for Hegel’s eventual solution of that problem.

The acceptance of the “ditch” means that the truth of Faith does not depend in any way upon the historicity of Jesus, or of the Crucifixion. The truth of Faith is simply the rational interpretation of the “myth” that expressed a rational truth appropriately for an earlier time; the myth itself is a fact of present experience, not of history at all. We have to insist on this very rigorously, because we cannot (in any case) accept the Resurrection as a historical fact, without sacrificing all of our fundamental canons of historical evidence. If we take the whole story as a myth, then no questions about its historical origin as a myth can affect its rational significance—fascinating though such questions are bound to be to at least some of the believers who are conscious of its significance.

But if Faith allows rational truth to be confused with historical truth,⁴⁸ then its “inwardness” will be “infected” by the Enlightenment; and as soon as that happens Faith itself will cease to be universally present. That is what happens to Faith under the impact of the enlightened falsification of its content. Being unsophisticated, Faith is easily led into misunderstanding itself. Lessing pointed out that by being willing to fight upon the historical field at all, the defenders of the historicity of the

Gospel were inflicting serious wounds upon religion itself. He asserted that Pastor Goeze was “*not uninfected* by the heterodoxy of the enemy.”⁴⁹

- 19./555. (3) *God's Service*: Faith disciplines itself in various ways to testify as well as possible to its awareness of its union with God (and its independence of everything else). In its criticism of this, Enlightenment falls into *practical* impurity. First it does not recognize what Faith's aim is. Secondly it claims that the only rational end is to be happy in finite terms.

The abstract conceptual expression here needs to be interpreted in terms of the concrete examples supplied by paragraph 556. Once this is done, little commentary is needed. The examples refer us once more to D'Holbach, so it is still he who is the voice of Enlightenment—whereas Lessing has now emerged as the voice of the Faith that has achieved self-conscious Insight (and the tell-tale word *Ansteckung* directs us to *his* presence as the self-conscious voice of Faith throughout the “struggle”).

The distinction of “purposiveness” from “purpose” in the active relation of Faith to the life-world is the way in which the Unhappy Consciousness is preserved within it. What appears is the seemingly unachievable and hence irrational purpose of “self-denial.” The perfectly rational goal of serving God does not appear, but remains in the inward sphere of pure thought.

In the active life of pure Insight, on the other hand, there is a perfect harmony of appearance and intention. But that harmony reveals the contradictoriness of “pure intention” on its own account. The rational goal of Insight is “happiness”; but the pursuit of happiness is a worldly end that contradicts the pure rationality of Insight itself. Insight is not caught in Rameau's situation; it is not selfish, so it is not obliged to despise itself rationally. But the rational will for the happiness of everyone generally (in pursuit of which the insightful agent may sacrifice herself as readily as any martyr of the faith) is a will for the worldly happiness of everyone distributively and singularly; and that contradicts the rational unity of everyone in pure thought (which is, on the contrary, the consistent goal of Faith). The opposed inadequacies must be reconciled in a resolution that does away with them both. But the simple triumph of Enlightenment will only bring the contradictoriness of the purely secular goal of “happiness” to light.

- 19./556. So fasting is absurd, and giving one's goods to the poor is quixotic—though the one demonstrates spiritual freedom, and the other spiritual community. These goals are right, but really pursuing them is wrong. Being comfortable is what really counts.

When Hegel carries his defence of the rationality of Faith into detail, all of the above points become fairly clear. The problem of the Unhappy Consciousness is overcome, when he argues that the regular practice of self-denial is as rational as eating. The self is not denied by any one act of discipline; but neither is life maintained by any one meal. The rationality both of fasting and of eating depends on their being comprehended as life-*policies*. The only response I can think of on behalf

of D'Holbach is that resigning one's goods *to the Church* might not have the piously intended effect (and I suspect that, whether he said so or not, that was in his mind). But according to my reading, Hegel does not mean to defend the piety that depends on authority. D'Holbach, on his side, cannot deny that self-discipline and the charitable assistance of those in need will continue to be rational virtues in the enlightened world to which he looks forward. The temptation to make people laugh at the impulses of benevolence, is an excess of enlightened insight in which we can detect a secret (or half-conscious) identification of rationality with natural self-preservation; and that would pitch us back into Rameau's rational self-contempt.⁵⁰

(f) *The Positive Enlightenment*

- 21./557. *Positive Enlightenment* (1): Pure Reason. Enlightenment gets into this bad light because it becomes negative through its relation to finite things. But the finite world is where it becomes actual. What, then, is its positive doctrine of reality? That all objects are finite human "ideas" [Locke] and Absolute Essence is a void. So the riches of Insight are a bad infinity of limited moments and an unknown.

Hegel now turns our attention from the negative side of the polemical Enlightenment to its positive side. This is not yet the proper truth of Enlightenment; it is only the other side of the polemic of Insight. But the reasons for the silent triumph of Enlightenment will now begin to emerge. We are still dealing with the radical humanism of D'Holbach and La Mettrie; but Hegel will now derive their practical utilitarianism from their theoretical position—i.e., he will show us how their rational ethics of universal Utility is the final end of their polemic.

But before we examine that fairly straightforward "positive reality" we must take a last look at the "negative reality" that Enlightenment gives itself. There is no conflict between Enlightenment and Faith in the silent and secret "infection" of all minds; one can (like Lessing) be both "faithful" and "enlightened" without strain. But when Enlightenment becomes phenomenally visible ("actual" in the full sense) it becomes a polemic against "superstition"; and in this guise it is "the contrary of itself," both because it ought not to be one-sidedly polemical (partisanship destroys its "purity"), and because Faith is *not* superstition (only an *impure* intention, or a *perverse* insight can take it in that way). This self-contradiction is necessary because, in order to be "actual," Insight must be different from naïve Faith, and must show itself as such; but the "contradiction" is only a stage in the realization of the concept.

The positive reality of Enlightenment, is its third moment in which the "good" inward essence, and the "bad" outward appearance are reconciled. The argument is simple and easy to follow, because the whole position was commonsensical. In the self-explication of Real Individuality, the dialectical motion is of the harmless, unparadoxical kind that we are all quite used to. The noisy Enlightenment brings the triumph of the silent Enlightenment to consciousness.

This is all plain sailing; but we shall soon be faced with a new section of chapter

VI that seems only to repeat what is said here. At that point we shall have to look very hard to find the dialectical progression that Hegel *must* want us to see. The “comprehensive inversion” of the silent and the noisy Enlightenment together is what is happening here. What happens *there* must be something else. What it is, we must decide when we get there.

Here we must consider first the injustice that Enlightenment commits against Faith. The “*positive reality*” of Enlightenment appears contemptible to Faith precisely because of its rejection of all “other-worldly” values. Pure Insight itself belongs to that “other world of pure thought”; so the essential worldliness of the Enlightenment looks very bad. But the truth of Enlightenment is precisely that that other world is empty, that the only content for pure thought is to be found in this world, the world that is “other” for pure thinking. This was the principle upon which the shameless reduction of Faith to idolatry was based.

Our thinking, says Enlightenment, is a strictly human function, the formation of “ideas” à la Locke. The “Absolute Essence” is Locke’s “Substance, I know not what”; nothing can be said about it. All of the monstrosities of superstition have arisen from the pretence (of the evil-minded priests, who do know better rationally speaking, because they all admit that it is unknowable) that we can talk about it. The proper behavior of Pure Insight is to recognize itself as *human*, and hence as having its proper objects in *this* human, finite, and sensible (non-rational) world. “Agnosticism” is the enlightened way of dealing with the Absolute.⁵¹

- 22./558. (2) Sensation: All actual cognition is *singular*; the universal is unknown. Sense-certainty is the ultimate truth to which Insight *returns* (as distinct from the natural consciousness that starts there). Everything beyond sense-certainty has been reduced to nothing. This is the merely negative proof that Insight can offer. The positive truth is the certainty of the finite self that it *is* [there] among other actual things outside it. This situation is the absolute truth.

Whereas the God of Faith is immediately present in the thought of the worshipper, the Absolute Essence of Pure Insight is immediately *absent* in thought. “Presence” is all in the external, non-rational, mode of sensation. In Pure Insight we have the completion of the great cycle of singular consciousness; Reason returns to the starting point of simple Consciousness in Sense-Certainty. The closing of this circle is important for Hegel’s “Science,” because it makes the rebirth of “speculation” in post-Kantian idealism a spiritual rebirth. Paragraph 558 directs us to the commonsensical empiricism of the Enlightenment as our philosophical model for Sense-Certainty. And since we ought to seek a naïvely unpolemical or theoretical example for it (and not see it initially as part of a battle between Faith and Reason), the Common Sense philosophy of Thomas Reid is probably the best philosophical *Gestalt* of the “natural consciousness” that we shall find.

This rational philosophy of Common Sense is very different from the “naïve” common sense from which our Science began. It has won its way back to self-possession as the reflective *theory* of “what there is.” The knowledge that it has escaped from all “supernatural” assumptions is essential to it. The world of Sense-

Certainty is its “truth” in a very sophisticated sense. It can distinguish between simple “being” and “essence” successfully; so it does not cycle round endlessly from Sense-Certainty to Perception and back like the natural consciousness. It is Reason operating as Understanding.

This Common Sense is an absolute certainty of “being in and for itself.” We shall see what that means in paragraph 559; and we shall soon discover how woefully inadequate the truth of this “absolute certainty of being” is. But the completion of the circle here, confirmed by the application of the adjective “absolute” to the commonsense conviction that “I am here,” and “the external world is there,” implies that the Baconian applied science of this world is the solid foundation upon which Hegel’s ladder of *spiritual* experience rests. The Terror will teach us that this sense-world, and this kind of scientific comprehension, is not enough. But we are never going to leave this world behind again; our return to it here is decisive. The Understanding is now about to draw the curtain (referred to in par. 165) and to take possession of its “real world.” It is the ordinary empirical world that is turned over into the world of Spirit proper. The world of naïve common sense is “just the *unmediated* being-for-self of the Concept as object.”⁵²

- 23./559. (3) Utility: What is the relation of this finite certainty to the Infinite? The infinite Beyond is the Void, so the decision about finite reality is open: Finite knowers and objects can be either Being *or* Nothing; whatever is actual can either be or not be. There is no value judgment here, but just the identity of being-in-itself with being-for-another.

Pure Insight *comprehends* the finite human reality of this world of Lockean ideas. The world of sense is known to rational insight as the finite appearance of the absolute *Void* that is beyond. Here, for the first time, Hegel uses the unmistakable language of Materialism. He is not dealing with “matter,” however, but the relationship of finite persons and things to the Absolute; still, his model is provided by the Atomist theory of bodies moving in the Void. This is how finite being must be conceived if it has *no* being in and for itself—which is the purely instrumental or utilitarian view of it. The truth of Enlightenment (at this stage when it still exists as the antithesis within the Concept of pure consciousness, or Faith) is found in the Baconian doctrine that “knowledge is power.” *Human choice* is the truth-criterion of this world; the “perfectibility of man” (and of woman too, for Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin were among the most perfectly articulate voices of the Enlightenment) is the “purpose” of Pure Insight.

If we remember that the actual world has all been comprehended (Locke-fashion) in the finite self, we can see that Hegel means the “Void” literally here. He does not need the hypothesis of dogmatic materialism yet; the only “atoms” moving in this Void of Pure Insight are the human selves. The relation of these finite selves to Pure Insight as the infinite void of free thought can be whatever you like. Free thought contributes the determination; and free beings are what is determined. Hegel gives us several “identical opposites”: “*Being* as well as *Nothing*; *In-itself* as much as the counterpart [i.e. For-another].” He formulates *perfectibility* in

the claim that “the connection of *Actuality* to *In-itself* as the *Beyond* is just as much a *negating* as a *positing* of it.” Nothing human is actually “perfect,” but everything is perfectible; this is the Faith of the Enlightenment.

We are no longer in Faith’s cultural world of Good and Bad. The standard of perfection now is “usefulness”; and like everything she comprehends, the singular human being exists to be useful to her fellows. The alternative of Being and Nothing is the permanent aspect of the third moment, because the “being” of the finite rational self is identical with its self-annihilation in the service of others.⁵³ But that is the empty Beyond of death; it is the positive being of our sensory existence that Reason “makes, fosters and cherishes.”

- 24./560. In fact we have to assert both sides of the in-itself/for-another identity because everything is both useful and exploitive. The world of Insight is a universe of mutual exploitation, and the self is both instrument and user. We are once more in Eden, but we have eaten the apple; we know Good (measure) and Evil (excess), but we can use Reason to stay within our proper bounds. In that way we can universalize pleasure. The determining aim of rational measure is the measureless.

With its concept of universal Utility, the Enlightenment makes a successful transition from rational Sense-Certainty to rational Perception. The human being is the finite “thing” (*Ding* means a perceptible object here) that is aware of Utility as the relationship of the finite to the infinity of Reason; and although she uses non-human “things,” she is the only “thing” to which the relation applies indifferently in both directions. That is why we must read “Wesen” comprehensively as referring to “persons” in paragraph 559, rather than to ordinary “things.” For although the world of sensible things breaks loose from the world of pure thought at this point, it does so only in the context of a new Garden of Eden in which Adam and Eve give everything its name, and enjoy lordship over all they survey.⁵⁴ This is not the original Garden of Nature, but a new Garden in which the Tree of Knowledge is no longer forbidden (another symbol of the overcoming of the priestly conspiracy); and the Serpent in this Garden is the “new serpent of wisdom” made by Moses himself upon God’s instructions (par. 545).

The breaking loose of “things” from the unity of pure thought is a further step in the emergence of Materialism. One result is the reappearance of the concept of Good. Good and Bad are not God-given but humanly determined; and this means that the human being as an embodied perceptible thing is *naturally good* (a direct inversion of the thesis of Culture [cf. pars. 484–486]). Human happiness (the harmonious satisfaction of all natural desires) is Good; and human unhappiness is Bad.

There is a close connection between the world of Universal Utility and the rational self of Pleasure and Necessity, just as there was between the battle against Superstition and the Frenzy of Self-Conceit. But the “reflective” character of Enlightenment makes a crucial difference. The identity of “Pleasure” was immediate, emotional and singular. It is a mistake to read utilitarian hedonism in at that stage; but that is what we have now arrived at. Enlightened eudaemonism is universal and rationally mediated; everyone knows that they must give as well as take. All

must desire and work for the happiness of everyone. Hence this is the world of Virtue rather than of Pleasure; and at this stage, the word Virtue invokes the shadow of Robespierre. Reason is the eyes, and the instrument, of the passions here. If we are rational, we shall live (and help others to live) the longest possible life as happy pigs; the identity of self-enjoyment and service need not be a painful contradiction (or an encounter with incomprehensible Necessity). Everyone can enjoy themselves while being useful to everyone else; and one can do this anywhere in the rational social system.

Because the natural life of sensation is a direct identity of Being and Nothing, our “naturally good” nature must actually comprehend evil within it as its own “Beyond.” If we follow our spontaneous impulses we shall destroy ourselves. “Reason” is our instrument for avoiding this; so it is not our passionate nature that is good, but the *comprehensive* capacity of Reason. This capacity distinguishes us from other animals; and it gives us the knowledge that, in the end, we shall die anyway. So as rational beings we must not only aim to be happy for as long as possible; we must be as useful as possible in the maintenance of the universal continuum of happiness and utility. We control the excesses of “nature” rationally in order to secure the continuation of this “excessive” nature *ad infinitum*; and the universal continuum should have no essential (or natural) distinctions of functions. The concept of rational utility is modelled by our two hands which must wash one another reciprocally.

The conception of a new Garden of Eden comes from La Mettrie; but the supposed perfect harmony of enjoyment and service is more evident in the work of Helvétius.⁵⁵ But the whole argument is also in D’Holbach; and the basic thesis that humanity is “naturally good” was common to virtually all of the Enlighteners (except Hobbes at the beginning and Kant at the end).

- 25./561. In this world of universal utility our religious relation to the Absolute is *most* useful (as the spreading of this gospel).

D’Holbach seems to have been the only important leader of thought who was openly *anti-religious*. Even the outrageous La Mettrie makes a solemn bow in the direction of Deism:

Not that I call in question the existence of a supreme being; on the contrary it seems to me that the greatest degree of probability is in favor of this belief. But since the existence of this being does not prove that one form of worship is more necessary than any other, it is a theoretical truth with very little practical value. Therefore, since we may say, after such long experience, that religion does not imply exact honesty, we are authorized by the same reasons to think that atheism does not exclude it.⁵⁶

But La Mettrie shows his materialist tail and cloven hoof even here, in his absolute rejection of Voltaire’s claim that God is a “useful” hypothesis. Hegel makes the transition to Deism (or rather to the division of the essentially agnostic Enlightenment into its theistic and its atheistic wings) through the extension of

the two-sided concept of Utility to the Absolute. The relation of the finite self to the Absolute *as a self*, provides a *religious* relation of the Spinozist kind. The “love of God” in the rationalist sense makes the identification of enjoyment with service simple. That is why it is “the most useful of all utilities.”⁵⁷ For as the Self that gives us all room to exist (in his Void) God is the incarnation of the principle of Utility itself.

Again we should notice that humans (or, at the widest, living organisms) are the only “things” that are “useful to one another.” But even inorganic “things” have the double relation to the Absolute. This is what Bacon means when he says that “We cannot command Nature except by obeying her.”⁵⁸ Even in the universal instrumentalism of the Enlightenment, everything must be known as it is “in and for itself,” before it can be *used* properly.

- 26./562. This gospel of universal goodness and expediency is an abomination to faith. Everything is good just the way it comes from the Supreme Being. This self-confessed platitude is the highest knowledge.

The God of Deism, the *être suprême*, thus emerges from the necessary two-sidedness of Utility as the absolute concept of enlightened Reason. The “absolute essence” now has *two* names. As the “in-and-for-itself” aspect of Reason it is the Supreme Being; as the universal means at the free disposal of all finite thinkers, it is the Void. This Religion of universal Reason and universal happiness is fairly safely identifiable with the views of Helvétius.⁵⁹ But Hegel’s contemptuous comment on the Prize Question of 1778 (par. 550) has already shown us what he thinks of Religion as the most useful of all fictions.

This eudaemonism is abhorrent to Faith. When Hegel says that Faith regards it as a platitude that openly confesses itself such, I am not sure that he is not confusing the proper verdict of Faith (that this is the “pride” of Lucifer) with the verdict of La Mettrie (and himself); but it does not take a great deal of rational insight to see that the only *object* behind the useful fiction is an unknowable identity of Being and Nothing, in which a worshipper could never recognize herself. The “religion of humanity” can have saints, but it has no real divinity. The knowledge of the finite is known to be the highest knowledge that we can have.⁶⁰

(g) *The Triumph of Enlightenment*

- 27./563. Faith has the divine right [of the essence—see par. 467] that arises from thinking this absolute opposition [God and Man] as a true identity. Enlightenment has twisted all the moments of Faith out of shape. It has only the human right to disagree with itself, and to change its thoughts. But this is the absolute right of self-conscious freedom; and Faith, being consciousness itself, cannot deny it.

At this point another “reversal” begins. Enlightenment has come to a reconciliation between its “essence” and its “appearance.” Faith condemns the reconciled

“positive reality” (par. 557) as being just as bad as its “negative behavior” (par. 562). But now the “negative behavior” is about to be reexamined (pars. 564–572), and found to be quite well justified after all. Enlightenment, with its “positive reality,” will then be triumphant in its “truth.” Enlightenment has comprehensively inverted itself, and come to the self-possession of its impartial silence in its partisan speech. Now it will comprehensively invert its rejection by Faith; the silent identity will become visible.

The judgment of Faith upon Enlightenment is justified. Enlightenment does distort Faith; and the Insight that it puts in place of Faith has been shown to have *no* absolute content. It is both theoretically and practically empty of any absolute significance; yet Faith is the loser in the struggle.

There is an interesting contrast and parallel here with the conflict between Antigone and Creon. Both of them were asserting the “absolute right of self-consciousness” against “the divine right of the essence”; and both had to learn their error (par. 469). Now it is Faith that has the *divine* right; it grasps the identity of the finite and the Infinite, or of God and the human worshipper, truly; but Enlightenment has the *absolute* right. The human right to finite self-expression is absolute. As justified “rights” the “absolute” right and the “divine” right are equal just as the rights of Antigone and Creon were. But dialectically—or as a conflict in process of resolution—it is Insight that is “absolute” and must first prevail. Then a catastrophe follows; and whereas what came forth before was the “self-conscious Right” that both Antigone and Creon asserted, what will come forth now will be the divinely self-conscious Right of the substantial Spirit. Hegel’s concern in both cases is with the inevitability of the tragedy, and with its “result.” The right of Self-Consciousness (or of the daylight of universal insight in the finite world) is absolute, because it already comprehends the divine substance potentially. Only through its catastrophic triumph (in making the substance move) can a self-conscious identity, a stable balance of Substance and Subject, be established.

The mythic model that is followed in the downfall of the True Spirit, and repeated in that of the true Faith, is the story of Adam’s disobedience and Fall. Hegel agreed with the orthodox theologians that the Fall of Man is real; but like them he aims to show why it was “fortunate.” He differs from them, however, in wanting to show also that the category of “fortune” does not properly apply to it. The Fall is logically necessary; the right of finite self-consciousness sublates the wrong, and emerges as “absolute” because it is the right of Reason. It is in that negative character, or as the thought that cannot be satisfied with anything less than the “actual cognition of what truly is”—i.e. of the divine Substance—that it comprehensively envelops its opposite. Notice that according to this programmatic pattern it is the finite that must envelop the Infinite, the temporal experience that must comprehend the eternal truth.

The struggle of Faith with Enlightenment differs from that between Antigone and Creon (at least in Hegel's analysis of the latter) in the degree of self-consciousness involved. Faith is logically obliged to admit its own defeat, because what Enlightenment insists on is one side of what Faith itself asserts. Faith acts like the perceptual consciousness, attending to one side of its experience at a time, and ignoring the fact that in its different stances it contradicts itself. Pure Insight acts like the critical Understanding in pointing out the contradiction. When Insight points out that the Crucifix is only a piece of wood, bone, metal or stone, the criticism may seem to be merely a perverse misunderstanding; but in its own positive insistence that the worshipper is a finite consciousness of flesh and blood, the relevance of its objection to the inwardness of the life of Faith becomes clear. Faith itself can do away with, or do without, the Crucifix; but it cannot get away from the flesh and blood.

It is the "identity of principles" that is crucial. Faith itself asserts that we experience salvation here and now. It wants to insist that this is an *inner* experience. What Insight points out is that "inner" and "outer" cannot be sundered, that "the outer is the expression of the inner." This is what Faith asserts too, so it cannot disavow it. When it insists on the "inwardness" of its experience, it cannot forget that the faithful life is to be *lived*. That is why it can justly complain against the perverted interpretation that the polemical Enlightenment gives of everything that it does in the outer life. But it can only pretend to itself that the outer life is not "essential," by confiding in the promise of another life in the Beyond. Even that life is to be a "resurrection of the body"; and the Enlightenment has shown that the merely *intellectual* Beyond is an empty Void. Faith concedes this; otherwise it would cease to be a "kind of knowledge," and would fall back into the "Unhappy Consciousness." So it is here and now in the context of the "otherness" of the sensible world, that the "inwardness" of spiritual life is to be experienced. The "otherness" is essential to the inward life of the Spirit. Of course, the immediate identification of the "outer" with the "inner" which Insight blindly asserts, is an "infinite judgment" that can only bring death in its train; but there *is* a conceptual "identity" here, and Faith has to admit it. So there is no choice but to go forward and let the "infinite judgment" articulate itself into a comprehensible shape.

- 29./565. Enlightenment, however, becomes purely negative and ignores its own other side (the rational content of Faith). It does not recognize itself in the enemy, but remains one-sided. The Concept arises as an Other for it, and is simply found to be present by Enlightenment (which is the isolated moment of motion or *dialectic*). The two sides of the Concept meet as activity and being; and Faith must recognize the violent authority used against it.

Faith does not share the blindness of Antigone regarding its own defeat. But Enlightenment shares, to the full, the blindness of Creon regarding his own injustice. It keeps itself rigorously separate from the content of Faith; its own "religion" is a pure fiction of Reason. It "excludes Faith's content from its purity," by refusing to treat Faith as a form of thinking, and hence as implicitly rational. That is how it

is able to regard the content of Faith as “superstition,” the irrational negative of its own rationality. So while it does bring the sides of Faith together, it does not bring the thinking of Faith together with its own thinking. In choosing the “outer” side of Faith for assertion, it reduces Faith to contradiction; and in denying the “inner” side of Faith, it denies and contradicts itself.

Faith and Insight are like the two sides between which the perceiving consciousness skips back and forth. But it is Faith that must understand what is happening, because Faith is the unconscious “identity” of Thought and Being, while Insight is their absolute (self-conscious) estrangement. So instead of the perceptual stasis, the situation that arises is that of Lordship and Bondage (or unequal recognition).

The Enlightenment brings Faith to self-consciousness, without realizing the significance of what it is doing. The objective Concept arises before it as an alien essence that it must sweep away. Enlightenment itself is the moving force of this alien Concept. As in Lordship, this commanding violence is directed at an “other” which is not recognized as one half of the acting subject itself. The whole process takes place within one shared self-consciousness, but only Faith recognizes the sharing. The right of Insight over Faith is acknowledged by a self-consciousness that recognizes its Lord as a free self. Faith knows that Insight must triumph. But Insight does not recognize that it is Faith itself that is admitting this. It takes Faith’s defeat as a simple triumph of light over darkness in the hitherto unenlightened mind. Thus (again like the Lord) it does not recognize that Faith in defeat is actually wiser and more insightful than it is itself. Enlightenment will realize its Truth, and recognize its own absolutely contradictory, negative character in the Terror. What will emerge from the Terror is a higher mode of Faith; the “Goddess of Reason” will perish. Paragraph 565 brings out the dependent status of Faith; it is Insight that has the *independent* consciousness.

- 30./566. Enlightenment makes the believer see that the Concept is an *act* of consciousness, that the essence is the self-produced essence of myself, not an inexplicable revelation to me. Faith lives, moves and has its being in God, because it manifests God in its own active life. But Enlightenment goes further and makes God’s essence *only* a product of action. This reduces the production itself to the creation of a fiction. On the other hand, God exists as the Unknowable Other—Enlightenment and Faith agree on that point.

What emerges here is the problem of how an absolute Other can be known. The Insight that says God is a “fiction” implicitly assumes that the Other is an unconscious object; but that is not known. So the sense in which God is a product of “pure consciousness” (or of thought) requires further meditation. It is I who must read the Bible for myself, and make my own interpretation of it; and the experience of the Risen Christ that comes from this purely theoretical effort will become the genuine experience of salvation (which belongs to the “third relation” of Unhappy Consciousness) only if I can live in accordance with it. It is only in my active life that I can “be conscious that my singularity is reconciled with the universal” (par. 210).

Faith is hardly conscious of its active life as a “production” at all; but Enlightenment triumphs in the cultured mind because of the indubitable truth of this claim. Faith holds that God *reveals* himself. He is always primarily in and for himself; and my very capacity to experience the “witness of the Spirit with my spirit” when I read the Bible is a function of my recognition that “God is there” in my inner life. I live and move in God, and my being depends on his (not vice versa); but the actions that confirm the validity of this intuition are inalienably *mine*.

Now let us put the same point in the language of Insight. I do not produce Reason, when I think; but I do produce my own rationality. And that is not as easy as it sounds, as we can recognize when we reflect that the call to “have the *courage* to use your own understanding” was by no means rhetorical. Courage was required. In the language of Pure Insight, the word “production” (*hervorbringen*, bringing forth) is not at all the same as “creation.”⁶¹ No one creates rationality, or even makes herself rational by her own efforts alone. But there will not be any actual rationality unless we “bring it forth” together; and similarly, what is meant by the “bringing forth” of the community of Faith, from the inner world into the daylight of this world, is something *necessary*, something that Faith cannot deny to be its own act.

But then the Enlightenment goes wrong about this “production.” It claims that the subjective producing is all that there really is to Faith. The “Being in and for itself” that is inwardly experienced, is just a fictional reality; for Enlightenment takes that to be the only kind of existence that mere thoughts can have. This radical reduction ignores both the fact that thinking itself is something objectively valid, and the fact that Pure Insight is itself conscious of something more, something beyond mere thought, something alien to it and unknown. Each of the adversaries experiences the “essence” both subjectively and as a completely mysterious and alienated “object.” That is why Faith must yield; but it is also why the movement of rational thought cannot stop here.

- 31./567. Enlightenment does have a right to insist on the finite, anthropomorphic moment in Faith; for Faith combines with its spiritual experience the claim that certain “happenings” express the Absolute. Enlightenment, for its part, envisages this world as spiritually forsaken, as neither being nor not-being, but becoming.

The problem of “anthropomorphism” is more complicated than the simplistic attack of D’Holbach allows; but there is a problem nonetheless. Both Faith and Insight are involved in it, and neither can handle it properly, because both give to the Beyond, or to “pure thought,” an absolute priority which it cannot have. Faith can reject the accusation of idolatry with a good conscience; but it cannot deny its own historical origin and character. It makes its entrance into the eternal presence of God through its experience of “the witness of the spirit.” But that “witness” is mediated for it by a historical record. If Lessing is the voice of “Faith,” for instance, then the virtuous pagans (whose fate was such an agonizing problem for Dante) are just as surely a part of the community of the blessed for him, as they are for Helvétius; but how this can be consistent with the historical character of Faith is not clear.

The attitude of the Enlightenment towards historical transience (as summed up in the last sentence of this paragraph) is fundamentally mistaken (so Hegel will argue later); but Faith cannot explain *how* the dead man has “risen.” Faith itself (like the Enlightenment) thinks of the actual world as a “forsaken” unspiritual world that must be left behind.⁶²

- 32./568. As for the contingency of revelation, faith acknowledges that too. Salvation is an incomprehensible mystery, that is only imagined not known. The saved soul forgets this in the experience of the “witness of the Spirit.” Enlightenment concentrates on the aspect of mystery and the authoritative mediation, ignoring the *inward* structure of the salvation experience.

Dante, with his problem about the virtuous pagans, and the time before the Gospel came, is the *Gestalt* that we need here. Hegel is now dealing precisely with the bad logic of revelation (which Lessing insisted upon as much as Spinoza). No historical record can establish “eternal” truths; and Faith itself does not claim to have any rational insight into what it says it knows.

Faith is an ambiguous, two-sided phenomenon. Lessing gives precisely the interpretation of Faith’s “spiritual immediate knowledge of the Absolute Essence” that Hegel accepts. But for Faith itself, the fact that I have read the Book and seen the light, is a contingent fact of grace—an unfathomable mystery of “Divine election.” The polemical Enlightenment, which is mainly concerned with the social authority of the priesthood, degrades the “spiritual immediacy” of Faith’s knowledge back into the relation of external mediation by which the “unhappiness” of the natural consciousness was finally sublated (the channeling of Divine Grace through the priest as an “alien third”). What makes this possible, is precisely the fact that Faith can give no rational account of how it comes to be on the eternal side of “Lessing’s ditch.” The faithful consciousness does not even properly understand that the ditch is there, until the Enlightenment pushes it over the edge, and claims the eternal side just for itself. Both sides forget the immediate inner “witness of the Spirit.” Only at the end of chapter VI will it be properly remembered.

- 33./569. As for asceticism, faith acknowledges that God meant us to be happy. It is all the more grasping and hedonistic in its secular existence because its religious sacrifices are procuring its freedom on the other side; and therefore it is hypocritical.

As far as the discipline of asceticism and charity is concerned, Faith is in the same contradictory situation in which the Unhappy Consciousness found itself. Faith is not in despair about the fact that sacrifice can only be symbolic, because it admits that we have to make ourselves at home in the world. So it is satisfied with a religious renunciation that has real effect only in the inner life of thought. I am not certain what target Hegel has in mind in his ironic comment about Faith being all the more grasping in this world because of its religious confidence in its own pious intentions. But since the main representative of the Enlightenment is D’Holbach; and since the main battleground is France, I suppose the reference must be to the

acquisitiveness of the French Catholic Church, and to the stout defence of its “privileges” by the First Estate. In that case, this paragraph does not anticipate Max Weber’s thesis about the association between Protestantism and Capitalism.⁶³

This material acquisitiveness on the part of the Church makes Faith guilty of exactly the same hypocritical corruption of intention that it found Pure Insight to be guilty of earlier (par. 555). Hegel is clearly setting up a parallel in the whole sequence of topics and criticisms from the two sides. The establishment of a perfect equality in assertion and action means that the Enlightenment must triumph, because it has admitted the necessary identity of its thoughts with their singularized “otherness” in the secular world of sensible things.

- 34./570. As for the proof of its freedom being a fake, Faith knows that its symbolic action stands for a freedom that it does not have, and cannot achieve. A single action, no matter how radical, cannot adequately express a universal purpose. The pretence is too naïve.

The symbolic actions that express the inner purpose of Faith are logically absurd, just as Insight says they are. Faith escapes from the contradictory misery of the Unhappy Consciousness by distinguishing between “essence” and “existence,” and withdrawing into the “inner life” for its religious experience; and this means that it must logically admit that all of the “symbols” through which the Unhappy Consciousness was reconciled with the external world (and could even come to see it as “reconsecrated” or saved) are foolish. But such actions as fasting (or abstaining from most kinds of flesh) on Fridays are equally irrational. Here the agreement of Faith with Enlightenment becomes denominational, because D’Holbach was following in the footsteps of the great reformers in attacking the disciplinary *rou-tines* of Catholic piety.

The practice of priestly celibacy in particular is the target of the sarcastic reference to Origen. That great Church Father probably threw away his chance of sainthood, by having himself castrated in an excess of zeal. He made sexual intercourse impossible for himself, but he certainly did not free himself from the desire for it; and this says something important about “disciplined” abstention. On this point, D’Holbach has the most important of all the *Gestalten* of Faith on his side. When Luther left his monastery, he devoted time and effort to the finding of husbands for nuns who followed his example; and when one of them proposed herself as a wife for him, he married her, and fairly promptly fathered a child.

The dogma of the Atonement itself involves the same “infinite judgment” that Insight and Faith discover in all practice of ascetic discipline. How can a singular action of self-sacrifice be identical with the universal purpose of guaranteeing the forgiveness of all repentant sinners? Insight is quite right in pointing out here that “the Spirit is not a bone.” But it will go on to make the same absurd identification positively.

The standpoint of Faith is by no means exclusively Protestant; but Pure Insight became a social polemic against “superstition” (and ecclesiastical authority) largely because the Reformation did not triumph in France. The identity of itself with

Faith which Enlightenment perverts is more evident in the case of Protestantism, because the Enlightenment makes the Unhappy Consciousness its target, just as the Reformers had done earlier. Both the Reform and the Enlightenment are aspects of the evolution of Faith as the “third relation” of Unhappy Consciousness to the Unchangeable.

- 35./571. Here Enlightenment fastens on the unachieved inward ideal. For itself it does not even try to transcend its natural desires. Doing what comes naturally from within is self-justifying.

Faith clings to the inner life; and the more it becomes clear to itself, the more it becomes self-consciously hypocritical in practice. It is no *use* trying to do the impossible in the way of self-denial, as the Unhappy Consciousness did. So Faith becomes reconciled with the “bad infinite” of actual life in practice, precisely because it is estranged from it in theory. Insight cancels this hypocrisy by bringing the theory into harmony with the practical surrender.

When we study the agreement of D’Holbach with the great Reformers about the follies of penitential “discipline” we get an interesting insight into the “irresistible” authority of Enlightenment over Faith to which Hegel will very soon recur (compare par. 563 with par. 572). But before we go on to that we must explain the difference between the inner life of Faith and that of Insight. Insight can establish a perfect harmony of theory and practice because it “knows” that the inner life of its desires is naturally good. So when it holds fast to the “intention” as what counts in all active life, there is for it no opposition between Reason and Nature.⁶⁴

The inner life of Faith is not so simple and harmonious. Faith is still involved in the process of Culture—the process through which the Unhappy Consciousness is overcome. Pure Insight is the Reason that results from Culture; so it is the immediately “Happy Consciousness.” But it is actually a much more radical form of hypocrisy than Faith; so it will promptly turn over into a universally actual (or secular) experience of unhappiness. The final resolution (or better, the self-conscious reconciliation) of Unhappy Consciousness will begin from that experience; but for the moment, the rationalization of Faith by Insight produces the pseudo-religious Eudaemonism that Hegel castigates in *Faith and Knowledge*. In this second examination of Insight’s “negative behavior” the battle is over. Faith is forced to accept the “positive reality” of Enlightenment: the “comprehensive inversion” of the struggle is a familiar type of rational *accommodation*. This is the “Truth of Enlightenment.”

- 36./572. Enlightenment triumphs by Faith’s own confession. It seems that the “beautiful” harmony of Faith is being rent asunder by the demands of Understanding [cf. par. 32] in its vanity. But actually Enlightenment just makes Faith think, instead of living in two worlds at once with different standards and senses for each. Faith wakes up and admits that it cannot carry on in that way.

The “negative” Enlightenment did not triumph over Faith, but only over a straw man which it put in the place of Faith. As Hegel reminded us in par. 571 it

“maintains the externality of thinghood”; and since Faith quite consistently agrees with it about that, no genuine triumph over Faith was involved. But in its positive aspect—or as a doctrine of the “inner life”—Enlightenment is more consistent than Faith; and it is this logical consistency that constitutes its “irresistible *Gewalt*.” The great “flurry” appears to “*shatter the beautiful unity of trust*.”⁶⁵ All the “happiness” of this life is summed up by Rameau in the essentially *ugly* image of the night-stool and the regular, copious and easy bowel-movement; but it is Beauty that is the object of his meditation (both active and contemplative) and the symbol of his revolutionary hope. He is a failed musician who expresses the *Zerrissenheit* of actuality by mixing all the modes of music in a great display of miming. He is the figure of despair, but he does not yet violate the alienated thought-world of his “Faith.”

That violation is exactly what Enlightenment is guilty of, once we have decisively passed over into the world of thought. The monotone of the bell that sounds at the crucial moment of the Eucharist on Sunday morning is, for the absolved Unhappy Consciousness, the moment when the whole world is redeemed and sanctified (par. 219). Dante passes in his *Comedy* from the unclimbable mountain in the dark wood on this side of the world, to the climbable one on the other side (with Paradise, Earthly and Heavenly, at the top). And his poem is an act of *self-absolution* (that is what makes it properly an act of *Faith*). The *Comedy* expresses perfectly the “beautiful unity of *trust* and of immediate *certainly*.” Dante’s salvation needs no priest, but only the “witness of the spirit” in his memories. But back into this vision of “the love that moves the sun and the other stars” Insight now drags the night-stool, and all the ugly but unavoidable self-love and self-preservation that it stands for. That, after all, is the blind world that Dante is instantaneously whirled back to by the divine love in his last line.

Dante was certainly not devoid of “the vanity of Understanding and of selfish will and accomplishment.” I suppose he would have agreed completely with the characterization of Faith as having “two kinds of eyes, two kinds of ears, two kinds of tongue and speech.” He would have agreed, too, that the two kinds of speech must use the same content—the “*Vorstellungen* of the sensible world.” But that this can be taken as what determines which kind of consciousness is “awake” and which is “asleep” he would not have agreed; and Faith universally is on his side. The “waking” consciousness is the one that is aware of the “witness of the spirit.” At this point, the Enlightenment is the direct inversion of Faith.

Dante, however, is the logical prisoner of his own act of self-absolution. The two worlds *are* one world, and the two languages belong to one self. The self that can “absolve itself” is “the indivisibly *simple* self into which Faith has passed.” Dante would recognize the Enlightenment’s Faith that humanity is naturally “good” as the pride that led to Adam’s Fall; and that is what it will show itself to be. But the new Fall is what must follow from taking the act of self-absolution seriously; for if the absolution is real then all of nature is, indeed, redeemed by it. Moreover, this new Fall of rational Insight will be a “fortunate” event like the primitive Fall of the natural “consciousness.” It is the proper beginning of conceptual thinking (which

involves the “knowledge of good and evil”). The thinking that is now set in motion will be the final sublation of the separation of the “two worlds” in which Faith has lived. What Insight already sees and says is that there is really only one world; what the conceptual thinking that now begins will learn is that the “Fall” into two worlds was not a “fortune” at all—either tragic or comic—but a rational necessity. That knowledge is the real “good fortune” of salvation.

- 37./573. The dream-world of faith is now lost. All the furniture of Heaven has been restored to its proper use on earth. Faith is now an unsatisfied yearning since Earth offers only mortal seekers after natural happiness. Enlightenment is satisfied. Faith is not. The stain of that dissatisfaction mars Enlightenment’s perfection in all three of its moments (thought, action, and fulfilment). But it will rid itself of this blemish.

Faith does not “lose its content” because the negative Enlightenment shows that it cannot transport all of the furniture of this world to the “other” one; but rather because the positive Enlightenment shows that it is precisely this world that is transported thither. This world is the only actual world there is. The only world of “pure consciousness” is the world of here and now. “Heaven” is not critically “negated”; it is plundered. The apostles of the “perfectibility of man” and of the “religion of humanity” take Faith seriously. They want to see it realized in works. The Faith that is left disconsolate and unhappy, yearns for something beyond this heaven on earth in which nothing but the happiness of finite individuals can come to pass. Helvétius and even Rousseau’s Savoyard Vicar (if we are right in taking his “faith” as an enlightened Faith in the future) typify the “satisfied Enlightenment.” But who speaks for the “unsatisfied Enlightenment”?

We ought to find someone who spoke before the Terror revealed to all eyes that the simple transportation of Heaven to Earth is not possible; and if we go back to the account of Reason, and compare its climactic moments with the way that the “yearning” of Enlightenment is characterized here, it becomes obvious that *Kant*—who gave Hegel his definition of Enlightenment—exemplifies the necessary “dissatisfaction” of the Enlightenment also.

Reason broke down because (as Lawgiver) it could not effectively define an ideal society. Indeed, it cannot even solve the fundamental problem of whether the ideal society should be a liberal or a communist one. In its Kantian critical shape, Reason was shown to be merely formal; the “satisfaction” of the Enlightenment is now said to lack exactly what the Kantian practical Reason “postulates” in its Faith. First, the “pure object” of Enlightenment is “void.” We have not, so far, got beyond the “matter” of D’Holbach and La Mettrie; we have only a fictional God. Secondly, “as action and motion,” the objective of the Enlightenment is unfulfilled; and it was Kant who insisted that the rational goal of history must remain simply a goal. A world of “Perpetual Peace,” a world of perfected legality, is possible (and Kant’s little treatise is one of the most notable expressions of the humanist vision of a Heaven on earth). But the moral perfection of mankind is an “infinite beyond.”

Finally, the world of perfected Utility would be “selfless.” Robespierre is the negative self of the Terror; but the positive ideal of “absolute Freedom” is as “selfless” as

the Ethical Substance. This is where we must remember Rameau's triad of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, and Kant's corresponding triad of "Critiques." Kant's Kingdom of Ends, if it were realized, could have only "Beauty," not active selfhood. The useful exists for the sake of the useless. If Insight itself is to be satisfied, it must restore to Faith the "beautiful unity" that it has "defiled." It was Schiller who completed Kant's republican ideal in this respect.

Schiller's ideal of the "aesthetic State" appeared in the shadow of the Terror. But Kant's essay "On the Radical Evil in Human Nature"⁶⁶ actually anticipated that dramatic verification of his thesis. So it seems only fair to emphasize the Kantian inspiration of Schiller's *Letters on Aesthetic Education*, and to count Schiller's violent polemic against the coglike fragmentation of the Enlightened world of "Real Individuals" as an expression of the "unsatisfied Enlightenment." Even in 1795 he published the *Letters* with the concluding promise that a "first essay" about the "State of Beautiful Semblance" would shortly follow. Like Kant, Schiller belongs to both sides of the great divide marked so dramatically by the Terror.

This "yearning of the gloomy spirit that mourns for the loss of its spiritual world, lies in ambush." Virtue took comfort in having an ambush ready for the World's Way (pars. 386, 388); and here we find the real ambush in which Faith will indeed catch the worldly Enlightenment. But that victory will come from the rebirth of the "spiritual world." Before that can occur, the Enlightenment must divide into Virtue and the World's Way, and bring defeat upon itself. At the moment, it is the perfected shape of Virtue triumphant. It possesses the whole kingdom of this world, and we must now go on to see how even the blot represented by Faith's yearning is sublated in principle (*an sich*) in "the positive result that is for it the truth."

We are going to have to give "closer consideration" to this "positive result"; and we must expect it to change its aspect in that closer view. To discover the change will not be easy. But the significance of the claim that "the blot is already sublated in principle" is easy to see and to state: whatever happens to the "positive result" of Enlightenment in the rest of Hegel's argument, the return of "pure consciousness" to this world is final. This world is our home. Whatever "satisfaction" is possible for our heart's desire, *must* be found here. It is on the foundation of this sensible and material world that the unified world of the Spirit will be reborn.

Notes

1. See the *History of Philosophy* (Haldane and Simson) III, 379, 385, 390, 398. Not all of these passages are found in *T.W.-A.* XX, which reprinted the *first* edition of the Lectures; but compare XX, 287, 293, 297. Compare also the *Philosophy of History* (*T.W.-A.* XII, 523; Sibree, 441–442). The actual "estrangement" of Faith and Insight was culturally costly in Hegel's view—compare chapter 7, note 32 below. For valuable discussions of the relation of Faith and Reason in the *Phenomenology* see L. W. Beck (1976) and M. Westphal (1984c). We should remember here the report that Hegel coupled Luther's 95 Theses with his toasts to the fall of the Bastille. Political and religious freedom went hand in hand in his mind (compare J. Ritter [1968] 1982, 184–185). There is a good discussion of Hegel's interpretation of

the Lutheran Reformation (and of “the Protestant principle”) in J. Yerkes (1983, 147–155). (The most comprehensive discussion of the relation of Luther and Hegel is probably that in U. Asendorf, 1982.)

2. M. B. Foster (1929, 69n.) is right when he says that Faith is the “departed spirit” that remained in ambush all through the realm of cultural actuality; and C. Boey (1972) is right when he says that Rameau is implicitly the spirit of the Moral World.

3. On this view, the *authoritative* tradition in Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant, belongs to the Unhappy Consciousness; and the conciliar or *consensual* tradition belongs to Faith. Papal Infallibility, the Inquisition, excommunication (in all denominations), the burning of freethinkers (Bruno, Vanini, Servetus) and of witches, all belong to the Unhappy Consciousness. But Abelard, Dante, Bruno and Pascal belong to Faith just as archetypically as Luther and Servetus. At the other end of the cultural cycle—in the opposition of “satisfied” and “unsatisfied” Enlightenment—it is the Unhappy Consciousness that embraces the “better” half: the Young Rameau, Jacobi, Schleiermacher and so on. In this final stage it is the conventional “faith” of the community that is *authoritative*, but the authority no longer has the serious self-certainty marked by the invocation of the death penalty.

4. When we reach “Religion *in and for itself*” we shall *have* the knowledge that Faith “believes” in. But since we shall have it now and here, the experience will be radically different from what Faith expects. The God of Faith is “determinate” (being *opposed* to this world). That of Religion is “infinite” (reconciled with this world in comprehension).

5. This is a very appropriate *Gestalt* for the way in which the first two “masses” of the substance flow together into the third, the fiery subjectivity of absolute culture (par. 492).

6. It is the pure Concept in its strictly negative shape; it has no positive content. In the “Truth of Enlightenment” it will acquire “absolute matter”—its own alienated empty shape—as its content.

7. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 588 (Bowen, 21).

8. The statement of Paul to Timothy: “God our savior . . . will have *all* men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Timothy 2:3–4) falls neatly into place here. But we must not fall into the logical rigorism that made this text such a grave problem for the orthodox. In the logic of the Understanding it was inconceivable that “God’s Will” would not be completely fulfilled (God knows who is saved and who is not—and that is how he *wills* it). Faith, like Insight, holds (commonsensically) that everyone in this world *can* (but *may not*) “come unto the knowledge of the truth.” This is the “raising of the actual world into the universality of pure consciousness.”

9. Hegel’s quite unorthodox presentation of “the Earth” as the permanent *Gestalt* of the Unchangeable is the middle term for this “identity.”

10. Insight is always what Hegel elsewhere designates by the name of “Reason operating as Understanding”; it applies its universal Concept to its singular *Vorstellungen*. But it is in transition because it is consciously *dialectical*.

11. This means that Insight is identical with the “Reason” of chapter V. “Faith” and “Reason” go hand in hand towards the recovery of their lost identity in “Spirit.” A perfect illustration of the *rationality* of Faith is supplied by the damnation of Guido da Montefeltro in Dante’s *Inferno* XXVII. He is in Hell because he relied *absolutely* on the “counsel” of his “mediator.” He *ought* to have had better “insight” (and the “courage to use it”).

12. The selection of Pascal as the paradigm of “Faith” is meant to underline this; and Calvin’s view of the Bible as a divinely given law-book looks (to me at least) like a resurgence

of the *first* relationship. So the historic succession of identifiable confessions is not directly identifiable with any logical series (at least not with any series that I find it easy to recognize).

13. "Objectivity" in this second use has become a "good thing," whereas "objective thoughts" in the earlier use were "bad things." The objectivity that the Unhappy Consciousness does *not* achieve, is that of *experiencing* its objects in actual life here and now. The theologians of the Unhappy Consciousness think abstractly about an Object which they have already stipulated to be "incomprehensible." (See, for example, the Athanasian Creed, or the "Proslogium" of Anselm.)

14. *Metaphysics*, λ (= xii), 5.

15. Even for Augustine and the Medieval period (from Erigena to Ockham and Suarez) my direct knowledge is rather patchy. About the Patristic period I have *only* a second-hand knowledge—and that is not very extensive. But there is, at least, an important *strand* in the Patristic tradition that can be appealed to in support of what I have asserted here: see especially Lawrence Dickey (1987, Introduction).

16. Rameau certainly does not deny that. But his "faith" is incapacitated by its own contradictoriness. Pure Insight has made the inward turn, and escaped from contradiction. But it loses its "content" in so doing; the recovery of content is long and slow.

17. Byron, "The Destruction of Sennacherib," opening lines. (Hegel's view of the Terror makes the comparison fully appropriate. It is the Assyrians of the Enlightenment who are vanquished at the end of the day.)

18. Our commentary will proceed as "methodically" as possible. We have seen why Hegel needed to discuss Faith and Insight together as the logical completion of the actual world of Culture. Now we shall observe that the account of Pure Insight "in and for itself" is logically continuous with the account of their "struggle"; and the chapter-structure of our commentary is designed in deliberate counterpoint to Hegel's, in order to highlight that fact.

19. We shall see in due course, that this is more than an innocuous "historical" observation.

20. *Novum Organum*, 3.

21. In *Measure for Measure* (Act IV, Scene 2, lines 29ff.), Abhorson the executioner complains that he cannot accept Pompey (a Clown, tapster to the bawd Mistress Overdone) as his assistant: "A bawd, sir? Fie upon him! He will discredit our mystery." (A short debate ensues between them about the "mysteries" of bawdry and hanging.)

22. Thus, Robinet provides the missing link between the "honorable consciousness" of the "spiritual animal kingdom," and the one that is caught in Rameau's whirlpool. Robinet is certainly a proper "shape of Reason."

23. "What is Enlightenment," *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, IV, 1784, 481. I cite the translation of L. W. Beck in Kant, *On History* (Indianapolis, Library of Liberal Arts, 1963, 3). Beck adds the interesting intelligence that the "motto" (which comes from the *Ars poetica* of Horace) was adopted in 1736 by the Society of the Friends of Truth, an important circle in the German Enlightenment. Both Hegel's concentration on *religious* enlightenment, and the essential distinction that he draws between Unhappy Consciousness and Faith, derive from this article of Kant's. (Kant's use of *Verstand*—which Beck translates indifferently as "understanding" or "reason" but which I have regularized here—is also Hegel's paradigm for "Reason operating as Understanding.")

The best short survey of Hegel's view of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution in English is that by L. W. Beck (1976). For Hegel's attitude to the French Enlightenment in particular, see also J. D'Hondt (1978). (This is a topic that C. Taylor [1975] discusses

insightfully several times—and because of his interest his disgraceful apology for an Index is here useful.)

24. Only the Concept of the new world has arisen at the moment when the “science of experience” becomes possible (see pars. 11–13) and the science itself shows us why we must not try to *anticipate* the experience of its “realization.”

25. As R. K. Maurer says (1974, 398) “Protestantism makes rational political universality possible because (already within subjectivity) it orients the will towards a Reason that is comprehensive.”

Hyppolite was correct in maintaining that the Reform is part of the “battle” of Faith and Insight (1946, II, 410–411; 1974, 423–425). But, by the same token, he was wrong to say that there is no clear allusion to “the Revolution of the Germans.” The whole of chapter VI C is concerned with this.

26. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 586–587; Bowen, 23.

27. The last sentence of Miller’s paragraph 540 is actually a *separate* paragraph in Hegel’s text. So I have called it 540a for Miller-users, and given it its own (section) number for other readers.

28. *Novum Organum* I.

29. For both this and the preceding quotation, see *Les Philosophes*, ed. N. L. Torrey, Capricorn, 195. H.-G. Gadamer (1975, 239–240) says that “the fundamental prejudice of the Enlightenment is the prejudice against prejudice itself, which deprives tradition of its authority.” This is an enlightened way of formulating Hegel’s own view. (For a good discussion of it, see M. Westphal, 1986.)

The opposition between the “political character” of the Enlightenment and its “spiritual disintegration” which S. Rosen sets up (1974, 183) is a false one. It is the French Revolution that we are trying to comprehend. Admittedly it is a *political* failure (and Hegel wants to see why). But it provides the foundation for a new political world. (It must be granted, however, that much political interpretation of this section is only “enlightened chatter.” P. C. Ludz [1961] appears to me to be a good example.)

30. See his *Universal Morality* (1776) (Torrey, 193).

31. “Despotism,” we may notice, is the sublated or inverted shape of the “unlimited monarch” who is the “universal benefactor” of Culture in its transitional phase.

32. The “new serpent of wisdom raised on high for adoration” is not the serpent of Eden, but the one that Moses raised up in the wilderness as a magical cure for snake-bite (Numbers 21:6–9). Hegel applies the allegory very neatly to the Enlightenment’s curing of “superstition” (so that the poisonous bites of priestly cunning have no effect). But he adds his own barb to the story—for when the “new serpent of wisdom” cast its skin, it was Madame La Guillotine who emerged. The casting of the skin was by no means *schmerzlos*!

Hegel’s use of the brazen serpent image may very probably have been inspired by the controversy about “Crypto-Catholicism” that centered round the figure of J. A. Stark in the 1780’s. See Jacobi, *Werke* II, 460–461; and further G. di Giovanni (1994) and the book by Jean Blum (1912).

33. Goethe, *Werke* XXI, 639–640; Bowen, 68. D. W. Price (1991, 227) remarks that Hegel saw this passage as appropriate for quotation here because his whole book is an idol-smashing expedition. (For the context of this quotation, see chapter 5, p. 313 at note 66.)

34. See Cerf and Harris, 56–59 (*G.W.* IV, 316–318).

35. *Faust, Ein Fragment* (1790, lines 147–156). The speech appears unchanged in *Faust, Part I* (1808, lines 501–509). I have based my rendering on the prose translation of Barker Fairley (University of Toronto Press, 1970, 10); but I have maintained Goethe's punctuation, and have tried to be even more literally precise than Fairley.

36. Pascal is a good paradigm for the standpoint of "Faith"; and it is clear from Hegel's occasional references (especially *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 414; Cerf and Harris, 190) that Hegel was aware of this. How much he knew about French scepticism I do not know. Nor do I know enough about it myself to make an informed estimate of its contribution to the silent Enlightenment. But I think that the effort of "recollection" should embrace all of the movements of thought that are recognizably important.

37. *Pensées* (ed. L. Brunschvicg, 1914) 9, 581.

38. *Epîtres*, xcvi.

39. The claim that there is a certain affinity between D'Holbach's materialism and Hegel's idealism is supported by Hegel's sympathetic critical evaluation of the *Système de la nature* in the *Difference* essay (see Harris and Cerf, 177; *G.W.* IV, 80). But it was *Spinoza's* naturalistic Deism that posed the problem of "necessity" for the post-Kantian speculative philosophers generally (and for Hegel in particular).

40. On one side, Faith is the *third* relationship of the Unhappy Consciousness. The *Andacht* that *must* focus on the external image—or the wafer and cup—becomes pure *Denken*. But on the other side, this *thinking* is the *first* relationship of Absolute Spirit. In its theological aspect, Hegel's *Phenomenology* is a completely *rational* exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity.

41. *Pensées* (Brunschvicg, 1914, 6, 347 and 348).

42. This takes us back to the "wisdom of the animals"; and it constitutes the connection with the Eleusinian Mysteries.

43. Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God."

44. Hegel's "Life of Jesus" confirms his agreement with D'Holbach on that point.

45. As the "element" for rational living things, Spirit *envelops* our external life too; and its existence is as puzzling as that of the "aether," until we recognize that it is the "real Concept."

46. *Gesammelte Werke* (ed. P. Rilla, Berlin, 1956, VIII, 12, 14; Chadwick, 53, 55). On the problem of Lessing's ditch see J. W. Burbidge (1992, chapter 1). Behind this polemical position we can clearly perceive the argument developed at length by Spinoza in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (see especially *Chief Works*, ed. Elwes, vol. I, 61):

The truth of a historical narrative, however assured, cannot give us the knowledge nor consequently the love of God, for love of God springs from knowledge of Him, and knowledge of Him should be derived from general ideas, in themselves certain and known, so that the truth of a historical narrative is very far from being a necessary requisite for our attaining our highest good.

47. I base this hypothesis about Lessing's unexpressed real position on the explicit statements in "On the Proof of the Spirit." On the one hand:

To jump with that historical truth to a quite different class of truths, and to demand of me that I should form all my metaphysical and moral ideas accordingly; to expect

me to alter all my fundamental ideas of the nature of the Godhead because I cannot set any credible testimony against the resurrection of Christ: if that is not a *metabasis eis allo genos*, then I do not know what Aristotle meant by his phrase.

But on the other hand, what can bind Lessing to accept the teachings of the Christian faith is:

Nothing but these teachings themselves. Eighteen hundred years ago they were so new, so alien, so foreign to the entire mass of truths recognized in that age, that nothing less than miracles and fulfilled prophecies were required if the multitude were to attend to them at all. (*Werke*, VIII, 14–15; Chadwick, 54–55).

If we read this second passage in the light of the evolutionary theory of truth stated in “The Education of the Human Race” it seems clear to me that the “requirement of miracles and prophecies” was (in Lessing’s mind) the necessity of a certain form of *presentation*, appropriate “to the entire mass of truths recognized in that age.”

48. This is a confusion that the very form of “myth” invites, because it is inherited from a culture that did not know how to distinguish clearly between historical and eternal truths.

49. See *Werke* VIII, 37. Hegel uses the word *Ansteckung* at the end of this paragraph; and his general use of this metaphor for the Enlightenment (par. 545) probably derives from Lessing. (The opposition of “spirit” and “letter” in this paragraph is another pointer to Lessing’s presence and influence here.)

50. This does not imply that there is anything absolute about the virtue of personal benevolence. When Bernard Bosanquet and the Charity Organization Society opposed “socialist” welfare policies on the ground that the *opportunity* for the development of personal virtue must be preserved, they were thinking in an estranged way, and not using a properly Hegelian argument (as Bosanquet no doubt believed). The *Phenomenology* is neutral about the ethical shape of individual virtue.

51. The critical editors refer us forward to the discussion of Deism and Materialism here. But at this stage Hegel does not want to bring that division in, because he does not want to speak about the “content” of the Beyond. When that later division is made, the strictly humanist position that leads the attack upon Faith will be identified as “Materialism”; but for the present it is simply “agnosticism.” At present, it can comfortably embrace the polemical activities of many, like Voltaire, who were dogmatically Deists. Whether sincerely or from motives of policy, many leaders of the Enlightenment were agnostics. Diderot and D’Alembert seem to belong to this category; and Helvétius adhered to it officially (though it seems clear that it was only a cloak for outright Materialism in his case).

52. H. Boeder (1977, 170–171) takes note of the fact that this self-possessed common sense is the fulfilled meaning of “natural consciousness”—cf. P.-J. Labarrière (1968, 134).

53. The identity of the *in-itself* with the *for-another* was first encountered in this shape in the willing self-subjection of the other self that is the highest object of natural Desire (par. 175). Again we are made aware of a *circle*. The educational philosophy of the Enlightenment returns self-consciously to the ideal of the “natural” self.

54. For Hegel’s interpretation of the original myth see especially *Enz.* section 24 Z3. It can be applied readily to this new doctrine of a return to the primal innocence.

55. We shall soon come to some relatively indisputable references to Helvétius.

56. *L’Homme Machine*, Torrey, 176–177.

57. Baillie refers us, very aptly, to I Timothy 4:8: “Godliness is profitable to all things.”

58. *Novum Organum*, Book I, Aphorism cxxix.

59. See *De l'esprit*, 2nd Discourse, chap. 2; and *De l'homme*, section 5, chap. 3; also section 9, chaps 4, 6.

60. In *Faith and Knowledge* this "absoluteness of the finite standpoint" is called "the fixed principle of this system of culture" (*G.W.* IV, 319; Cerf and Harris, 60); and Locke is clearly identified as the point of origin for it (*G.W.* IV, 321–322; Cerf and Harris, 63). Hegel's main concern in that essay is with the philosophers of the moral world-view; but the introductory discussion of enlightened eudaemonism deserves careful study at this point (*G.W.* IV, 316–324; Cerf and Harris, 55–66).

61. L. P. Hinchman (1984, 129ff.) deals with this problem very well.

62. This insight into the transience of the finite is just what Enlightenment forgets when it sets out to realize its "Truth."

63. Something more like an anticipation of Weber's thesis can be found in *Faith and Knowledge* (*G.W.* IV, 316, line 33–319, line 3; Cerf and Harris, 57–60). There Hegel is explicitly talking about German Protestantism; and we can see that the "subjective beauty" of that philosophy belongs to the Moral World-View rather than to the Faith that is attacked by Enlightenment.

64. Here we can see why the rational Heart also adopts the "conspiracy" theory of "Culture" so readily, as soon as it is proposed by the rational mind (compare par. 377 with par. 542).

65. *Zerreissen* is the word here, and it should infallibly remind us of Young Rameau with his "language of *Zerrissenheit*".

66. Written in 1791 as "Book I" of *Religion within the Bounds of Reason* and passed by the Prussian censor for publication in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift* (April 1792).

Chapter 7

Reason Triumphant

VI B.II(b): The Truth of Enlightenment

The great puzzle posed by this section is that both the title and the content appear to be directly repeated from above (pars. 557–561). Hegel certainly does repeat himself, but he never does so elsewhere in the book upon this scale; and it is completely implausible to suppose that he would deliberately dignify a simple repetition as a new movement of thought. (See par. 592 and note 25 below for clear evidence of how significant the new movement of consciousness in this section really is.) Logically, the topic of this section has to be the sublation of the “blemish” represented by Faith’s unhappiness. The “Truth” of Enlightenment therefore has to be its validity as Religion. Hence the title of the next section of the commentary.

(a) *The Mundane Religion of Pure Insight*

- 1./574. Apart from this silenced yearning, Consciousness sees itself clearly. Insight actualizes itself by positing pure Thinghood as its intellectual object. The absolute Concept posits itself as the pure thinking that is a pure thing. On its subjective side (as a movement into the Beyond) this concept is the brooding feeling of Spirit. But the identity of the two sides is unrecognized. The knowing consciousness is finite, the thing infinite (absolute).

The “truth of Enlightenment” is “pure metaphysics” (pars. 580, 583). The “blemish” remains behind in the “other world,” but “true thought” is now actual in this world. Faith “has gone into itself on the yonder side of consciousness.” So the inversion of Enlightenment is here quite simple and straightforward. The pure theory of the Enlightenment now “actualizes itself” (practically). This is a direct transition from “Logic” to “Nature” (but we are still stuck in the first triad of the speculative Logic when it happens). From the actuality of Culture we moved into the world of pure thought; now we move back to actuality again thoughtfully. But it is not the actual world of Culture that we return to, but an understandable world of Nature in which there are no distinctions, and in which everything is “good,” because whatever is natural is good. The “beyond” of the enlightened spirit is just the thought-project of the earthly paradise; and the emptiness of this “pure thing-

hood” is logically identical with the nothingness that Faith sadly contemplates. The “identity” consists in the *emptiness* of both concepts.

The positing of Nature as what is *not* thought, is the first step of the Concept (or of *speculative* thinking) towards its own actualization. This positing is a pure thought, but it is precisely the thought of what is “*not*-thought.” It is the thought of a “pure thing,” i.e. a universal and non-sensible thing, the thing that is the inward, purely intelligible, “essence” of all sensible things. Pure Insight (or the “absolute Concept”) posits itself as its own negation. When we spoke of Insight before, during the battle with Faith, we were considering it as an “activity”; now we are considering it as a “being.”

This is a distinction without a difference. Insight is the same thing, the thing that necessarily thinks of itself as other than itself. The distinction between the pure activity of Insight and the thing that it posits as “beyond,” is only maintained by the movement of distinguishing or positing which is the very movement of Insight itself. To put it another way (which may, I hope, make it a bit more perspicuous) I *am* my “nature”; yet if I do not posit “nature” generally as other than me the thinker, I cannot be or do anything; and this has to be understood universally—i.e. there is simply “thinking” on one side, and “nature” on the other.

For pure Insight, the active positing of “Nature” is completely unselfconscious. In the estranged standpoint of “consciousness,” thinking and being are quite alien to one another, and are opposed in character. Nature is simply there; it is what is beyond thought. Insight itself is simply a finite consciousness that is rationally aware of it. On the other side, the “gloomy weaving” of Faith rests in its yearning identity with the “Essence that is beyond consciousness.”

The identity of the *object* of Faith and Pure Insight is not too hard to recognize and to grant. The empty “Other” is what the Victorian positivists christened “the Unknowable.” But the identity on the side of the subject may not be so obvious. Insight is a “self-conscious movement” that is identical with the “unconscious weaving” of Faith. This weaving which can no longer make any valid thoughtful distinctions, is what Hegel calls “feeling”; the identity exists at this level because “self-feeling” is the immediate identity of all consciousness with its “nature.” This identity appears to be differently structured on its two sides, because Faith is the unhappy feeling of being estranged from the Beyond for which it yearns; while Insight is the happy thought for which the Beyond is absolutely alien. But as “happy” and “unhappy” the two opponents are just opposite sides of the same Concept. It is these two attitudes (of feeling and thought) toward the “absolute Essence” that must now be comprehended in the Concept of “Absolute Freedom.”

- 2./575. Enlightenment now splits into two warring parties. It has to be against something, so it turns against itself since it always had the other in itself. But now the battle is not in the dark; it is not an unhappy but a happy schism.

In the warfare of enlightenment with superstition we were concerned only with the subjective attitude of Pure Insight. Now we are concerned with what appeared there as Insight’s “other.” We could not help referring to that sometimes, because

universal Insight takes its singular real object for granted in such a spontaneous and unselfconscious way. But we treated it as having *no* determinate character. D'Holbach was in fact a dogmatic materialist, but we dealt with him only as a humanist critic of "man's self-incurred tutelage." The only "absolute essence" that we have encountered so far is the God postulated in the humanist religion of Helvétius, the God who is essentially a subjective fiction.

But now, in the (objective) "truth of Enlightenment," we are dealing with the "physics" (or the "natural philosophy" of the Enlighteners). All of them shared the commonsense certainty that their rational insight was directed upon a real object which was in itself a unified order of Nature. But some of them assumed that the unity derived from a divine "Self"; while others maintained that it was a "not-self" (though it was certainly "self-moving"). Many stood firmly by their subjective agnosticism, holding that no strictly rational insight was possible about this; but all admitted that the two options were open. Thus the conflict between Faith and Insight was always present within the victorious party of the Enlightenment. The Truth of Enlightenment contains the sublated battle; and this, as Hegel rather obliquely says, is fortunate rather than a misfortune. Enlightenment can resolve the problem of Faith's unhappy yearning, because it does not stand still in a sceptical position. It knows the "Essence" in both ways.

- 3./576. The absolute essence is thought of in two ways [cf. par. 559]: as pure *thinking* and as sensuous *thing*.

The question is how the Understanding should conceive of the "Force" that is "behind the curtain" of sensible awareness; or how "Observing Reason"—the *instinctive* Reason that "operates as Understanding"—should conceive of "itself" objectively. There is no way in which the object (which is "beyond" both thought and sense) can be differentiated "in itself." The two possible answers arise from the duplication of the stances of consciousness (as Understanding and as Observing Reason). Those who "understand" the world will assume that "Force" duplicates itself somehow, so as to be self-aware; while those who understand their own understanding as the comprehensive concept of "Reason" will postulate an absolute *mind* to account for the necessary self-doubling aspect of the Concept of Force itself. Our relation with this "absolute Being" is entirely constituted by the experience of Sense-Certainty and Perception. We can regard what lies "behind the curtain" as a "thing" or as a "self." But in any case it will be (negatively) a Being that does not *think* in the way that we do, and is not a *thing* like those that we know. It is the problematic *Ding an sich*.

- 4./577. Abstracting the sensuous aspect we can get either *Matter* as the purely conceptual moving power; or the Supreme Essence of thinking itself.

In paragraph 576 Hegel mentioned first the Deist hypothesis of the "absolute thinking." But the "absolute thing" arises more naturally in the "experience of Consciousness" because Sense-Certainty is primitively a relation to an *external*

object. The most elementary common sense tells us that an “absolute thing” is “out there.” We know that our experience is finite; and this finiteness has its origin in the givenness of sense-perception. Thus the object is taken first as the pure thought that the Understanding posits when it reflects upon sense-certainty and perception. In other words, it is the unknown ground of the order of nature, the most ultimate (and purely intellectual) object of Consciousness as Understanding.

The matter of Materialist theory is not an object of sense or perception. One cannot establish its existence by “striking his foot against a large stone, till he rebounded from it” as Dr. Johnson did in his famous “refutation” of Berkeley by appeal to simple perception.¹ As we say now, pure Matter is a theoretical hypothesis. This is necessarily the case, because we have to abstract from every sensible condition, or perceptible order, in the supposedly material things that we are directly aware of.

Secondly, it must not be conceived as the passive or inert substrate that Berkeley did show to be a superfluous, unverifiable, and indeed inconsistent, hypothesis. It is a moving force. In his chapter on the Understanding, Hegel replaced the hypothesis of the “unknown” with the actual Concept of Nature as we know it; but he acknowledged the “Beyond”—that which is “behind the curtain” (par. 165) even then. That unknown “substratum” is the “predicateless Absolute” either as Matter or as Mind.²

- 5./578. The Enlightenment splits therefore into Deists and Materialists; the Absolute is abstract thought either as subject or as object. Matter lacks the “wealth of unfolded life” that Nature has; and the Supreme Being lacks self-differentiating consciousness. So the battle is about nothing. The Deist’s God is what is *beyond* our consciousness, so that He is a negative “thing” like Matter. Matter, on the other hand, is a pure concept, i.e. something that can only be thought. Descartes had already realized that to think is to be (for oneself). Conversely “pure being” can exist only for thinking.

The God of Deism is the same purely conceptual entity as Matter—but regarded as an active Concept. The “pure concept of the non-conceptual” involves “pure conceiving.” This “pure conceiving” for which the order of Nature is, is God. This was the absolutely simple formulation of Deism that Hegel found in Robinet.³ He now wants to keep Deism and Materialism as close together as possible now, because in their “truth” they are just the opposite sides of the empty “pure concept” which we have been calling “Insight.”

The most famous Deist was certainly Voltaire; and he attached great importance to the belief in God. Hegel is anxious to show how little difference it makes. Both D’Holbach and Robinet presented their views in works *On Nature*; and in so far as they stuck to the exposition of the order of nature as it is apparent to us, they were obliged to say, and did say, much the same things. But they thought that they were radically disagreeing. Hegel’s point is that the concept is empty whichever way one takes it; and therefore the disagreement, about which both sides waxed hot, is actually quite pointless. In both directions we are dealing with “the Unknowable.” The God of the Deists is “beyond”; yet in the order of nature He is

here; and the Matter of the materialists is certainly “here”; but as a pure concept it is essentially a “beyond.”

Hegel thinks, plausibly enough, that the Deists have inherited the rationalist certainty that “pure thought (essence, rational substance) *is*”; and the Materialists have inherited the empiricist certainty that “things are” (matter, extended substance). But neither party has fully comprehended the significance of the Cartesian proposition: I *think*, therefore I am. This does not provide a guarantee of the separate existence of two kinds of “substance,” but it does illustrate the double aspect of “being.” The thinking self posits itself as an object, and that object *is* (for it); but this positing itself simply *is*, i.e., it is the thinking activity that posits itself as an object. The guarantee of the being of what thinks applies of course to Pure Insight in the universal sense; and that is not even logically separable from the being of the truth that Pure Insight knows. What is logically guaranteed is that Being and Truth are necessarily the same (which is what Parmenides meant). How this can be “absolutely” known (as something more than a formal conceptual necessity) when all actual knowers are finite, is what Hegel wants to articulate. Descartes found the right first step, and the dogmatists of the Enlightenment have lost hold of it. But if they have lost hold of it, that is a direct result of the “two substance” theory which Descartes developed out of his primary certainty.⁴

- 6./579. Essence [the truth of what is] must have this subject/object difference in itself. That is why these opposite views are possible. Pure inward oscillation or self-thinking are the common universal. But all the content is left out. The simple alternation of perspectives (being-in-itself, being-for-another, being-for-self) is *Utility*. This bad infinite cycle is actuality as it objectively is for Pure Insight.

The thinking self *is* in two ways: it is conscious of itself as a living thing in the world (which is *not* thought and is “negative of self-consciousness”). In this sense “Thinking is thinghood.” But on the other hand, the thinking self is aware that this consciousness of itself in the world is for it simply. In this sense “Thinghood is thinking.” “Thinghood” is a concept, and my own “thinghood” in the world of things is continually evolving. “Pure thinghood” (or Matter) is the most abstract of all concepts (next to, or together with, “pure thinking”). The identity that Hegel states both ways is not a simple conversion. The universal shared between self as world (which Descartes miscalled “extended substance”) and self as self (miscalled “thinking substance”) is best characterized in ordinary language as Life. This is the Concept through which Hegel himself makes the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness; and his use of the “spinning axis” metaphor here, seems to be a reference back to that (see par. 169).

The expression “pure thinking of itself” reminds us directly of Aristotle; but the alternative expression “pure vibration within itself” points towards physical experience in a way that is quite unAristotelian. The material expression is necessary, because the material world is necessary. The pure selfhood that Hegel is talking about, is necessarily plural (and hence necessarily finite, necessarily faced by a

Matter that is the “negative of self-consciousness”). The reason why the “Supreme Being” of the Deists is not properly God (i.e. the God of Faith) is that it lacks “the consciousness that distinguishes itself within itself” (par. 578). The conscious life that rises to Pure Insight must be a community that has both an organic and an inorganic natural context; for when Hegel says that it “leaves behind the unmoved” this implies that “the unmoved”—that which does not think or feel—must be there in order to be “left behind” in this way.

Now that we have united the finite and the infinite aspects of rational consciousness (or sense and Reason as we met them in the subjective “truth of Enlightenment” [pars. 557–558]) in the speculative “identity” of thinking and being, the third moment (Utility) shows its sinister side. It is the finite, or embodied, selves that are useful to one another. The ordinary rational consciousness (the one we are observing, the one that has *not* arrived at our comprehension of the “Cartesian metaphysics”) posits itself outside the speculative identity of rational life. Against the background of the inorganically material world it enters into a “bad infinite,” that is to say, an endless continuum of “means” and “ends.” This continuum of utility does not complete a circle which brings it back to the self-consciousness that enters into it. It is broken negatively by death. It is not just the cycle of the “in-itself” and the “for-another” (which constitutes the process of Perception and the identity of the “thing”). The final “purpose” of the cycle is the “for-itself,” the agent who is *outside* of the “unity” using things for her own free ends.

- 7./580. Utility may look bad to faith or formal speculation, but it is the realization of *pure* insight, for it is Insight as an object. Rational Utility is the Concept in being as a community of equal persons. It is the activity that is in itself what it is for another, the *being* that vanishes in a means-ends continuum; and it is the “thing” whose whole meaning is in its use. Utility, however, is not the subject of insight, but the represented concept. Being-for-self does not comprehensively include the end and the means aspects. It is the awareness of the world as useful, not the comprehension of that world as the real self. Self and world are antithetic, and must now collide.

The subjective standpoint of Enlightenment is now the actual truth. The world is a mass of rational utilities. Faith has retreated into melancholy yearning, romantic feeling (*Empfindsamkeit*) into appeals to the Law of the Heart, and even formal idealism (like that of Fichte) is reduced to “virtuous” rhetoric.⁵ But all of them are mere *talk*. Enlightened Utility controls the actual world. The *Grande Encyclopédie* sets before us the realization of Bacon’s dream. The whole world is one great scientific “personality” and we are all equally “moments” in it. We last for different times, and we do different things, but we can all recognize our absolute equality, our “identity,” in that realized dream.

The “being-in-itself” of each of us is our purely transient activity of expressing the rational selves that we are (compare pars. 400–404). But all of our rational saying and doing passes over directly into the bank of objectified activities upon which others draw for their self-expression; and we ourselves drew all of our raw material from that bank in the first place. So the “in-itself” is identical with the “for-

another." They vanish into one another, back and forth, and what is permanent is just this process of "becoming," just the "vanishing" (cf. pars. 408–409).

This "vanishing" is a simple and immediate "identity" of being-for-self with being-for-the-other. I do not comprehend and possess myself in this "comprehensive concept." It is an objectively correct description of "what is there"; but Dewey's "means-ends continuum" is not concrete selfhood. I am "useful" (or for that matter, I may be a "problem") in many ways; but Pure Utility is nobody's self. It is not a "negative essence"; it spreads out in the world, and justifies all the agents who contribute to it, so that Rameau cannot laugh it away. But Pure Insight is just an observer outside it all. The difficulty with the Baconian dream is that there is no real personality at the centre of the web. As a "negative essence" the "vanishing" of being-in-self into being-for-another (and vice versa), is bound to be an *active* form of Rameau's self-contradiction. It will emerge as Madame La Guillotine, Reason's instrument for abolishing the "being-for-self" that aims to exist as the unity of these antithetical moments.

Let us try now to *comprehend* the "metaphysics of rational selfhood" that is only "pictured" (*vorgestellt*) against the material *tabula rasa* of the "world of Utility." "Pure Insight" is the immediate consciousness of God in the Cartesian self: "I think therefore I am." But one of the first things that I think rationally—the very first truly rational discovery according to Hobbes—is that I am mortal. God thinks in me, but not for long. Whatever I do for "humanity," I must do for others. This holds reciprocally. My rationality is just as much a human end ("in-itself") as it is a human means ("for-another"). Only in the continuing, shared life of the rational community are the moments successfully unfolded: my nature is developed into human rationality as the endless continuum of means and ends. The "thing"—and this means, first of all, my animate body—is a tool. But it is also something whose health and freedom others must both respect and foster. The being-for-self of the rational person (the "rights of the man and the citizen") is the unity into which both of the opposed moments return (the "in-itself" and the "for another").

But this "tool of Reason" is not "pure Insight as such." *He* (for, after all, the Revolution did not make the "rights of woman" effective in fact, though Charlotte Corday and Manon Roland went to the guillotine with many other Girondins for the "rights of Man") is only the objective *Vorstellung* of Reason. The freedom of the rational tool does not properly envelop the moments of human dignity (the *Ansich*) and utility. The moral conception of human freedom will appear only in the *Critique of Practical Reason*; it requires a resurgence of the Beyond, and the comprehension of this world of "natural rights" within the "moral world-view."

For the moment we have a Freedom (a "for-itself") that is "infinite" only in a bad sense. The "in-itself" does not subsist as an abiding object of *respect*; like the things of Perception it turns over directly into the "for-another" (the tool of Reason). There is only a "pure self-consciousness that is just as much *for-itself* as *in-itself* in an immediate unity."

Take Charlotte Corday for example—partly because she demonstrated that the "rights of man and citizen" could be exercised by the forgotten sex.⁶ At her trial,

she justified her assassination of Marat thus: "I killed one man to save a hundred thousand; a villain to save innocents; a savage wild beast to give repose to my country." She was a great reader of Rousseau, and a self-conscious martyr for virtue and justice. But the thought that the personal freedom either of her victim or of herself ought to be treated with *infinite* respect did not enter her mind at all. "Freedom" for her means the willingness to kill (and to accept being killed) if rational calculation dictates that the killing is useful to the community. A martyr of the Faith might have done what she did; but the memory of Caiaphas counselling that Jesus be condemned because "it is expedient that one man should die for the people" (John 18:14) ought to keep such a one from *arguing* as she did. "To the Priest they send her," writes Carlyle, "she [Charlotte Corday] gives thanks; but needs not any shriving, any ghostly or other aid from him."⁷ I dare not go bail for the historical accuracy of this. But the phenomenological logic of it is perfect.

Faith has been liquidated finally and completely. If Jesus or Charlotte Corday (or the "savage wild beast" Marat) were simply passing over to another sphere of "existence" when they are put to death, why should the termination of their existence "here" not be regarded as a "utility in itself" (however much our judgments of the "utility for us" might vary both from one another, and from those of the actual agents who terminated those lives)?⁸

It is precisely because the finite self is really finite that it has an "absolute" value that is infinite. Charlotte Corday's act was the moment when the whole world of "human utilities" collapsed into "the pinnacle of the Concept." Pure Insight is that "pinnacle" precisely because the new spiritual world into which the Concept will unfold when subjective Insight comprehends the Substance of the Spirit, comes back to this moment of pure self-consciousness that says "Here am I in my world" and brushes away all need for evidence and argument, just as Charlotte Corday did at her trial.

- 8./581. *Actual* culture culminated in *absolute vanity*. Now the concept of self-culture (Enlightenment) has absorbed Faith, and realized pure Insight as Deism/Materialism and the world of utilities. Utility is the truth of both aspects. The actual world of culture created the self-certain spiritual kingdom of animals; the thought-world of Faith developed the genus [universal identity in God], but left it sundered from the self-certainty of Insight. Now Faith and Reason have been actualized together as Utility. Faith should be satisfied, for we are now in a position to create Heaven on earth.

Naturally enough, the last paragraph of the section (VIB II: "The Enlightenment") offers us a review of what has happened. Hegel goes back to Rameau's Pure Culture and surveys our progress since then.⁹ As the emergent self-consciousness of the world of "cultural actuality" Rameau revealed how "vain" all of its pretences were. The ideal of "noble service" finally reached a form in which it could be universalized. But in that form it was a system of *privilege* maintained by all the office-holders for the sake of the wealth it would give them; and Wealth displayed itself as the universal Good through the client-systems established by office-holders and

the privately wealthy on the model of the Kingpin of the whole system. The world became a mass of contradictory judgment in which every singular choice was equally valid.

That world of rationally singular selves “returned into itself” as the “pure Insight” of the Enlightenment. Insight recognizes itself (i.e. subjective Reason) as what is universally human in the cultural free-for-all. Faith (the saved shape of the Unhappy Consciousness, which had similarly “returned into itself”) had recognized this positively already. Faith knows that we are all directly in the presence of God, and we must all forget the petty selves of Rameau’s rat-race world. But now Insight presents Faith with the free universal self of Reason which makes the real achievement of that otherworldly dream possible. So Faith (in its “believing” aspect, its reference to another world) necessarily perishes. Its own claim to be autonomous, or to be in the immediate presence of God, takes over.

In the Truth of Enlightenment the moments of “positive” and “negative” are reversed. Faith sets the positivity of thought (the community of God in Heaven, with the faithful as “pilgrims” here) against the negativity of the actual rat-race. But in the world of thought the Self of rational Enlightenment is the universal negativity of “pure thinking” which completes Faith, by turning it into actual Insight (knowledge). This does away with the positive thought-world of Faith (the “inner world”) altogether. The empirical world is what is positive; but it is positive only as a blank slate—the concept of Matter. The *actual* Truth of Enlightenment arrives when rational Insight takes over the actual world and sweeps away all the distinctions that have shown themselves to be “vain.” This Truth of Enlightenment (as distinct from its negative polemical activity in clearing away the thought-world of Faith) is the world of universal Utility. This is the one world into which the doubled (and redoubled) world of Culture and Faith has collapsed.

In the world of actual Culture we had a Spiritual Animal Kingdom of fragmentary humans. Reason was nowhere realized as the human “Genus,” but every “type” enjoyed Reason’s self-certainty (as the Category). In the world of Faith, the Category was substantial as the Genus. Faith has the Truth of Reason without its Certainty. Salvation comes by faith in God. Dante imposes a marvellously intricate moral order on his *Comedy*; but he also denies its rational absoluteness. The typing of Sin and Virtue is all “for us,” or to be quite precise it is for him, and for the sake of *his* salvation. He is of course Everyman, and his *Comedy* says that every man or woman will be saved or damned by their own decision. The “saved” and the “damned” are the “species” that we meet in the world of Faith and Insight. But these rational species transform themselves dialectically, because each party is “saved” in its own eyes, and “lost” in the eyes of the other.¹⁰ In the battle of stand-points it is the salvation of the Enlightenment that must triumph at this moment, because it is saved in this world, and it restores the unity of the doubled world of Culture. The blot of Faith’s unhappiness is removed “in principle.” A lot of further development is necessary. But salvation will take place *here*.

The world of Utility is the actual world of Culture clearly seen as the Paradise at the top of Dante’s mountain. In the world of Culture, enjoyment—the experience

of being-for-self—must be postponed. Being-for-self is in the heavens where we cannot go without supernatural help. The Enlightenment has to win its war, so that this fable of postponement can be eliminated; the “true” world of Enlightenment is the world from which the fables have been banished. Paradise is here, the mountain has been climbed, we have only to cross the last river. But the experience of Dante in the Earthly Paradise of Faith will now repeat itself in the Paradise of Insight. Paradise Regained turns directly into Hell. It is the whole of Dante’s pilgrimage that must be brought to this world. We cannot leave anything out, because the “other world” really *is* “eternal,” and we have to comprehend all of it within the consciousness of our mortal “being-for-self.”

I called this section “the Mundane Religion of Insight.” But Hegel says that Reason has *no* religion, because it is fully satisfied in the present world of actuality (par. 673). This paragraph confirms the identity of Reason’s world with that of Self-Estranged Spirit. The “Spiritual Animal Kingdom” is the stable world of the “mixed judgments” in which the drama of unmixed Nobility and Contempt is played out. In this tragicomedy Faith perishes. But the transfer of the Beyond to the actual world of Reason’s quest (as the “bad infinite” of *perfectibility*) does turn even the secular Enlightenment into a “mundane religion” (or a kind of secular Faith). Many have died, like Charlotte Corday or Manon Roland, for the *hope* of “Heaven on Earth.” It is an ideal in which both the “satisfied” and the “unsatisfied” Enlightenment are united. Lessing’s famous “choice” (of the quest in preference to the fulfilment) even shows us how the necessary “comprehensive inversion of the concept of Happiness” takes place. “Reason *has* no Religion”; but we must admit that there are some for whom it *is* one.

VI B.III: Absolute Freedom and Terror

The Truth of Enlightenment has overcome the estrangement of the cultural world between actuality and thought, in the sense that what is thought about is now the actual world. The “otherness” of thought and world (which is the form of estrangement involved in Pure Insight) remains absolute. But it seems that the two sides (Universal thinking and Singular things) have been coherently articulated in the Concept of Utility. In the last phase of Self-Estranged Spirit, when the rational Concept enters into actual possession of the cultural world that developed it, we shall find that this is not so. The project of an Earthly Paradise turns directly into Hell on Earth, because the immediate identity of the moments of Utility is another shape of the “infinite judgment.” The dream of a world in which “thought uses things” comes to grief upon the fact that the thinkers are themselves the things to be used.

(b) Reason as Absolute Freedom

- 1./582. Consciousness has found its concept in Utility. But this objective Concept is a *project* that has to be realized, and “be for itself.” The revolution of *absolute freedom* came forth from this.

The first sentence of the new section contains a deep truth. Consciousness has *found* (not made or developed) its concept in Utility. "Finding" is what Reason as Observation (i.e. as subjective consciousness) does. But now the "finding" is clearly understood to be Reason's finding of *itself*; and we know from chapter V that Reason can only find its own *objective*. What consciousness has found in the Enlightening phase of its Culture is the right perspective upon the observable world, as the repertory of tools for its self-making.

We must always remember that the world of Insight is the world of *human beings*. It is not the inorganic world of tools in the ordinary sense, but the world of cultured living nature. When Charlotte Corday called Marat a "savage wild beast" she was not violating the general faith of the Enlightenment that man is naturally good. She was saying that through some "cultural" failure Marat had fallen out of the naturally rational human condition, his nature had become twisted. In the perspective of universal Utility that we have reached, this might equally be expressed by saying that, on the contrary, the process of culture had not domesticated him enough to become the tool of Reason, and the *persona* of Pure Insight. He was not properly useful to the human world, and so he had to be eliminated.

Utilities must be utilized. A hand cut off, or even a hand paralysed, is not really a hand. The hand of which G. E. Moore could say "this is *my* hand" was the one he wrote with; and when it was writing it was "nothing else than the self of consciousness"; and what it put on the paper was Moore's "being-for-self," the being (or thinghood) of thinking in its most elementary sense. But what we are concerned with now is not just a mortal person expressing and possessing herself in some small part of the material world; our concern is with the Pure Insight that has recognized itself as the universal Concept of Utility, and is now organizing and possessing the social order. This is not just the Concept of the singular thing in Perception (the unity of being-in-itself and being-for-another). It is Self-Conscious Reason, so it has to "be for itself." In ordinary language this means there has to be a *government* that operates upon the principle of rational Utility. This was the goal or *Zweck* of the Revolution as expressed in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen."¹¹

The Truth of Enlightenment as achieved in "pure Consciousness" is the truth about Nature from a practical point of view; so what follows from it directly is an action-programme. But the programme is the unrealized End; or in other words the Truth of Enlightenment is now the End existing as the *means* to its own fulfilment. The community that has achieved insight into its rational goal must now go ahead and carry out this programme; Rational Utility must become Absolute Freedom.

The Truth of Enlightenment is the climax of *Bildung*. It can (and indeed it must) be produced in actuality by individual action. Social convention, social action and social authority were crucially involved in the first phase of *Bildung*; but from the moment when "pure Culture" emerged, the further development of the Concept was a personal responsibility. The use of Insight to spread the Truth of Enlightenment was an act of personal courage, because Faith has all the resources of conventional authority behind it. This truth is now universally spread and universally

recognized; so it is time for the community to be active again. This is the sense in which the third moment of Estranged Spirit is the comprehensive unity of the first two. The structure of Utility as the *pure* self-estrangement of the Concept now becomes crucial. Utility is a universal predicate of singular objects for singular subjects; and the objects that are socially useful are precisely those which are themselves singular subjects. It is easy for there to be a universal *consciousness* of this; but even when the consciousness is universal the subjects that have it remain obstinately singular. The moments of singular being-in-self (user and tool), universal being-for-an-other (general usefulness of tool) and singular being-for-self (user employing tool) that are logically involved in Utility remain separate. What is needed is a universal-singular (or singular-universal) being for self which can comprehend the other two moments within itself. That is the Substance—the social agency—which has not yet been shown to exist.

- 2./583. Everybody and everything (on Earth or in Heaven) is now to be interpreted in terms of this metaphysics [of rational Utility]. The conscious being exists to serve his fellows; Nature exists for our use. The user of it all is not the single but the universal self; so Utility is social utility, the utility of the community; and Insight knows this.

Implicitly the takeover by the active spirit of “public Utility” has already happened. Every existing institution already appeals to the selfless objective Concept for its justification. Only a “show of objectivity” stands between the Concept and its “absolute freedom.” The Estates of the Realm (even the First Estate which has charge of the nation’s Faith) are all acknowledged to be founded upon “public utility.” The objectivity of the physical world simply means that it is a repertory of tools for use by the rational self. This rational self is Pure Insight; everything belongs to it as its instrument. Nothing belongs to a particular self or group. This pure Insight is not embodied, and singular embodiments are not significant to it.

We have here both the rational basis of the Terror, and the decisive evidence that Hegel’s own ethics is not “totalitarian.” The Terror happens because the self of “pure Insight,” being abstractly utilitarian, does not “return into itself” in the proper sense: “The *being-for-self* into which the being-for-an-other returns, i.e. the self, is not diverse from the Ego, not the own self of what is called object.” The rest of the chapter will show that the spiritual return to self is, and must be, a return to the “own self of what is called *Gegenstand*.” The universal self of Insight, the Ego, is disembodied; but every “own self” is embodied.¹²

The “certainty of self is the universal subject and its [self]-knowing concept is the essence of all actuality.” The Self of Absolute Freedom is the Self of Reason (pars. 233, 235). The difficulty that this raises is obvious. *Any* self that has this *certainty* is equally entitled to make absolute judgments about the utility of the other animate bodies of reasoning beings. That is how and why the Terror comes to pass.¹³

“Terror” is endemic in political relations. What makes 1793 unique is the fact that the claim to be the universal self of Pure Insight does not involve any identification with or subordination to an objective social order at all. Charlotte Corday said (and her act surely testifies) that “I was a Republican before the Revolution.”

But this was not Antigone's self-identification with the *Dike* of Zeus, an immemorial custom which has always been observed, and always will be. It is quite likely that everyone among Charlotte's judges would have said what she said. Everyone could recognize themselves equally in the universal *public thing*, the *Respublica*. This identification of every self with the "public utility" overcomes the bad infinity of Pure Utility. The abstract "rights of man" become the concrete "rights of the citizen" in the world of Absolute Freedom which we have now reached. All being (whether "in itself" or "for another") returns into this pure knowing that is "for itself." This is Reason's "certainty of being all reality."

- 3./584. This rational community of free and equal selves knows itself to be the essence of all the social differences that exist in it. All rights reside in the rational self as person. The will of the rational community is the "general will" to maintain the rights of Reason. *My* will is not expressed silently, or by an authorized representative [e.g. the *monarch* of Culture] but by *me*. What the community does everyone does (and they know it).

The self-consciousness that comes to be as a result of this return of Utility into Pure Insight is "the People." The people is *sovereign*, and the will of the people is absolutely free. In the "Declaration" we read: "3. The principle of all sovereignty resides in the Nation. No body, no individual, can exercise authority which does not emanate expressly therefrom." The authors are prepared to say what "natural and imprescriptible rights of man" all political associations must aim to conserve: "liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression." But the right of "resistance to oppression" is an awkward one, when it is the "political association" itself that must conserve it. The sovereign Nation has overthrown the old order. It knows itself to be the essence of all "masses"—i.e. of Church, Civil Society, and Enlightenment (the Community "in-itself," "for-another" and "for-itself"). The "people" is conscious of its "pure personality"; it has a *will* that defines everything and lays down how everything is to be interpreted. In this sense, what Hegel says is true: "for it the world is simply its will, and this will is the general will." The "Declaration" tells us what this means:

6. The law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to take part in person or through their representatives in its formulation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or whether it punishes. All citizens being equal in the eyes of the law are equally eligible to all honors, offices, and public employments, according to their abilities and without other distinction than that of their virtues and talents.

Of course, the authors of the "Declaration" took their concept of the "General Will" from Rousseau's *Social Contract*; and I shall not hesitate to appeal to that in elucidating what they meant where it seems helpful. But although the "Declaration" itself was an act of the General Will, and became part of the Constitution of 1791, it is not radical enough. Hegel says that "spirit present as absolute freedom . . . is the Self-Consciousness which grasps for itself that its self-certainty is the essence

of all spiritual masses.” So far there is no problem. The Absolute Freedom of the Nation need not entail any simple civic equality. The spiritual masses can have their distinct agents. There is still room for the Clergy and the Nobility as distinct orders of society: and the “Declaration” says that “all citizens have the right to take part in the formulation of the general will either *in person* [like the Nobility] or through their representatives [with the Clergy distinguished from the Third Estate in this category].”

But this is not yet the fully explicit concept of Absolute Freedom. The Absolute Freedom of Pure Insight is the freedom of the self-certain Cartesian Ego and the rationality of Helvétius’ “greatest good of the greatest number.” It has to be *absolutely* democratic before it can properly express the sublated Truth of Enlightenment as an actually universal self (i.e. a national self) in the actual world. Hegel’s formulation of the Concept is as follows: “It is not, indeed, the empty thought of willing which is posited in tacit or represented consent, but real universal will—the will of all *singulars* as such.” But now we have a problem about what he means by “represented consent.” For there was no Revolutionary Assembly of the whole French Nation; and the “general will” could not (at least in Hegel’s world) be the direct sum of all singular wills.

Once we admit this, and ask what *else* Hegel can mean, it becomes clear that “tacit or represented consent” refers to the way the old order worked, with the peasantry “tacitly represented” by their landlords, and the other orders “represented” by various methods in which the consent was generally less tacit, but in which what was “represented” was always some *specific* aspect of the social whole. In the National Convention of 1792 this sort of “representation” vanished. The deputies (chosen by universal male suffrage, but by a process of indirect election) represent, not their electoral constituencies, but always and only the Nation. They are all of them equally citizens chosen by other citizens to express the *national* will.¹⁴

The National Convention abolished the Monarchy and established a new calendar for the official acts of the French Republic (22 Sept. 1792). This is the moment at which “absolute freedom ascends the throne of the world” (par. 585). The votes of the Convention express the will of the Nation, because every legal person participated—if he wished to—in the choice of “electors” who chose the seven hundred and forty-five deputies by whom the Republic was actually proclaimed. By the time the Convention met in Paris, the “September Massacres” had already given the first spontaneous foretaste of the Terror. The “Nation in danger” had become the “Nation in arms,” the Marseillaise with its ethic of a citizen army was on every tongue, and after the early setbacks, the actual citizen army had turned the tide at Valmy a day or two before the Republic was proclaimed. It is the immediately felt identity of every patriot with the Nation that Hegel is formalizing in the doctrine that the national will is “the *self*-conscious essence of each and every personality, so that everyone undividedly does everything, and what emerges as the deed of the whole is the immediate and conscious doing of each.” The perfect *Gestalt* of this individualized *national* consciousness is provided by the Marseillaise.¹⁵

- 4./585. This sovereign freedom assumes the throne easily because everyone knows that rational insight is the element of all social substantiality, and all the substantial social distinctions (which gave the Concept its own objective status) have collapsed. No one speaks now for his estate or corporation; everyone participates in the National Convention simply as a citizen, making laws for all; and in the new, democratic Army too.

It is the universal awareness of the “Nation in danger” that makes “Absolute Freedom” into an “undivided substance.” “The principle of all sovereignty resides in the Nation” (as the *Declaration* said). So, with everyone thinking and speaking for “the Nation,” there is no power that can offer resistance: “No body, no individual, can exercise authority, which does not expressly emanate therefrom.” The “social distinctions” which “can be founded only on public utility” are no longer seen to have any utility. The social system of the “spiritual essences or powers” (i.e. the Estates and “corporations” of all kinds) has collapsed into a homogeneous democratic community. The King is on trial as “Citizen Capet,” and all patriotic citizens are thinking of the “national safety.” In the old order there were “separately constituted masses” [*abgesonderte bestehende Massen*]: Clergy, Nobility, Third Estate, Peasants.¹⁶ Because of this socially differentiated Constitution, the Concept (of the community) was an “object,” i.e. there was an actual social substance. Now the Concept is a “subject” immediately—every patriot is “the Concept absolutely.” No one participates in the national life now as a member of his “estate,” or of his professional or craft-organization. There are only “citizens.” Among adult males there are no longer any passive citizens—as there still were in the Constitution of 1791—though the adult females, who are all called “Citizen,” must still be put in that category. All citizens (whether male or female) must think and work with equal and total dedication for the Nation. But what “work” can the Nation do (apart from fighting for its life)?¹⁷

- 5./586. Society and its members are not now an objective system of *utility*. There are just single *citizens* and the Nation. But every citizen *is* the Nation, and “God” is just a bad smell, that lingers over the corpse of the old Constitution.

“The object and the *distinction* has here lost the significance of *Utility*.” The singular verb indicates that “object” and “distinction” are one and the same. The “object” is soon identified as “consciousness itself,” and “the distinction” is that between singular and universal selfhood. These two are no longer related as end and means. The Nation is the “universal consciousness” because every citizen is conscious of him or herself as a simple citizen. Hence the “distinction” between singular and universal consciousness is only the *semblance* (*Schein*) of an antithesis. There is no “essence” within which a standing distinction between being and appearance can be made. The God of the old order, which had this independent being as the doubled world of Actuality and Faith, has been “blown off” from the corpse, and survives only as the bad smell of Deism.¹⁸

We can readily see what all this refers to in experiential terms. The “Declaration” of 1789 defines the aim of political association generally as the preservation of

certain rights. Under “liberty,” particular prominence is given to the freedom both to hold and to express any opinion; also everyone is to be secure against arbitrary arrest, and presumed innocent until found guilty by due process of law. The meaning of “liberty, property and security” is spelled out in terms that appear to constitute a reciprocal contract between society as a “public force” (for which all citizens must contribute democratically according to their means) and the citizens who enjoy those benefits.

But in the experience of the “Nation in danger,” the immediate identity of every patriot’s will with the national will washes out all this rational utility. The “speech” of the National Convention is the “universal law” (as Hegel put it at the end of par. 586); and the definition of the singular rights of citizens gives way to the preservation of “*absolute* freedom.” The “universal work” is now the survival of the nation; and the *identity* of the citizen with the community in “resistance to oppression” becomes the crucial criterion of citizenship. “The object for consciousness is consciousness itself”; if the Republic perishes, my free selfhood perishes with it. The community is the living God who is identical with my self-certainty.

Charlotte Corday’s declaration that she was “a Republican before the Revolution” was a way of saying that for her this *subjective* identity was what mattered. She was not a worshipper of the “Etre Suprême,” any more than she was a loyal subject of “His Most Catholic Majesty.” The “Catholic Majesty” of the old order was already dead for her; and the “Supreme Being” was something she could well do without. The living God was here already.

All the “utilities” of finite existence are summed up in Rameau’s night-stool. To take the “Supreme Being” (who stands above and beyond nature) seriously, is like supposing that there is something sacred about the smells that accompany the regular completion of the cycle of self-preservation. On the contrary, the imperceptible diffusion of the Truth of Enlightenment has passed over from that perceptible stink of Rameau’s self-contempt, which still mars its perfect satisfaction, into the sound of a song in the street outside. There *is*, after all, something *absolute* to live and die for: here, in the song, is my absolute *self*.

- 6./587. When the old order is wiped out, only the reciprocal interaction of universal and personal consciousness remains. The universal will becomes a citizen who is both subject to Law and authority and aware of himself as both legislative and executive.

By the time the King was deposed and the Republic proclaimed, the whole of the old social order had been “sublated.” The three stages that Hegel mentions are easy to identify. Let us begin (because the Revolution itself began) with the sublation of the “two worlds” of the old “restricted life of individuals.” In their *separation*—which Hegel here acknowledges for the first time—these are the world of the *Church* and that of the *State*.

The nationalization of Church property in November 1789 was followed by the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in July 1790. The monastic orders were dissolved, and the parish priests had to be elected by their “communes.” The old dioceses

were abolished, and replaced by one bishop for each of the eighty-three new “Departments” of the country. Bishops also were to be elected. Most important of all, the clergy both higher and lower had to take an oath “to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king; and to maintain the constitution with all their power.” This was the final stage in the dissolution of the *ancien Régime* (until the abolition of the Monarchy itself and the advance of “Absolute Freedom” to the throne). Not surprisingly Pope Pius VI condemned it (April 1791); and Louis XVI, who bitterly regretted his approval of it, took a “non-juring priest” as his confessor.

Sandwiched between the material and the spiritual sublation of the “First Estate” came the official abolition of noble status in the spring of 1790. That was when it was decreed that French men and women were all “citizens” and were to have no other title of address. The same civil rights were accorded to resident foreigners (so that Citizen Tom Paine could, in due course, sit among the Girondins in the Convention); and even (after some heated discussion) to the Jews.

This—together with the Civil Constitution of the Clergy—was the “sublation of the distinct spiritual masses.” The abrogation of noble land-tenure rights and restrictions, and the corresponding liberation of the peasantry, actually began in August 1789, but we cannot here go into the complex story of the material sublation of the Second Estate. What Hegel calls the “sublation of the restricted life of individuals” was also complex and many-sided; but the crucial event was the Le Chapelier law of February 1791 which abolished the guilds. It was the bourgeoisie that profited most from all of this—since it was they who could set up new business enterprises freely, and buy up the Church lands or the noble estates freed from entail restrictions. But the military organization of the new Republic was the one aspect of the new social system where the equal eligibility of all citizens for “all honors, offices and public employments according to their abilities and without other distinction than that of their virtues and talents” really existed; and it was the Army that actually did the “universal work” of Absolute Freedom.

Hegel’s attention is focussed, however, on the work of the National Convention, and on the identity of will between citizen and Nation in that body. Every citizen of the Republic is a “singular will” to which the law, and the great struggle for national salvation, stands opposed. In the Convention—which *all* have elected—the laws of the social whole are made, and the policies are determined by which the salvation of the Nation is to be secured. This is the “universal self”; and there is one article of the Declaration that sounds a note of deep foreboding for this homogeneous universal subject which recognizes no objective boundaries, or *substantial* social structures: “16. Any society in which the guarantee of Rights is not assured, nor the separation of Powers determined, has no Constitution.”

The bourgeois leaders who had tried to make over the Monarchy into a new constitution, wanted a decentralized government with a fairly weak executive. The emergency of foreign invasion produced, as a result of the Paris insurrection of 10 August 1792, an executive driven by the overwhelming fear of internal subversion. The Monarchy, the Nobility and the Church had all emerged unmistakably as enemies of the Revolution. So, in this crisis, no basis for a real “separation of powers”

existed. The community must have one actual will, and it must have dictatorial power. To begin with, therefore, the Convention itself becomes a dictator. Its laws and policy decisions apply to all, and are quite impersonal; but now a struggle begins over the designation of the agency that is to execute these “absolutely free” decisions—for everyone in the legislature has the same direct consciousness of his own personal will as the “universal will.”

(c) *The Tyranny of Reason*

- 7./588. The universal will cannot *release* an object (which would set limits to its absolute freedom). But this is what the establishment of any finite freedom requires. There have to be distinct social estates, and separate legislative, executive and judicial powers. Then there is a social substance [i.e. a Constitution] which is free, without being singular; but then, too, the individual person must stay within the bounds set by the Constitution. The universal subject we have reached cannot suffer that. It must be absolutely *actual*.

Here Hegel follows out the logic of section 16 of the Declaration by showing first what is involved in the existence of a “Constitution,” and then what it means for a community of equals not to have one. The sovereign Nation which exists only in the enlightened minds of its patriotic citizens—minds like Charlotte Corday’s—does not “release anything in the shape of a *free object* that stands over against it.” Our “absolute Freedom” does not “release itself as a free object”; so, unlike the absolute Idea, it cannot recognize itself in the objective structure of the real world; and it cannot raise itself out of this externality to become Spirit (and the philosophical self that does logic).¹⁹

The constitution of a rational community is like the order of Nature in that it must have an objective structure informed by its own *law*. The “absolute Freedom” of the new Republic cannot release itself as an objective constitution because of the threat posed by the old order still existing outside its borders. It cannot commit itself to the maintenance of a properly articulated Constitution, because the *substance* of the Spirit has perished. A social substance must have what the actual world of Culture had in its traditions. What Hegel calls “the laws and institutions of conscious freedom” are the judicially mediated aspect of a social structure in which the different activities of life are articulated in ways that are spontaneous and self-determined. There must be “constituted (*bestehende*) spiritual masses” (such as the clergy, the nobility, the commons and the peasantry in the *ancien Régime*)²⁰ which are instituted, regulated and governed by an authority in which the legislative, executive, and judicial powers are separated.

Hegel enumerates here a whole series of social “masses” of different types. To articulate itself in these “masses” is (and will become) the proper task of the freedom that is achieving self-consciousness. To begin with the three “powers” that Hegel took over from Montesquieu, the legislative, executive and judiciary are “thought-things,” created and defined by the law. But there are also “real essences” both universal and particular. We have seen the concept of public service as an

independent “noble estate” liquidate itself in the cultural process. But the Church, Civil Society, and the community of enlightened Culture are the three “universal masses” that the new society is bound to inherit from the older world of Christian culture; the “particular masses” of labor, trades and professions, the new political world will define more freely for itself. The executive who eventually did this “work of the will” was Napoleon. He operated not by simple decrees, but by the use of a complex system of legislative acts and judicial commissions. He understood, and accepted the fact that the governing authority has to be differentiated. The legislative and executive institutions have to cohere with, and proceed on the basis of, the judicial recognition and maintenance of those real life-structures that the cultural process and traditions of the community have actually produced.

This social articulation must all be founded in (and legally recognized or authorized by) the State Constitution. This is what Hegel means by the “universal works of speech” or the “laws and universal institutions of conscious freedom”; all of this is what “absolute Freedom” cannot achieve.

A Constitution founded upon acceptance and recognition of the “real essences” created by and inherited from cultural tradition would be free from “singular individuality.” The singular individuals would be distributed into different social functions; and it would be the functional communities that are represented in the legislative assembly. The executive will—which must by definition be “singular” in execution at least—would be hedged by the legislative as a universal *free* will on one side, and by the judiciary as a *recognitive* understanding on the other.

The French “National Convention,” on the other hand, was a legislative in which the “sovereignty of the Nation” was directly incarnated. The Nation is directly incarnate in every professed “Republican” (as the example of Charlotte Corday illustrates); and the principle of election by universal suffrage preserves that direct incarnation in the legislative. If we do not grant that every Republican is an incarnation of the will of “the People” (or of the God of Reason), we cannot enter into Charlotte Corday’s own view of what she had done; and in that case, we shall not understand either how “absolute Freedom” is “absolute,” or how it still contains the sublated conviction of Faith that “in God, we live and move and have our being.” But if we do not comprehend how election by universal suffrage is simply the rationalized form of the principle of “the lot” in classical democracy, then we shall not understand how Hegel can claim that “*this* universal Self-Consciousness does not allow itself to be defrauded of its *actuality* through *representation*.”

The rationale of the lot in the Athenian democracy was that sovereignty resided in the assembly, so that where individuals must be chosen to act for the assembly, the God alone should choose. In the modern “enlightened” Nation, the God of the community resides in every citizen, so the assembly of citizens must make the necessary choices by vote. The making of the choices does not derogate from the divine sovereignty of every citizen. Judging that Marat, the self-styled “Ami du peuple,”²¹ is actually an enemy of the people, Charlotte Corday sees herself as patriotically obligated to remove him precisely because of the power and influence that he exercises as a deputy to the Convention.

- 8./589. So the singular consciousness does not find itself, either in the universal work as a social substance, or in the deeds and acts of the social will. To do a *deed* the community must individualize itself into a head of state. But then all other single citizens are (unjustly) deprived of their share. This means that universal freedom can only produce a fury of annihilation.

The singular self-consciousness of Charlotte Corday could not find itself in the role of wife and mother (where Antigone, on the contrary, *wanted* to find herself). Obviously Hegel did not blame her for that in the actual Revolutionary situation she was in. His sympathies were on her side of the issue at the time, and he was violently critical of Robespierre.²² The “recognition” of the family in the marriage law is the foundation of absolute freedom as “substance”; but even this aspect of the natural consciousness was ideally “sublated” by the principle of the *levée en masse* of August 1793. The Committee of Public Safety decreed that bachelors of 18–25 were liable to military service, and that the entire population (both sexes) could be conscripted for service of some kind.

Charlotte Corday, the Republican, could not recognize her universal self in the “individual actions” of the Paris mob who committed the September massacres before the Convention even met. Nor would she have recognized herself in the notorious “Law of the Suspect” (17 September 1793), the legal *deed* of the Convention through which the mob-terror of the September Massacres became the authorized policy of the Nation. Yet she was a “terrorist” herself; and the mobilization and control of all national resources, together with the control of prices and wages, would not have been possible without “martial law” in some form.

The *dictatorship* was organized by Robespierre, and justified by him as the “despotism of liberty.” Hegel’s conceptual analysis aims to show why dictatorship was inevitable in this revolutionary situation (no stable executive can emerge from a legislative in which all social authority is concentrated, unless it overrides constitutional procedures); and why it must maintain itself by Terror (only the sanction of summary justice by martial law *can* override all constitutional safeguards). But he gives a very one-sided account of things when he speaks as if the Terror (the “fury of vanishing”)²³ was the *only* achievement of the “despotism of freedom.” Clearly we must ask ourselves *why* he looks at the work of the Committee of Public Safety only in this negative perspective. Let us see what sort of answer we can find as we go on.

- 9./590. Once the old social structures have been swept away, only the single citizen remains to be destroyed; and since he is nothing but an abstract living self the work of absolute freedom is the most abstract *death* possible.

The “despotism of freedom” is, of course, a living contradiction. In the interests of the preservation of national sovereignty only one view can be allowed; because of the urgent need for decisions, discussion and argument must be preempted. Several shades of “centre” opinion were actually represented among the twelve members of the Committee of Public Safety; but the dominant voice was always that of Robespierre, and the Convention itself did not argue about the

Committee's recommendations. In practice, therefore, Robespierre's decision was final; Absolute Freedom coincided with the singular self-certainty that was the "highest actuality." The negative object of the Committee's concern was the dissenting view of those whose sympathies still lay with the *ancien Régime*; and if we concede that the forms of communal "representation" to which those sympathies were attached were now dead and gone, that the "substance" was smashed like Humpty Dumpty never to be put together again, then we have to admit that the only "object" which presented itself to the "universal freedom" as still requiring to be negated, was the singular self "in its abstraction."

The universality that "does not allow itself to come to the reality of organic articulation" is the identity of patriotic fervour for the "Nation." This universality aims "to preserve itself in undivided *continuity*." We can infer what "continuity" would be from the contrast with the discontinuity that arises in its place. The "undivided continuity" is "at the same time internally distinguished because it is movement or consciousness in general. And indeed, for the sake of its own abstraction it divides into extremes which are just as abstract as that: the simple, inflexibly cold universality, and the discrete absolutely hard rigidity and self-willed point-separation [*eigensinnige Punctualität*] of actual self-consciousness."

This is not hard to interpret. No matter how oppressive the government may be, the surviving individuals remain *thinking points*. Their thoughts are known only to themselves. On the other side there is the Law (specifically the "Law of the Suspect") which is everywhere (because it is known by all the points), yet nowhere (because it is not spatially located).

Once we have identified the *extremes*, the "continuity" which they replaced (when the Law was passed) is not hard to grasp. The citizens singing the Marseillaise are a "continuity" of consciousness that is quite *undivided*; even when they assemble in clubs and discussion groups of the relatively likeminded, and make speeches expressing their own views, the "continuity" is not "divided" (though it contains "distinctions") because it is "consciousness in general." The "sundered" situation only exists when the decrees of the Committee of Public Safety have to be rubber-stamped by the Convention, and obeyed without discussion.

This whole standpoint is an abstract one, because the "points" of private self-consciousness are "abstract." Rationally speaking, they are all the same point; and in their patriotism they are the same *identical* point. Their private self-consciousness is an abstraction from that; and their free expression of their private self-conscious thoughts as a continuum of public "consciousness" remains "unsundered" as long as everyone has perfect confidence in the patriotic commitment of everyone else. What *we* can see, because we have first achieved the "Cartesian meta-physical" standpoint regarding the "truth of Enlightenment" universally, and have now inverted it into the "national" concreteness of "Absolute Freedom," is, first, that it is the public continuum of consciousness that is "concrete," while the privacy of self-consciousness is "abstract"; and secondly that the "abstraction" of the "public force" (which was first recognized as necessary for the protection of equal rights, i.e. for the preservation of the abstract points) is actually necessary for the

preservation of the national "identity." The national identity is the "metaphysical" foundation of the public continuum.

The situation of the "nation in danger," which makes the inversion of rational discussion into patriotic fanaticism unavoidable, reveals the contradiction that Absolute Freedom contains. With the overthrow of the "Estates," the emigration of the politically disaffected began; only a few days after the storming of the Bastille, the King's brother, the Comte d'Artois, went into exile as the leader of the first important group of emigré nobles. But the levying of troops to meet the foreign invasion (February 1793) provoked a revolt in the Vendée; and with the *levée en masse* of August 1793, the suspension of the Constitution (which followed in October) became inevitable.

The Constitution was only promulgated in June 1793. This is where we can see the *Gestalt* of "Absolute Freedom" as an "undivided continuity with internal distinctions" extended to "infinity." For the Constitution not only established universal suffrage (i.e. male suffrage, for with respect to sex Freedom never became *positively* absolute) and the right of referendum; it also proclaimed the "brotherhood" of all free peoples and their right to self-determination in the same way; and it even declared that society owed a living and a free education to everyone. This was the "continuity" that was shattered into "the discrete, absolutely hard, rigidity and self-willed point-separation of actual consciousness" by the establishment of the "despotism of liberty" in October.

The "sundering into equally abstract extremes" occurs, as Hegel puts it, "for the sake of the universality's own abstraction." The "abstraction of the universality" is the *absolute sovereignty* of the Constitutional Law itself. This abstraction has to be made (and recognized by all) for two opposite reasons. From the point of view of the consciousness that we are observing, it is necessary both for the definition of everyone's rights, and for the proper control and use of the "public force" that sets the proper boundaries of all rights. From our "metaphysical" point of view, absolute commitment to the upholding of the Constitution is the identity of "patriotism" upon which the "self-distinguishing continuity" of Absolute Freedom rests. Within this perspective the "abstraction of the universality" can be recognized as the *final* cause. Loyalty to the Constitution is absolutely essential; so when the new nation is in danger, and it is manifest that the community contains not only open enemies (in the Vendée) but many secret sympathizers with its external enemies, it is obvious beyond the need for argument that patriotism itself must focus upon the maintenance of the Constitution in its "sovereign" abstraction. Instead of every public utterance by a citizen being regarded as a contribution to the universal continuum, it is now studied first as an expression of the private self-consciousness, because the first question is whether the speaker is a true patriot (i.e. whether the privacy of his self-consciousness has been truly sublated in the "general will," or the "identity" of the Nation). The law itself (and the public force that maintains it as an "abstraction") must "for the sake of its own abstraction" devote itself to the obliteration of all secret self-will. This was Robespierre's "despotism of liberty"; and it is what Hegel calls "the sundering of the extremes."

Here in paragraph 590, Hegel is not simply concerned with the function of the Terror in the final liquidation of the old order, but also with the conflict between Robespierre and the Mountain on one side, and the social extremists (generally called the “Sans-culottes”) who wanted to establish government by direct democracy, and a new religion with a living actress personifying the “Goddess of Reason.”²⁴ The Sans-culottes wanted a redistribution of property; and the Convention did vote to redistribute the confiscated property of the enemies of the Republic. The social extremists were strong supporters of the Terror as the “popular axe” or “scythe of equality.” But in the spring of 1794, Robespierre had to execute their main demagogic champion, Hébert. The solid bourgeoisie who supported the Jacobins would not tolerate radical economic revolution and social anarchy.

Effectively, the great mass of patriots supported the “despotism of liberty” during the military crisis. Otherwise the new Nation could not possibly have survived. But we are not concerned here with that permanence of the *Gestalt* of Absolute Freedom. Our “metaphysical” interest is in the fact that, since everyone is equally a private self-consciousness, the “Law of the Suspect” puts everyone under suspicion of being a subversive. Only Robespierre is “the Incorruptible.” One “free singular self” is identified with the “universal in the abstract” and the others must all be wiped out wherever their self-will can be detected. Where previously there was a continuum of conscious communication there is now only an infinitely divisive doubt and suspicion; and the function of the despotic universal is to put every divergent self to death.

This function is performed as coldly and efficiently as possible. Dr. Guillotin came to the Estates-General in May 1789 (as a deputy to the Third Estate from Paris) full of enthusiasm for his newly invented machine. The deputies laughed (so Carlyle claims) when he said “I can whisk off your head (*Je vous fais sauter la tête*) in a twinkling and you have no pain.” I am not sure whether Hegel’s metaphors of the cabbage and the gulp of water also come from the rhetoric of the good doctor, but it seems quite possible.

- 10./591. The government comes to this wise one-word decree because it is necessarily a tyranny; it excludes its opponents and is therefore a “faction” opposed to the general will. Its victory over other factions cannot last, because it knows that it deserves overthrow. So it must suspect everyone of aiming to overthrow it; a suspect intention must therefore pay the penalty.

The Sans-culottes wanted to realize the ideal society of the Enlightenment in the terms and perspective of the Enlightenment itself. When the “scythe of equality” finally had to be turned on *them*, in order to maintain the authority of the government itself as the “abstract universal” of the legal constitution, the “wisdom of the government” was fully revealed. The Sans-culottes stood for the pure “freedom of the individual”; so the execution of Hébert signified “the negation of the singular as a *subsistent* (*Seienden*) in the universal” (590). This turning of the Terror upon its most extreme supporters—those who saw the community as a collection of free and independent points—was only the last stage of a struggle between social

factions. The various “factions” were bound together by economic and social interests which no longer receive any constitutional recognition (because the explicit ideology of the new nation is that of the *Sans-culottes*).

The situation of the Absolute Freedom that can only become an actual government through the exercise of Terror against all who want to go back to the old Regime on one side, or forward to democratic anarchy on the other, is a Hobbesian one. Only the singular self-consciousness can really know its own “secrets.” So first twenty-nine Girondist members of the Convention were arrested (2 June 1793) and many others fled—some of them becoming counter-Revolutionaries. Then the victorious Mountain split; and finally on 10 October 1793 (with two-thirds of the country in rebellion) the Convention decreed that the provisional government of the Republic was to be “revolutionary until the peace.”

The Committee of Public Safety actually included several shades of opinion; but after the execution of Hébert, it was clear that no one was safe from the guillotine. The law of 10 June 1794 made even suspect deputies subject to summary arrest, and deprived those accused of the right to legal counsel. Not even the members of the Committee of Public Safety could feel safe after that. The plotters who finally had Robespierre and several of his closest supporters arrested on 9 Thermidor (27 July 1794) included members of the Committee as well as other deputies. The “Incorruptible” could no longer count on the Paris mob to defend him; he received the sort of summary justice he had himself decreed, and went to the guillotine within twenty-four hours of arrest. But then the plotters themselves soon fell under “suspicion.” Thus the Terror burned itself out by its own logic. The proscribed members of the Convention who still survived, returned to their seats in December 1794, and the emergency regulations of the “despotism” were then repealed.

Hegel characterizes the problem perfectly. Only the faction that is actually in power can call itself the “government.” But whereas its governmental actions are clearly identifiable by everyone as “despotic” and “unconstitutional”—i.e. as an open transgression against the “general will”—the governing faction has nothing better than suspicion to go on. The government controls the actual world; but its subjects enjoy their “absolute freedom” in the world of pure consciousness; they are not ordinary criminals even if they nourish subversive thoughts, because the Constitution itself (the general will) exists now only in that world of “pure will.” It is only an “intention.” This is the key to our next transition; and the making of that transition is our topic from this point until the end of the section.

- 11./592. The terror of death teaches us that (as the erasure of all distinctions) self-consciousness is in itself (or abstractly) quite different from the positive affirmation of personality. *Terror* is the transition of Enlightenment’s “truth”; Thought becomes Matter.

If the suspicion of opposition to the government is all that there can be, and if this suspicion must be wiped out, then only the death of the embodied singular self-consciousness can secure the triumph of Absolute Freedom. All of the striving factions are “factions.” Hence they are *known* not to be identical with the general

will. The substitution of mere “suspicion” for proven “guilt” is only the phenomenal expression of the logical certainty that all singular selves deserve death. Thus Death is the universal *work* of Absolute Freedom (which cannot submit to servitude like the natural consciousness, because it is the absolute freedom of thought which cannot be renounced). The guillotine is its only objective realization because thought can here perceive its absolute essence as a purely negative force. Having wiped out all objective differences, the singular self-consciousness experiences the “truth of Enlightenment” and the objective nature of self-consciousness in its pure abstraction, when it passes from identity with God to direct continuity with the rest of matter as the guillotine falls.

This abstract equality of mortality is far removed from the positive “liberty” of the Declaration of 1789, or the universal “fraternity” proclaimed in the Constitution of 1793. According to the Declaration, the “general will” is the positive element within which all the singular wills of rational persons can express themselves; and according to the Constitution of 1793 all free communities are to be received into the universal fraternity. But instead, the actualization of the general will turns out to be a direct transition from “pure thought” to “pure matter.” What is directly realized is the two-sided Truth of Enlightenment.²⁵

In the “despotism of liberty,” we reach a situation where every self that either thinks for itself or presumes to act for the community, stands self-condemned by its own act. It deserves to die, and it executes itself according to justice. At this point the Cartesian *cogito* sublates itself; for if I think, then what I must think is that I ought *not* to be. Pure Reason blots me out. I experience the identity of the “Supreme Being” with “Matter” not as pure thought, but as pure will. The positive Concept of thinking as Absolute Freedom turns directly into the negative Concept of thinking as the sublation of the finite.

- 12./593. As the universal will Absolute Freedom has negation and hence distinction in it; so a new social structure develops out of it. The survivors have learned not to identify with the absolute negative, but to accept social differentiation of function.

When absolute freedom seeks to express itself as absolute rational equality, it stands revealed as the negativity of death. But in this absolutely negative disciplinary authority of the government over the anarchists who oppose it, the “pure self-equivalence of the general will” shows that it necessarily contains “*distinction in general.*” The General Will itself contains the distinction between the government and the governed.

Only the absolute distinction between the living and the dead, or thought and being, is involved in the Terror as a universal cycle of death in which the ruling faction sends its enemies to the guillotine, and then rides to the Place de la Révolution in the same carts a few days later itself. But the Thermidorean revolution (the overthrow of Robespierre and of his despotic Committee) was the first important catastrophe since Bastille Day in which the Sans-culottes (the devotees of absolute equality, and hence the practical agents of Pure Insight) played no significant part;

and when constitutional government was restored the basic distinction of 1791 between “active” and “passive” citizens was reestablished. Only taxpayers were given the vote.

Social distinctions were again accorded constitutional recognition (in company with the naturally given distinction of sex); the social organism was again treated as a standing substance. It was not reduced simply to the abstract shape of a constitutional law that was supposed to guarantee “equal rights,” but actually guaranteed only the death of all who were suspected of being opposed to it. The “multitude” of atomic consciousnesses allowed themselves to be apportioned once more into “spiritual masses.” The Army (which had already put down counter-revolutionary insurrections in the provinces) was used against the Sans-culottes in April 1795, and against Royalist mobs in October. (It was Royalist protesters who were put down by Napoleon’s “whiff of grapeshot”). In fact, the Army took over the despotic function of Robespierre’s Committee for several years, until Napoleon established the Empire. Then the old “spiritual masses” (the Clergy, the Nobility and the Civil Service) emerged in quite new shapes.

Outwardly Hegel ignores the decade between the fall of Robespierre (9 Thermidor 1794) and the establishment of the Empire; he does not allude to the replacement of the guillotine by the “whiff of grapeshot.”²⁶ We shall soon see why we do not need to be interested in the process by which the “substance” is reformed. Hegel describes how the new political world is different in a single paragraph, and then moves on to the next “experience.”

(d) *Moral Freedom*

- 13./594. This does not mean a simple repetition of the cycle from the ethical substance, through the stages of Culture. In absolute freedom there is no longer the [legal] world of singular individuality nor the two worlds of actuality and thought. All has come to the nothingness of a meaningless death; but this fate is consciously willed by the universal will of the community. This absolute negative turns over conceptually into a new *position*. The atomic person whom the guillotine chops vanishes as “being.” What survives is pure self-cognitive universal will (i.e. moral will). It is the law of the rational self that requires self-sacrifice; the self identifies with its universality (instead of being an atomic point). The *single* self is only the *form* of this pure Insight (and objective actuality is the selfless unknown).

For the purposes of the “science of experience,” the restoration of the social order—without which the whole movement of Self-Estranged Spirit could never become the stable *Gestalt* of State and Church that *personal* freedom requires—is a topic that only needs to be referred to in order to point out what is *new* in it.²⁷ The Terror does not send us back to the breakdown of Roman Law, and the despair of the Unhappy Consciousness. And the Marseillaise does not send us back to a felt ethical identity with the community like that which Plato pictured in the *Republic*. The movement of Culture has uncovered a great new principle which Hegel describes as follows in the 1805 “Philosophy of Spirit”:

This is the *higher principle* of the *modern period*, which the ancients, even Plato, did not know,—in the ancient period, the *beautiful* public life was the customary norm for everyone—beauty [being the] immediate unity of the universal and [the] singular, a work of art wherein no part sunders itself from the whole, but [there is] this unity of genius between the self that knows itself and its displaying; but the knowing of itself as absolute on the part of singularity, this absolute Self-containment [*Insichsein*] was not present. The Platonic Republic—like the Spartan State—is this disappearance of the individuality that knows itself.—Through this [modern] principle, the outward actual freedom of the individuals in their immediate thereness is lost; but their inner freedom (the freedom of thought)—is maintained,—the spirit is purified of its immediate thereness; it has entered into its pure element of *knowing*, and [is] indifferent to the singularity that is there; the Spirit begins here, *to be* as knowing; or there is its formal existence as the knowing of its Self;—Spirit is [now] this Nordic essence, that is self-contained but has its own being—there in the Self of all.²⁸

Because of the incorporation of this “Protestant principle”²⁹ the restored social order founded upon “absolute freedom” will be different both from the classical political system, and from the system of Culture with its divided world of actuality and thought. But the shape of the new self-conscious community that is still in the throes of birth, is not the concern of our “Science of experience.” We can say programmatically that it must integrate the “masses” of cultural activity, within the felt *national* unity of “liberty, equality and fraternity.”³⁰ But the prediction of the future is no more our business, than it is the business of the science of objective spirit as such. We have to observe how “absolute freedom” as a despotic negative is reintegrated within a more comprehensive concept of the positive freedom of universal and equal rights. This is a comprehensive “second inversion” that transports us back again into the inner world. This time it is the inner world of self-consciousness (i.e., of *action*) rather than the theoretical world of substantial “faith-consciousness.”

If it were not for the emergence of this new principle, Charlotte Corday would be the moral heroine of the new age. She wanted “to know and find herself, not as ‘this particular,’ but only as universal, and hence she could also bear the objective actuality of the universal spirit excluding her as particular.” But already the spirit of “absolute culture,” the broken and self-contemptuous spirit of Rameau, could not bear that. If we want to understand how the blot of Faith’s unhappiness is sublated *an sich* in the “truth of Enlightenment” (par. 573) we must look to a revolutionary heroine whose experience was more completely social than Charlotte’s. Among the reflections that Manon Roland wrote in prison before going to the guillotine we find the following:

When men say that the morale of love is worth just nothing, they make a big proposition very lightly, which if true might be applied to all human passions which produce splendid results; take away this morale and life is reduced to physical needs and appetites . . . If the morale of love is admitted, I believe it to be the most fertile as well as the purest source of great virtue and splendid action.³¹

The inspiration for this can be found in Rousseau just as readily as the inspiration of Charlotte Corday's Spartan patriotism. But, as we shall see, it anticipates the full development of the "Protestant principle" upon which we are about to embark. For the "love" of which Madame Roland speaks is directed not at a great general abstraction like the "brotherhood of man," but at this particular human.

Robespierre himself is the best model of "the culture that self-consciousness attains in reciprocal action with that essence [the General Will]." His consciousness and public persona is in radical contrast to that of the Young Rameau. There may (as Carlyle, following Mme de Staël, thought)³² have been a coward's consciousness behind Robespierre's "sea-green" complexion; but all that private selfishness was sublated in his public devotion to Virtue. Without that he could never have become the "despot of liberty." Young Rameau could not have done it, because the private self which Carlyle affected to despise in Robespierre, showed itself so plainly in him. The guillotine (which Young Rameau would surely have managed to avoid had he lived long enough to be faced by it) only guaranteed the reality of Robespierre's sublation of the "sea-green" personality.

Robespierre goes to the guillotine when his work is done, because his only important work is to send all forms of superfluous singular consciousness to the guillotine. When the singular consciousness was recognized to be *in itself* both "superfluous" and "necessary" Robespierre himself could be sent to the guillotine as superfluous.³³ The sign that the time was ripe for this was the turning of the "scythe of equality" upon its supporters. Hegel's logical analysis is politically sound at least in this sense: that after the execution of Hébert, Robespierre could be disposed of without the risk of a popular uprising. He could finally receive "the wages of sin" himself. The "wages of sin" as decreed by enlightened Virtue brings Culture to its final shape—back again to the sinful self-condemnation of the Unhappy Consciousness.

Hegel runs through the modes of external reward in which the self-estranged consciousness sought its "fulfilment" before coming to the "self-possession" of the moral life through this completion of the circle. The ordinary consciousness of the cultural world combined the judgments of "honor" and "wealth" in their *mixed* form; and the noble mind sought "honor" alone (taking wealth for granted). Deprived of his political (and hence of his economic) independence, the noble became the wealth-seeking courtier, because his honor would not allow him to work for a living (like those who make the "mixed judgment"). The consciousness of Absolute Culture arises from reflection upon this experience of the identity of opposites; this consciousness becomes Pure Insight when it turns contemptuously away from external actuality to its own inner realm of thought. The heavenly reward of Faith is then brought down to earth by Insight as the universal Utility of the Enlightenment. It is that Utility which stands before us as Dr. Guillotin's marvellously efficient instrument.

Even the new society of national political freedom, will continue to need the judicial terror of the death penalty. All of the distinctive *shapes* of Culture are stable forms of social existence; but all of them—soldiers and statesmen, noble courtiers

and laboring sans-culottes, pious Catholics and enlightened utilitarians—have now gone to the guillotine (or into exile with the certainty of death if they return). This is only *symbolic* of the general “loss” of which Hegel speaks here; the loss, itself, is a conceptual one in any case, since the Republic had its own soldiers, and probably some courtiers too; and (as Robespierre well understood) there were many pious Catholics among the most fervent patriots. But the paradox of a patriotism that operates by Terror drowns the whole world of culture “for us”; it is *we* who comprehend consciously why a new form of the Stoic retreat into the inner Self is now inevitable.

The “negation” represented by the guillotine has been knowingly produced by human Reason in pursuit of what it recognizes as the absolute form of its freedom. It is not like the Necessity that came upon Greek political freedom in the shape of an external might. The Ethical Substance of Zeus and his justice, has now become a “subject.” In its “general will” the free Nation has a mightier power than Zeus ever was; but that power has itself negated its own positive justice. And the “general will” really *is* the national will; it is not the mere whim of the “unlimited monarch” surrounded by a mob of clients, who themselves copy his behavior towards their clients in the contradictory world exposed by Rameau’s wit. The self-contradiction, the transformation of freedom into tyranny, of guaranteed right into the death sentence, is logically inevitable.

In the figure of Robespierre, everyone can see how the immediate identification of the singular empirical self with the general will must produce a Hobbesian war of all against all; and the lesson of the life-and-death struggle in this universal form is almost as easy to grasp as the lesson of the singular struggle of natural consciousness: a new form of authority must be accepted. The positivity of “human rights” passed over into the negativity of general Terror; now a new mode of authority, the authority of a subjectively autonomous *moral* law, must be recognized if the positive enjoyment of constitutional rights is to be guaranteed. The self—every self who wants to be a good citizen, as Robespierre did—must be its own moral law-giver. We must identify with our own universal inner selves (and condemn our own finite personalities to a conceptual guillotine) if there is ever to be a positive enjoyment of “liberty, equality and fraternity.”

We have met the “moral law” before—especially in the Heart’s Law and in Virtue. But hitherto it has appeared as opposed to the ordinary external law or custom. Here it appears for the first time as the law which *sublates and comprehends* that communal “general will”; it is recognized as the condition for the preservation of the civic virtue that identifies with public law. In the main movement of Culture public authority has operated to form and develop civic virtue. But “civic virtue” comes to its final shape as a contradiction; only the transition to moral duty not as a higher negative, but as a more comprehensive positive concept, can save it. Absolute freedom—the very adjective tells us this—is something that must never be lost, relinquished or sacrificed, once we have found it. The Moral World-View forces itself upon us, precisely as the only way to save it. But the fact that we find this moral freedom in “another land” (which does not enjoy absolute freedom) also tells us at once that we have not yet found it in its fully developed shape.

We are all such instinctive Kantians, and such natural children of the anarchist Enlightenment that erected the guillotine on the Place de la Révolution, that we find it hard to comprehend consciously that it was precisely the anarchic freedom of the Stoic cosmopolitan Enlightenment that perished on the guillotine. It is the “Absolute Freedom” that has accepted the restored social order (with its socially situated singular self) which now passes on to the Moral World-View in the Hegelian “science of experience.” Most of the ironic fun that Hegel will have with the Moral World-View springs from the fact that he knows (and we are presumed to remember) that it has the Revolutionary critique of the Enlightenment already behind it. The revolutionary actualization of the Enlightenment gives the Moral World-View a clean social slate; but the Terror has also shown that the constitutional establishment of moral autonomy as anarchic political equality is impossible.

The transition to Morality at this point is a purely conceptual one.³⁴ The moral self that arises from the comprehensive second inversion of the freedom and death of civic virtue, knows indeed that it must maintain the equal rights of all rational agents; that is its “absolute positivity.” But it has forgotten all the concrete social circumstances to which it must accord recognition, and the finite ends to which it must reconcile itself. It is a *pure* practical knowledge—the volitional knowledge of the moral law. Its own natural body with all of its needs has disappeared on the guillotine; and the world that is immediately there is now a great repertory of *morally* useful things. Nature, as the unknowable *Ding-an-sich* (whether Matter or Supreme Essence), is irrelevant. Moral Reason knows its duty—and that is all it needs to know.

In effect, we have now returned to Law-Giving Reason as the *Gestalt* of a concrete World; and this world is *within* the singular self, so the singular agent does not prove to be as impotent morally as it was “legally” when it appeared as a *Gestalt* of individual Reason; it does fail in the end, but the story of its failure is complex. After surmounting many contradictions, it finally discovers the contradictory shape that truly belongs to it; and out of that there will be born not a higher abstraction (the Test of Laws) but Reason’s true concreteness.³⁵

- 14./595. Thus self-estranged spirit gives itself a new Heaven. But now the thinking is self-conscious. In virtue of our capacity to *think*, we are *free* members, here and now, of a supersensible order: the moral world.

The moral spirit has “equated the *Gegensatz* of the universal and singular will with itself.” In Robespierre we still have the distinction between the “pure willing” (the General Will) and the “pure willer” (the despot of liberty himself); and because of this distinction, “the Incorruptible” is universally recognized as a tyrant. In the moral spirit the law and its executive are no longer estranged, but have become “transparent” to one another. “Rational utilities” can conflict, but moral autonomy involves a “respect” that outlaws the life and death struggle. Moral freedom, the good that is to be universally willed, and the singular agent who wills it, are “equalized.” Just as we passed over earlier from the actual world of culture to the heavenly world of pure thought, so now we pass over from the Last

Judgment that Insight brought to the actual world when it transported the secular heaven of the Enlightenment to earth in the Revolution, to “another land”—the noumenal inner world of the moral consciousness. This is different from the inner world of Faith, because we now have clear Insight. We are the self-conscious thinkers and legislators in this world.³⁶

We also pass literally to “another land”; for from France we move to Germany. When Napoleon fell, Hegel sought to console himself in his disappointment, by claiming that this transition in the *Phenomenology* was a kind of prophecy of what had occurred.³⁷ But that was true only in the sense that speculative Reason cannot foretell what will happen in “actuality.” In the world of “Absolute Freedom” any kind of failure and disappointment can occur. What Hegel’s hopes and expectations were in 1806, regarding the emergence of a new social order through the authority and inspiration of a *positive* tyrant, is plain enough in the Preface. All that his gloomy self-congratulation in 1814 can legitimately mean is that the disappointment of those hopes does not *invalidate* the transition here from the “land of what is” to the “land of what ought to be”; and I have already indicated the real significance of the fact that in 1806 Germany is *only* the “land of what ought to be.”³⁸

After 1814 Hegel was forced to look to Germany for the evolution of *what is* as well; and, of course, however much he had deprecated the “war of national liberation,” he could recognize that the German—and especially the Prussian—resistance to Napoleon, was inspired by the nationalist ideal of 1793. He recognized that the constitutional work of Stein and Hardenburg was the same sort of constitutional reconstruction that Napoleon had achieved, quite permanently, in France. His interpretations of his “actual” world were quite “rational” in both cases; and his refusal to indulge in philosophical prophecy, even in 1806 when his hopes were definitely high, was steady and consistent. It was really from the justified wisdom of this *refusal* to speculate about the future of a “Napoleonic” Europe that he could properly take comfort in 1814. He could so easily *not* have terminated his political reflections with the “self-destructive actuality” of the Terror.

We may surmise that his attitude in 1814 was a return to the mood of 1794. It is reasonable to guess that the Girondist sympathizers in the *Stift* regarded the “self-destruction” of Absolute Freedom as the decisive proof of how vitally necessary the completion of the “revolution that will be produced by philosophy” was.³⁹ It is clear that by 1806 Hegel did not think that the “German Revolution” would come simply “from the Kantian system and its highest completion.” Even in 1793 he did not think that. Here in the *Phenomenology* he has given us a clear model of how complex the conception of cultural life that is already expressed intuitively in the Tübingen fragment of 1793 becomes, when it is developed into a fully “syllogistic” theory of actual social change. The long drawn out dialectical development and critical degeneration of the *ancien Régime* explains the emergence of the enlightened ideology of “equal rights.” This philosophical anarchism inspires the Revolution. And it is only the Revolution that makes the “highest completion of the Kantian system” socially relevant. But even so, the necessary reconstruction of the social order cannot come from the Kantian system alone. The actual reconstruction requires a

“new Theseus”; and every culturally independent community must have its own Theseus.

The “estrangement” of Ought from Is is the last (and most “transparent”) shape of Estranged Spirit.⁴⁰ The perfected “Kantian system” is the “truth” of “Absolute Freedom” as freedom of *thought* only: “it counts as what is true in this ineffectiveness [of Spirit’s *inner* “land”]; Spirit uses the thoughts of it as a cordial to comfort itself.” Madame Roland’s prison meditations are an apt paradigm of this “cordial.” Her wisdom will have to be made actually effective before the new moral heaven can be transplanted to this world once more.

Notes

1. J. Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (Hill, rev. Powell), I, 471 (6 Aug. 1763).

2. I do not find the argument very clear either in paragraph 576 or paragraph 577. But it seems to me that in paragraph 576 Hegel wants to show that the absolute mind is necessarily *external* (and hence “material”); while in paragraph 577 he wants to show that “absolute Matter” is a pure concept (and hence “mental”). Properly speaking, therefore, paragraph 576 is about Deism and paragraph 577 is about Materialism. My “analysis” does not show this; but it does not matter much, because the argument is repeated in paragraph 578. W. van Dooren (1976) rightly says that both sides fall into “empty abstraction.” But van Dooren (like Loewenberg before him—1965, 247) does not want to acknowledge the historical references.

I agree with H. Kainz (1983, 81n.) that Hegel was probably not influenced by Bentham. It is mainly French writers that he has consciously in mind. He was, of course, very conscious of the rise of the mercantile bourgeoisie—it is a world of rich bourgeois in which Young Rameau moves. That the world of “Utility” is bourgeois was pointed out by G. Solari (1931 [reprinted 1974], 225) even before Lukács wrote. But it is the self-destruction of the Nobility with which he is directly concerned. It is the world of “Conscience” that is (pre-dominantly) the bourgeois world.

3. We can see from the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* that the models Hegel had in mind were D’Holbach on one side, and Robinet on the other. This hardly requires proof, but for anyone who needs it, the evidence is there; and Hegel’s historical analysis in the *Lectures* confirms the interpretation of this metaphor from Faith. See *T.W.-A.* XX, 300–304; Haldane and Simson, III, 393–399.

4. Hegel’s reference to Descartes by name provides the clearest possible confirmation that Descartes is the original *Gestalt* of Pure Insight.

5. The reference of *Empfindsamkeit* is not easy to determine. Perhaps Jacobi and Schleiermacher (the “Unhappy Enlightenment”) are meant. But the view that Fichte’s moral formalism is what Hegel designates as “the abstraction that calls itself speculation” is very plausible. Of course, there may be some high-minded critic of “eudaemonism” hidden behind the *Gestalt* of Virtue, whom I have not managed to identify. But I think it is the standpoint of Virtue that Hegel has in mind here; and in that case *Empfindsamkeit* covers all who appeal to the “Law of the Heart.”

6. The “Declaration” was drawn up by a committee and submitted to the French National Assembly by Mirabeau in August 1789. It served as the Preamble to the Constitution accepted by the King in 1791. The following “rights” are particularly relevant at this point (we shall have occasion to refer to some of the others later):

1. Men are born, and remain, free and equal before the law. Social distinctions can be founded only on public utility.

4. Liberty consists in being able to do whatever does not injure another. Thus the exercise of every man's natural rights is limited only by those which assure the other members of society of these same rights. These limits can be determined only by law.

5. The law has the right to prohibit only those actions which are harmful to society. All that is not prohibited by law cannot be hindered; and no one can be compelled to do what the law does not require.

A "Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne" was published by Olympe de Gouges in 1791. It was directly imitated from that drawn up by Mirabeau's committee. But the National Convention suppressed her "Women's clubs." Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792—dedicated to Talleyrand, whom she knew from their discussions to be mainly against her) was a more thoughtful production arguing not for abstract equality but rather that "if woman be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue; for truth must be common to all . . ." (from the Dedication).

After the publication of her book Mary Wollstonecraft went to Paris (December 1792), where Tom Paine introduced her to Madame Roland and other Girondins. She witnessed the Terror but did not lose hope for the Revolution. She lived in France until April 1795. (The first volume of her *Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution*—which goes no further than the events of 1789 and was never completed—was written during the period of the Terror, and published in 1794).

7. I cite Charlotte Corday herself also from Carlyle's *French Revolution*, Part III, Book IV, chapter 1 (London, Macmillan, 1900, vol. II, 285).

8. St. Thomas justifies the burning of heretics in exactly this way (*S.T. II-IIq. 11 a. 3*); and he certainly belongs to the world of Faith rather than to the Unhappy Consciousness.

9. S. B. Smith (1989, 87–88) says that the demand for "absolute freedom" emerges from the disintegrated consciousness. But the "sunburst" of paragraph 11 can only occur because of the positive formation of the Enlightenment—and "Absolute Freedom" itself should not be directly identified with the "sunburst."

10. Hegel himself speaks only of the "world of Faith," but I think this extension of his meaning throws light on the dialectic of the second "world."

11. In the *Philosophy of History* Hegel speaks of "liberalism," whereas "absolute freedom" seems to be more a Jacobin concept (cf. A. Wildt, 1970, 268–269; 1974, 417). I doubt if this is more than an expedient accommodation. It was convenient in Berlin to give "liberalism" a bad name, and to dissociate the organic freedom of Hegel's own theory from it. Anti-clerical "liberalism" is not "situated"; Protestant conscientious freedom is (cf. *Philosophy of World History*—Lasson IV, 923; *T.W.-A.* 12, 526; Sibree, 444). Compare M. Kirn (1974, 362). Apart from the books and essays explicitly discussed in my notes, the following are definitely significant: H. Marcuse (1942), G. Lukács (1948); J. Hyppolite (1955, chapter 3; 1969, chapter 3); J. Habermas (1963); M. Theunissen (1970); W. ver Eecke (1975). But there are probably many items that I have missed.

12. Flay's note (1984, 366, n. 29) gives a good account of some of the astounding things that have been said about this transition. Hegel's argument depends fairly simply on the fact that enlightened Utilitarianism contains no principle of moral "respect." In the universal means-ends continuum there is no *determinate* "end-in-itself." (But see G. Besse [1968/

1969] for a defense of Rousseau's own ethics against the crude utilitarianism of the Jacobins.)

Spaventa was correct, I think, in arguing that there is no *moral* ground for the death penalty in Hegel's theory of punishment. But "utility" always prevails in the political realm. It is only the religious community that *must* "forgive" its members. Hegel is a "Hobbesian" in recognizing the essential role of Terror in politics.

13. "Terror" is a fundamental phenomenon of political life—it plays a vital role in "true Spirit" for example. But "*the* Terror" could happen only *once*, because there can never again be an enlightened community that believes in the *natural* goodness and rationality of all citizens, and is led by that to the Hobbesian discovery of universal suspicion.

(In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel generalizes the motion from Freedom to Terror so as to embrace religious fanaticism generally. This motion from a *religious* foundation is quite different from the movement *into* morality here; and from the "vaporization" of Conscience in the Beautiful Soul the argument here moves to the *adequate* concept of religion. E. Kedourie (1995, 94–102) is one of many students who interpret Hegel's critique of Kantian morality in a one-sidedly *negative* way, because he has not understood the *systematic* order of the *Phenomenology*. On the negative side, however, his comments are very insightful.)

14. The Critical Editors may be right that Hegel's formula: "real universal will, the will of all *singulars* as such" is an echo of Sieyès. They cite from the German translation of Sieyès' *Political Writings* (1796): "the first communal will of a number of men who unite themselves in a political society is without doubt precisely the sum of the wills of all singulars." But this language of "summing wills" generates Rousseau's antithesis of the "general will" and the "will of all." The interesting aspects of the comparison between Sieyès and Hegel are first that Hegel avoids the mathematical language, and secondly that Sieyès obviously accepted the indirect electoral process of the National Convention as a "summing" of the wills of all citizens. Hegel held that the General Will is a genuine Will of All that is *beyond* the level at which singular wills can be counted and summed. Distinguishing between the General Will and the Will of All as if they existed at the "summing" level was *Rousseau's* mistake. Once we have corrected it we can recognize Rousseau's outstanding importance as the philosopher of "Absolute Freedom"—see the *History of Philosophy (T.W.-A. XX, 307–308; Haldane and Simson III, 402)*. The Rousseau reference was recognized by Hyppolite (1946, II, 441–442; 1974, 455–457; and 1955, 71; 1969, 54–55).

15. For Hegel's experience of the significance of the Marseillaise in 1792 see *Toward the Sunlight*, 63, 113–115.

16. It cannot be doubted that this is what is meant here. The "standing sundered masses" are the "estates of the Realm"—that is to say they are the *constituent parts* of the Water-Mass in paragraph 492. (The "sundered masses" here must therefore be distinguished from the "elemental masses" of par. 492. There is some support for this interpretation in par. 588.)

17. The most influential discussion of "Hegel and the French Revolution" has been that of J. Ritter (1957, trans. 1982). H. S. Harris (1978) is heavily indebted to Ritter; cf. also W. ver Eecke (1975). A different view will be found in G. Mende (1972). J. Habermas (1973, 121–141) is right in saying that Hegel's attitude was very ambivalent (121). It is the negative side of the ambivalence that shows plainly in the *Phenomenology*. K. H. Nusser (1970) defends Hegel against Habermas' claim that his position is contradictory. J.-F. Suter (1964, 1971) interprets Hegel's attitude well, but is not interested in "phenomenological logic." See also M. Kettner (1989).

18. “Absolute Freedom” has a “religious” sense. The Revolution was “atheistic”—see D. Rodin (1991). If we accept this view, then this section is Hegel’s own critique of Kojève.

19. For an insightful discussion of “Absolute Freedom” see R. Schacht (1972). The Hegelian critique of direct democracy is discussed by W. ver Eecke (1980).

20. But not necessarily that set of social orders. What is *necessary* is that the structure should be an organic one. We cannot say that it must be a spontaneous *growth*, for we have already passed the moment where spontaneous growth turned into degeneration. The best model of what Hegel had in mind is provided by Napoleon’s organization of the Empire.

21. Marat edited a popular newspaper called *L’Ami du Peuple*.

22. See especially the letter to Schelling, *Briefe* I, 12; Butler and Seiler, 28; we should also remember the reports of Hegel’s fervent oratory on behalf of “liberty.” (Schwegler is not very reliable in this connection, but the testimony of Sinclair is unimpeachable [see Letter 199, *Briefe* I, 394–395; not in Butler and Seiler]). K. H. Nusser (1970, 293–294) is right (as against Habermas) in pointing out that Robespierre is not the World-Spirit—or even a positive “World-Soul” like Napoleon. He is only a negative moment in the motion of the World-Spirit. But his assimilation of *Bildung* to *Herrschaft-Knechtschaft* (par. 282) is misguided.

23. For an illuminating quotation from the “Law of the Suspect” see R. C. Solomon (1983, 560, n. 153). Hinchman (1984, 149) has rightly noted that the word “Fury” is to be taken in its original Greek significance. From the downfall of natural ethical life, the singular natural self-consciousness emerged as the author of *legal right*. From the downfall of the “cultural world” the singular rational self-consciousness emerges as the author of *moral duty*. (W. ver Eecke [1975] compares Hegel’s negative attitude to the violence of the Terror, with his supposed appreciation of conflict in Lordship, Bondage and the Law of the Heart. He is right in arguing against J. Habermas that Hegel was not “fearful” of the Revolution, but wrong in claiming that “revolution remains acceptable” [566]. “Accepting or rejecting” what happens is not the task of philosophy.)

24. The cult of the “Etre Suprême” (which Robespierre did establish) was as far as the Jacobins dared to go. The enthronement of a living “Goddess of Reason” in Notre Dame was too great a violation of the religious sentiment of the country as a whole to be tolerated.

25. We can see, here, how the seemingly repetitive “Truth of Enlightenment” is *crucially* different from the “positive doctrine” that it appeared to repeat.

26. The most interesting of the *coups d’état* in this connection was the first. In the Spring of 1797, a free election based on the limited suffrage principle of the new constitution, produced an alarmingly conservative result. The two Chambers were full of Royalists, and constitutional monarchists. The three radical members of the Directory used the Army to get rid of their two “unreliable” colleagues; and most of the election results were annulled. Napoleon stayed out of the Parisian limelight at this stage. He waited until the military defeats of 1798 led to a resurgence of radical Jacobins calling for a popular dictatorship again. That was when he emerged as the dictatorial protector of the more moderate centre (18 Brumaire, An VIII, 9 November 1799). Instead of universal male suffrage, Napoleon used popular *plebiscites* to incorporate the principle of “absolute freedom” into his new order.

27. There are two mistakes to be avoided here. On the one hand, Judith Shklar’s assumption that the *Phenomenology* should be studied as a political theory leads to the view that it is a hopeless “lament” for the past that we cannot go back to. On the other hand, M. Westphal’s

“Protestant” awareness that we pass now from the experience of the “State” to that of the “Church” leads to the view that Hegel thought (like the Marxists later) that the State would “wither away.” Both mistakes rest upon the comprehension that Spirit must be communally embodied (which is a vital advance in the understanding of what the book is about). But Judith Shklar (1971, 1976) has not grasped “the *higher principle* of the *modern time* which . . . Plato did not know”; while M. Westphal (1979), who has grasped it, has not properly appreciated the critique of enlightened “anarchism” which Shklar fully understood. Like Shklar, L. Dupré (1966, 25–37) seems to think that there ought to be a theory of the State in the *Phenomenology*; but unlike her he admits that there is not. The “transition” is actually to Civil Society as we know it. This is clearly shown by R. Racinaro (1972).

28. *G.W.VIII*, 263, line 16–264, line 6; Rauch, 160–161. In his revisions of the manuscript here Hegel added an important marginal comment about the Greek *polis* and Plato’s *Republic*:

Plato did not set up an ideal, but rather grasped the State of his time in its inner [life]—but this State has passed away—[it is] not [the case] that [the] Platonic Republic is not realizable—because Plato lacked the principle of absolute individuality. What is actual [e.g. in Sparta] does not outwardly look like the [Platonic] Ideal, of course—because the observer confines himself to what is immediate—to the necessary [upon which Reason must operate]—[the] extravagance, decadence, wanton carelessness, viciousness of the individuals [that] it must be possible to put up with—the State is the *cunning* [that can use them] (*G.W.VIII*, 263, line 24–264, line 19).

This comment on the relation between Plato’s “polity” and the actual *polis* is relevant to our understanding of the relation between Hegel’s account of “Absolute Freedom” and the actual French Republic. (For the permanence of this moment in Hegel’s political theory see *Philosophy of Right* sec. 124 Remark.)

29. In *Faith and Knowledge* Hegel says that this “modern principle” or “Nordic essence” is “from the religious point of view, the principle of Protestantism”—*G.W. IV*, 316; Cerf and Harris, 57. M. Bienenstock (1983, 162–172) has given an insightful interpretation of *Bildung* as the self-conscious realization of human rational *power*. Rational power comes to full self-consciousness in Morality—otherwise the cycle would begin again. The view of G. Lukács that at Berlin Hegel gave to the Lutheran Reform the pride of place that the French Revolution has at Jena (1948, 580; 1975, 460–461) is correct, but slightly misleading. Even in the *Phenomenology* the essentially *critical* evaluation of the French Enlightenment and the Revolution is preparing the Berlin position. (Compare, for example, M. Kirn, 1974).

30. J. Hyppolite (1955, 77–78; 1969, 59–60) rightly says that the social structure envisaged in the second *Philosophy of Spirit* (*G.W.VIII*, 266–270; Rauch, 162–170) is inspired by Napoleon. Hyppolite (1946, 316–322; 1974, 326–333) preferred the general thesis of M. Bösse (1931) (that the only important difference between the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* was in the point of view) to that of F. Rosenzweig (1920) (that in the *Phenomenology* “the importance of the State was greatly diminished” [1920, I, 219]). He was right in that preference. (But Hegel did radically *transform* “the ethical ideal.”)

M. H. Hoffheimer (1992, 353–359) proposes that the “Lord of the World” in the Condition of Right is Napoleon. There can be no doubt that readers are intended to recognize the “return” of Roman times in Napoleon’s work. But paragraph 594 indicates clearly that he is *not* the primary referent. His world is different because the *moral* conception of personality

has come to birth. To mention the most crucial *legal* difference, there are no slaves (or serfs) in his world—and even the “rights of woman” have become a matter of theoretical discussion. The “natural” division between Antigone and Creon has begun to be liquidated by *moral* argument.

31. U. Pope-Hennessy, *Madame Roland* (London, Nisbet, 1917, 496).

32. See the first appearance of Robespierre in Carlyle’s *French Revolution* (with his footnote). Hegel’s own verdict was that Robespierre “took Virtue seriously” (*TW-A*, XII, 533; Sibree, 450).

33. Compare Hegel’s verdict on the *necessity* of Robespierre’s “tyranny” in the 1805 “Philosophy of Spirit” (*G.W.* VIII, 260, lines 1–13; Rauch, 157).

34. The actual social transition here is well characterized (logically) by J. W. Burbidge (1992, 101–102). The necessary mediation between singular and universal will is produced in the world of objective spirit by the conscientious recognition of Family and State as non-contractual communities. See (for example) M. Westphal (1984). But (as we can see from the way Hegel’s logical argument moves straight on to the “Moral World-View” here), the theory of Absolute Spirit does *not* presuppose even the concrete realization of “the modern bourgeois Protestant world”—still less its abiding permanence. Thus claims like that of E. Fackenheim (1967, 224–233) that in view of the terrible failures of that world in our century “Hegel would not be a Hegelian” today are quite mistaken.

35. This is where A. Wildt’s contention that from the “real General Will” Hegel derives “the steady exchange of government and opposition” is justified in the *Phenomenology*. But the derivation depends on the *Kantian* interpretation of “liberty, equality and fraternity” (and Wildt is well aware of that). Compare A. Wildt, 1970, 269 (=1974, 417). The necessary marriage between the Jacobins and Kant was less obvious to the Jacobins themselves (or to us since 1917) than it was to their German disciples. (This was a lesson that Hegel himself learned in 1793.)

36. S. Dellavalle (1992, 148) says there is “no trace” in the *Phenomenology* of the important distinction in the *Philosophy of World History* between the French and the German Enlightenment. He was simply looking in the wrong place—being too much under the influence of Hyppolite.

37. Letter 233 (to Niethammer, 29 April 1814; *Briefe* II, 28–29; Butler and Seiler, 307). For Hegel’s mature view of Napoleon’s failure see his *Philosophy of History* lectures (*TW-A*, XII, 533–5; Sibree, 451–452). L. P. Hinchman (1984, 150–154) shows clearly how Hegel’s critique in 1806 coheres logically with the views of his last years. J. F. Suter (1964, 318) is guilty of oversimplification when he says that “for Hegel the French Revolution belongs to an epoch that is past.” But the resemblances between Hegel’s attitude and Burke’s, to which Suter draws attention, deserve careful study.

38. Hegel reiterated in his Berlin lectures that it was folly to make a Revolution without a preceding Reformation (*Enz.* sec. 552; *TW-A*, XII, 535—Sibree, 453). The explanation of this “folly” is the “estrangement” of Pure Insight from Faith.

39. His correspondence shows that Hegel actually hoped that the Germans would learn the political lesson of the Revolution better than their French teachers—and when “Revolution” reared its head again in Paris in 1830 he decided that (thanks to their “Reformation”) they had done so. It is therefore right to regard the *Phenomenology* as Hegel’s last and greatest contribution to the “German Revolution” which he began to labor for at Tübingen. See especially Letters 85 (23 Jan. 1807) and 106 (13 Oct. 1807), Hoffmeister I, 138, 192 (Butler

and Seiler, 123, 151). For the early hope for a German Revolution to be produced by *philosophy*, see Letters 11 and 13 (to Schelling, 16 April 1795, and Schelling's reply, 21 July 1795)—*Briefe* I, 23, 28 (Butler and Seiler, 35). Some of the other evidences of this shared hope are indexed under "German Revolution" in *Toward the Sunlight*.

On the whole problem of Hegel's supposed "accommodation with Prussia" in his later years, the most balanced picture is that provided by H.-C. Lucas and O. Pöggeler (edd.): *Hegels Philosophie des Rechts* (see the valuable review-article by M. Bienenstock [1987]).

40. I do not agree with everything that B. C. Birchall (1978) says about Hegel's view of the Is/Ought distinction. But a careful student of the "Truth of Enlightenment," "Freedom and Terror" and "Morality" will soon see what is valid in his analysis and what is not. G. Vassilacopoulos (Ph.D. Thesis 1993, 58) quotes Shelley very aptly: "one could say that Hegelian philosophers become 'the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present.' Turning vision to memory amounts to remembering the future . . ." But we must remember that the precondition of Hegel's prophetic power was his understanding of Napoleon's actual achievement. It is only *for us* that he seems now to have "remembered the future"; and we ourselves shall become "mirrors of futurity" only if we comprehend our own time well (see further, J. F. Hoffmeyer, 1994).

Chapter 8

The Voyage Home

VI C: Spirit Certain of Itself: Morality

We are now at the beginning of the final movement of (Objective) Spirit. Here we must expect to see the comprehensive inversion of True Spirit (or Ethical Substance) together with its direct inversion in Estrangement. The “result” should be a Concept of higher generality and ontological status—as indeed it is, since from here we shall pass to the concept of Religion as the “experience” of the Absolute Spirit. It is not surprising therefore to find that Morality involves an explicit encounter between the finite and the infinite Spirit. As we might expect, this first encounter still carries the marks of “estrangement.” The moral self is no longer estranged from itself, but it is still estranged from the life-world with which True Spirit was harmoniously identified. This situation is what has to be transformed in the evolution of Morality.¹

(a) Prospect and Retrospect

- 1/.596. The singular self, recognized first only in death, then legally as a person, and finally realizing its personality as actual living self in Culture and emerging as General Will, is now in self-conscious possession of itself. Its *truth* is this self-knowledge, so the goal seems to have been reached.

Since this is the beginning of the final movement of “Spirit” Hegel naturally opens with a brief survey of the earlier moments. The first position of the Objective Spirit was True Spirit. It was “true” because of the immediate identity of the living singular self with his (or her) universal Concept. The two sexes constituted the “particular” division of the universal community (the community that is the objective shape of finite Spirit). Active self-consciousness is specified sexually by nature; it is particularized, but not “individuated.” Self-consciousness pertains properly to the City, and is embodied in its two aspects: the man-made political assembly of the “fathers,” supported by their fighting sons; and the established tribal continuum, made in the course of nature by mothers and brought to consciousness by the social expectations and natural piety of daughters.

In the national fraternity of True Spirit the agency of the singular self receives recognition only after death. The emergence of the singular self as a recognized

bearer of legal rights is the death-knell of this beautiful harmony of life, in which personal recognition (or "honor") is accorded only to the dead. If a living individual claims and receives special respect in the Ethical Substance—say the King, or an "elder," or one's father, or an alien stranger—it is as the representative of a divine power, and especially of Zeus himself. It is the God who is appealed to; she is the injured party if right is violated, and it is she who will exact vengeance if that right is not properly maintained or reinstated.

The Roman armies replaced this rather chancy and disorderly harmony of life with one universal human law, and one continuum of humanly recognized "rights." But the universal continuum was soon shown up to be a mere cloak for the age-old "law of the stronger"; "natural law" and "natural rights" have to pass through the long and painful dialectic of the Self-Estranged Spirit in order to become fully rational; and now finally the rational self who is the conscious bearer of *moral* rights has come to birth.

This newborn moral self is so perfectly certain of its own self as its only "object," that death on the guillotine as a declared traitor to the community is indifferent to it. Polyneices faced that traitor's death indifferently also (for Sophocles makes Oedipus prophesy it to him); but the "object" of Polyneices was the kingship of the City, and the *Dike* of Zeus as god of kingship.² The moral self cares only for its own moral integrity, its membership in the "moral world-order."³

The moral self is "master [*Meister*, not *Herr*] over the *Gegensatz* of consciousness." This self has no private purpose distinct from the "general will." But its "mastery" is an absolute knowledge, which like that of the Stoic begins by resigning all claims to the control of anything real. The moral self knows that its will must be "good"; and it is satisfied when it knows that its will actually is good. It has no goals or expectations of "its own." The general will is its only "property" (not in the way that it was Robespierre's private property, but in the sense that the Good is what is most inward to it as its own). There is no *Gegensatz* now between its own certainty that its will is good, and the "object" (i.e. the universal Good).

- 2./597. My duty is what is *substantial*. But it is not an *ethos* stamped on me by nature, which is specific to me as male or female, while the whole truth has another side that is hidden. It is more like the Will of God in Culture and in Faith; but it is my own rational will, not a self-negating discipline or a flight to another world. It is the universal kingdom of practical Reason.

The knowledge that is the only "Substance" for the moral self is the knowledge of Duty. Duty is what is eternal. This self has seen all of the traditional structure of the world swept away; it knows that the natural world is a complex of tools for its use, and that its intuition of duty is the substantial form to be imposed on all of this dependent "matter." In this immediate aspect the moral world-order is "what is." But it is equally absolutely a mediated result of the action of the moral self; and in that aspect the knowledge of it is the knowledge of "what ought to be."

In the ethical world-order, our character gives us the *pathos* (the felt commitment) for what we must do. Both in the primitive and in the developed Aristotelian

shape, the virtues of character have a side of “not knowing.” The ethically virtuous (wo)man needs the (wo)man of practical wisdom, and Antigone needed a king like the Sophoclean Theseus, not the Creon whom she actually faced. But of course the Sophoclean Theseus had insight, not just character, to aid him (that is to say a lot of intelligence went into the ethical makeup of his *manly* character). He understood how the “syllogisms” of his finite community worked; and that was partly an accidental gift of nature (just as the birth of *two* princes, Eteocles and Polyneices, was an unfortunate chance).

Moral knowledge, on the other hand, has the inherited certainty and self-sufficiency of *pure* insight; so its likeness to Faith is more complex, and more interesting. Like the “new man” of Christian obedience, Moral Insight is “absolutely mediated”; it is culturally self-made, through the complete sublation of the natural self. But it will soon show itself to be the knowledge of membership in a spiritual community; and this knowledge does not have the “estranged” character of a promise or a hope. Nor does it have the “split” aspect of an insight that is obliged to be self-contemptuous. In the moral knowledge of duty, the rational community of the moral world-order is a living presence (*Gegenwart*). I am conscious of being immediately in the moral community as my substance.

Charlotte Corday, who came to Paris to emulate the great tyrant-slayers she had read about in Plutarch, was very conscious of the present community of the French Republic, but not of this community of absolute selves. She could (and did) speak of doing her “duty.” But in the perspective of the moral world-order we cannot call the assassination of Robespierre or of Marat a “duty.”⁴ The moral self cannot go forth to slay tyrants, for it must recognize the tyrant as another morally autonomous self. It is the immediately known *presence* of this universal community of rational selves, that makes it legitimate for Hegel to use the rhetoric of Reason, as he does so emphatically, when he claims that “*this immediacy . . . is all actuality . . . it is being in general or all being.*” The moral agent acts consciously for the whole community of moral agents. Reason no longer takes itself to be Utility; it knows that it is still an “end in itself” even in Marat. It has been “cleansed through the absolute negativity” of the guillotine.

- 3./598. This knowledge *is* action. The knowledge of what to do *is* my substantial world.
There is no morally significant ignorance.

Two things differentiate this moral knowledge from Faith. First it is *rational* insight; and secondly it is actual. But this “actuality” is of a very peculiar kind; the knowing that is *all actuality*, is actual only as *knowing*. There is a lot about the empirically external world that I do not know when I act; but that is morally irrelevant. It is what I actually do know that constitutes the situation in which my duty determines itself. What I know “absolutely” when I act morally is that my intention is good. In the moral perspective this is all that counts. It is an irrational guilt that poor Oedipus suffers, once he has said that he did not know his mother;⁵ and Antigone disgraces herself morally when she says she would willingly leave husband or son unburied at the command of the City. The natural and the social world still

have an independent sense for them, and exercise power over them. The moral world-order, on the other hand, is an objective world within the moral will. Every moral act realizes it, however unfortunate or misguided it may turn out to be in the external world. The world of freedom is quite independent of the natural order of physical causes. That is why we find H. A. Prichard discussing “shouting to revive a fainting man” as a possible duty.

We must understand that the general characterization of “self-certain Spirit” in these three introductory paragraphs is valid for the whole evolution of the Moral World that follows. When we reach the actual community of “Morality”—the community of “universal forgiveness”—we shall find that most of the paradoxes have dissolved, and the “comprehension,” both of the Ethical and the Self-Estranged Spirit in the doubly inverted result, is fairly easy to recognize. That community is visibly a “Lutheran” congregation; but we should ponder upon the fact that Hegel himself has logically required the inclusion of Oedipus, Antigone, Creon, sundry other Greek and modern tragic heroes, Young Rameau, Diderot, D’Holbach, LaMettrie, and Robespierre in the community that advances to comprehend its own Religion. This is more important than the required “forgiveness” of the high-handed attitude of the moral agent regarding any material facts that she does not “actually” know.⁶ The community of “rational faith” must both reconcile Faith with Insight, and comprehend the pagan world. Before it becomes Absolute Knowing (and ceases to be “Faith” altogether) it will comprehend a great deal more. In principle it must comprehend all properly “human” experience. Otherwise it will not be Science.

VI C(a): The Moral World-View

Self-Certain Spirit is articulated into three phases. All of them belong to the twenty years prior to 1807. The “Concept” of Morality (which does not properly know what it means to be the morally autonomous self) is established by the “rational faith” of Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason (though it reaches its most perfect form in Fichte’s Vocation of Man). The “experience” of this Concept consists of a logical criticism by Hegel in which the postulational point of view is shown to be guilty of shifting its ground in the manner of Perception. This leads us to “Conscience” as the Truth of Self-Certainty (and the level of proper “moral understanding”). That we shall deal with in our next chapter.

(b) Moral Postulation (Kant)

- 1./599. Duty is the essence (Truth). But what is the objective content of this self-consciousness? The content of duty is not an *object*. The objective world is a system of *natural* (non-moral) laws that is exactly as free of me as I am of it.

The only concern of the moral consciousness is its duty. This is its own rational *self*, so it is not an “object” in the ordinary sense. But duty is essentially something that is to be done. So, even though it is only my intended self (the “good will”) that

matters to me, I do need an objective world in the ordinary sense; for I must carry out my intentions, and so confirm for myself that I really do intend to do my duty. My moral self-consciousness is essentially “mediation and negativity,” i.e. it brings itself into being through (or by way of) the negation of something else. But it is not morally important to me in my own rational world-order, what that empirical order is like (though it is important for me to “observe” it as well as I can). I could be the bug in Kafka’s *Metamorphosen*; and I would then have a quite different set of empirical things to do, but it would not change my moral world-order. But I do need the empirical world for my rational self-realization; so when I insist that the shape and order of it does not affect my moral freedom, I am logically granting that the empirical world is also free to go its own way. Logically, the guillotine has cut the two worlds off from each other. But the dominance of Utility continues in a sublated way. I must *use* the order of Nature for the rational purpose of actualizing the Moral World-Order. This “estrangement” of the two “orders” remains to be overcome.

- 2./600. From this definition a “moral world-view” forms itself, which expresses the relation between free subject (moral laws) and free object (natural laws). The two are mutually indifferent and independent, but only Duty is essential, and Nature cannot *be* independent. This is the contradiction that will be developed.

What Hegel calls the “moral *Weltanschauung*” is very precisely the connecting link between the two “worlds”—the intellectual world of the moral world-order governed by the “laws of freedom” and the empirical world of nature governed by the “laws of necessity.” *Anschaung*, sensory intuition, is precisely the mode in which the moral self is aware of the natural world to which it is so completely indifferent. It is typical of Hegel (and directly consistent, for example, with his steady refusal to grant that there really are *two* worlds in his discussion of Faith) to insist that “the moral world-view” is precisely an intellectual way of intuiting this actual world of sense-experience.

This does not invalidate my claim that the moral self lives in its own “world-order,” and that Hegel always means us to keep this in mind. For that claim is entailed by the cumulative character of the Science of Experience. The moral self contains the “general will” of the political community—the will of the actual community that proclaimed “liberty, equality, and fraternity” as the “rights of man”—sublated into a new moral shape by the experience of the Terror. But the consciousness that we are observing has “forgotten” this; so the actual evolution of the moral world-view must be treated as the relation between the singular self and the world of sense-experience, because that is how it appears in the world of experience, which is the only world that our Science recognizes. The conflict of presuppositions that now arises is called *Glückseligkeit*; and the word itself carries the memory of Faith’s “communion of saints” within it.⁷

- 3./601. I can know and do my duty independently. But Nature does not care. I may be dutiful but unhappy, or undutiful yet happy anyway. So I am bound to complain that this is just not right.

From the Truth of Enlightenment, we have inherited the maximization of Utility as the goal of rational action. When that rational goal sought to actualize itself as the “greatest good of everyone” (or as liberty, bounded by equality, and reconciled in fraternity) the fact that at best it could only be “the greatest good of the greatest number” turned it into the universal utility of death as the price of the community’s freedom. That taught us the fundamental importance of “moral respect” as the foundation of all duty. It is precisely the evolution of the rational ideal of Utility that has taught us this; and now the alienation of the community of freedom from the world of nature, has put the achievement of universal utility beyond our reach.

In order to do my duty I must negate my natural impulses: and this means that I cannot be spontaneously or selfishly happy in any case. This is our inheritance from the social discipline of Culture with its ideal of noble-mindedness. But it has now been transformed into the rational insight that “moral freedom” is the true good; and unfortunately my moral freedom carries the world’s natural indifference along with it. Naturally selfish utilitarians are all round me. The discipline of Culture has operated upon them to produce only the self-satisfied individuality of Reason as the *Sache selbst*. There is Dick Whittington whose cat brought him luck, and Jack Horner who thinks himself a fine fellow because he stole his estate (or got it as a bribe); and in general there are all those bourgeois worthies who have made the “mixed” judgment, and who now live quite sincerely by the maxim that honesty is the best policy. They have no conception that moral improvement is what the world is there for; and all of my efforts to secure it are foiled by their very blindness. The experience of the moral self is precisely that of Virtue struggling with the World’s Way. The others do not understand the opportunities that they have; or they may not be equipped to use them. I have to do my duty fruitlessly, because no one understands; and I have to live with the knowledge that all my natural talents are going to waste. The “indifference” of the empirical order becomes “injustice.” I see no improvement in the world, no presence of the moral world-order, or of my true self in it.⁸

- 4./602. Felicity cannot be renounced, because singular selfhood and conviction are essential to morality. The enjoyment of moral success is essential. Even as moral disposition I must know that this enjoyment is possible. My natural condition must harmonize with my duty. But their disharmony is logically necessary too. Harmony can only *be* accidental, but I must *postulate* that it is certain. This ideal in my mind must coincide with my singular experience. Reason demands it.

In paragraph 601 Hegel says that moral consciousness may be *glücklich* or not at the hands of nature; and he explains this by saying that where the moral agent finds the occasion (*Veranlassung*) for acting, the action itself does not produce “the *Glück* of performance (*Ausführung*) and of the enjoyment of full accomplishment (*Vollbringung*).” It is clear that we must translate *Glück* and *glücklich* as neutrally as we can, since this “luck” depends on the indifference of the natural order. Moral conscience may be “unlucky,” i.e., it may not be fortunate enough to go through with what it intended, and so enjoy the sense of accomplishment. It is this enjoyment of

its own success in carrying out its intention that is now said to be the *Glückseligkeit* which the moral consciousness cannot renounce. Faith could *trust* in God for its blessedness in the Beyond; but the moral *knowledge* of the finite singular self must confirm her own moral conviction. If I never succeed in doing anything, how can I claim to be rational?

When someone labors for a cause that we hold to be lost, we can only say that she has “faith.” The situation of the ordinary moral agent is not quite so parlous as that; sometimes she has the enjoyment of successful accomplishment, and sometimes not. But if the luck of this relationship with nature is to be resolved into rationality, then the moral Faith that sets aside the failures, and takes the successes as the guarantee of “pure” (but finite) Insight, must be rational. My disposition (*Gesinnung*) to be moral is a kind of faith; it does not demand proof. It does not ask to see itself vindicated by success. But that moment of vindication is essential to moral consciousness as rational knowledge; and therefore, in spite of the attitude of the moral disposition, it is essential to a properly rational faith as well. For it is of the essence of moral Faith to pass over into action in the here and now; it must actualize itself here.

When Hegel defines the whole moral goal “with the consciousness of its moments expressed” we can see just how hopelessly paradoxical the situation is: “Fulfilled Duty is to be just as much purely moral action as it is realized *individuality*, and *Nature*, as the side of *singularity* as against the abstract goal, is to be one with the goal.” We can see “Reason’s certainty of being all reality” spelled out here; and we can appreciate that Morality is indeed a “World-View.” But “purely moral action” is action for the sake of duty alone (as the abstract goal). So how can any enjoyment of moral success fail to pollute that success itself and make it immoral? I enjoy the sight of what is achieved, because *I* achieved it, it is *my* action, the expression of *my* nature and talents. Unlike Jack Horner, I do not think that I am a “good boy” just because I am lucky. But how can my success be anything but the luck of having the natural gifts that the situation called for? I am just like Jack Horner, except that I can see clearly that if I congratulate myself on being a good boy, I am ceasing to *be* good. The moral consciousness is the fully rational shape of the Unhappy Consciousness. Because nature is “free” and its relation to moral action is completely chancy, all enjoyment of success is morally illegitimate.

In this parlous situation, the founding of moral knowledge upon the attitude of Faith represents the only hope. I can enjoy any and all moral success (not just my own), and I can take comfort in all moral “effort,” however unsuccessful it may appear to be in the world of my observation, because it confirms my thought of the moral world-order as the world of being that is eternally established. My certain knowledge of my duty leads to the “rational postulate” of a harmony between the world-order of freedom and that of nature, in the sense that moral action is always accompanied by the moral happiness of its own success. The existence of this harmony, this felicity, is neither logically nor empirically verified in the observable world, but I must postulate that in the world of “being” (the order of necessity that holds good, whether we know about it or not) it is realized. As *Glückseligkeit* the

harmony is a necessary aspect of the moral world-order; and the necessity to postulate this harmony makes the necessary existence of the moral world-order itself explicit for the first time.⁹

Primitively, the moral consciousness is the Good Will—the consciousness of the universal law of Reason (or *pure* consciousness; but this will is actual as my singular will, in my finite, empirical, consciousness. So the unity of the pure and the singular consciousness is conceptually necessary; and my felicity as a finite moral being is therefore necessary in the order of being, not merely as a goal of thought that may perhaps be imaginary.

What has become dubious in the course of this moral version of the Ontological Argument is precisely the question *whether* I am a moral being, and whether I deserve the postulated felicity of being sure of that. But the Cartesian certainty that “what thinks, is” is not subject to doubt; so we shall see the moral consciousness driven to try both hypotheses about itself—both that it is, and that it is not actually moral. The concept of Morality will be transformed as a result; but the concept of the self remains the direct knowledge of the necessary connection of thought and being, of pure consciousness with singular thereness.

- 5./603. This postulate leads to a whole cycle of postulates. My living nature is itself *purposive*, and its singular purpose is opposed to Duty; but the ordering of my own nature is peculiarly *my* moral concern. I am one consciousness, thinking and feeling; so I must moralize my desires. But also, in order to be dutiful, I must act against them. So the “conformity” of desire and duty is a postulate. Yet I have to experience it, too; so my actual morality is an endless progression which can never come to its goal. At the goal I should not be a moral agent. Either action or harmony, but not both at once. Morally it does not matter how this contradiction is resolved, but it raises doubt whether Duty is actual rationality.

As the *thought* of “what is”—i.e. as a postulated “being”—the harmony of nature and freedom in “felicity” is a future actuality, one that will eventually be experienced. It is what is “in-itself” but not yet “for-itself.” Hegel now reconstructs the whole Kantian and Fichtean programme of “practical faith”—the necessary postulates of practical Reason—as a dialectical progress from what is “in-itself” through what is “for-itself” to what is “in-and-for-itself”—the self being at all stages that of *Moralität*.¹⁰

Morality is fulfilled “in itself” in the moral happiness that I am calling “felicity”—that same harmony of moral duty with natural happiness which Kant called the “Summum Bonum.”¹¹ This entails the postulation by us of a being that is “not yet.” But Hegel will now show that no reconciliation of duty with enjoyment is possible even upon the postulate of an infinite extension of our finite being.¹² This postulate of “immortality” is the fulfilment of Morality “for itself”; and when we examine what morality is “for itself,” we find that the internal conflict of its moments leaves no room for self-enjoyment at *any* stage.

In order to see this we have only to consider how the moral self is necessarily aware of nature as “its own.” The world that is known to me as a theoretical

observer in sense-intuition, exists for my moral will as a mass of drives and inclinations. These conflict with my moral will; but it is the unity of my one self that is for me essential. So if I take it as my goal to produce a harmony of my desires with my moral will, the harmony of *Glückseligkeit* becomes a properly moral object. But how is this “harmony” to be conceived? The “faithful” analogue for it can be recognized in a remark of Madame de Sévigné: “The secret of happiness is to wish only that the will of God be done, and to believe that whatever happens is his will.”¹³ So let us first consider what this dictum means.

It is clear that if this goal can be achieved the motivation to act will be affected. The remark certainly contains a potential apology for quietism; but it would be wrong to take it as a recommendation of the Epicurean withdrawal from action, because the known will of the noble and pious lady’s God would never permit that.¹⁴ The “wish” and the “belief” of which she speaks are to be made by our moral effort. Madame de Sévigné is not supposing that we can be relieved of that effort, but defining how we should discipline our attitude toward the disappointments of our own will. That we do have both a will, and many desires of our own, she presupposes. The unity of our “wish” with the will of God is at a higher level altogether; it is brought about at the level of our reflective recollection and comprehension of conflicts and failures. No simple “harmony” of desires and moral will is possible.

Hegel intends now to exploit the quietist implication of supposing that we could achieve a simple abolition of our sensual will. But he does this in the interest of a recollective appreciation of an achieved reconciliation of Reason and Nature. He intends to show that the whole enterprise of “moral postulation” is a mistake. It is not this or that thinker (and specifically not Fichte) but the “postulates” of heavenly happiness, immortality and the holy will that are overthrown as internally contradictory. “Morality” (though not specifically the moral theories of Kant and Fichte) still survives. But it is shown not to be the “absolute” standpoint.

We were led to the postulate of the harmony of nature and freedom by the fact that both empirical consciousness and moral self-consciousness are necessarily present and presupposed in *one* indivisible finite agent. The “whole circle of postulates opens up” because, as sensually directed desire and pure will, the empirical (sensible and mortal) and the moral (rational and substantial) moments are “in themselves *one* consciousness”; and the certainty of *this* unity is precisely the pure knowledge that the moral self has of itself. This unity is what has to be morally respected; that is why we said that the guillotine taught us the *fundamental* importance of “respect.” The knowledge of this unity as a unity of opposites, a *Gegensatz*, is moral knowledge; the conquest of the natural self in favor of the universal self-knowledge is actual morality. But to suppose that sensuality could be finally sublated would be to abolish the self; and to suppose that it could ever actually come to be perfectly in accord with the moral will would be to suppose that actual morality can be abolished.

Actual morality is the perpetual making of a concord, which is not, and can never be, finally made. We must forever be “making progress in morality” (as both Kant and Fichte said, reviving the language of Panaetius which Kant found in

Cicero).¹⁵ The completion of the moral task must be postponed forever. According to the standpoint of “actual morality” the “harmony of desire and duty” is a regulative ideal that governs the performance of a task which is absolute as a task (i.e. it can never be completed).

At the same time, this is a harmony that I *must* experience. The harmony of nature with the Kingdom of Ends can remain a matter of moral faith (or *an sich*) because I am only a finite agent; but the harmony of my own pure and empirical self *must* be within the compass of my own will—for otherwise the infinite moral effort would not be rational. So the paradox is this: *eternally* the ideal of felicity must *be*; *perpetually* it must *not* be. It is the two models of “infinity” (the pure concept, and the schematized concept) that come into conflict with one another. The “dark distance” of infinity allows us to leave this antinomy unresolved; and the moral standpoint itself dictates that we *ought* to leave it undecided. We cannot decide it, because of its antinomic character. The infinite task is irrational in the conceptual perspective, and “felicity” is inconceivable as a mode of actual moral consciousness. But we do not need to resolve the contradiction because the decision is of no practical interest—we know what our moral task is, as singular consciousnesses, and that is all that matters.¹⁶

But the human “desire to know” cannot escape its own moral duty. The contradictoriness of the moral ideal of consciousness raises the vitally important question of whether our moral consciousness is “actual” or not. Is the moral self *actually* one self? Or is it *two* selves (like the Unhappy Consciousness)?

- 6./604. That I should be successful when I am dutiful is the first postulate—the goal of Reason in itself. That I should be happy in my dutifulness is the second—the goal of Self-Consciousness. The two postulates become “objects” in the actuality in which they are mutually “other”—God, or Reason in-and-for-itself.

The three “postulates” of the Critical Philosophy (meaning Kant and Fichte together) are usually summed up as “God, Freedom, and Immortality.” Hegel’s preference for “three harmonies”—which are securely founded in Kant’s texts—is determined by the three moments of his own logic of the Concept. First there is the conceptual harmony of the natural with the moral order in the “final purpose of the World.” Then there is the dialectical harmony of the natural and the moral self (which requires the postulate of “immortality”). And now, finally, we have the comprehensive harmony of the Concept (Rational Freedom) with the dialectic (Moral Struggle) in the Absolute Judge (God).

Theologically, the first postulate provides a rationale for the “creation” of a natural world in which free but finite rational agents have to act. Already when we speak of an “ultimate purpose (*Endzweck*) of the World,”¹⁷ it is plain that the implicit assumption is that the natural and moral orders of finite intelligence were created by a transcendent intelligent power which has practical rationality in common with the finite intelligence. So with the closure of the “circle of postulates” (par. 603, first sentence), the first postulate has now been supplied with an explicit systematic context that was originally only implicit.

In the case of the second postulate, the conceptual context is the autonomy of self-consciousness. Again this was the explicit assumption involved in rational moral consciousness from the first. So all that happens in the final postulate is that the self-conscious standpoint is projected backwards to embrace the whole world-order. *Another* self is “required” to whom the goal of the world-system belongs, just as our own moral harmony is the goal of each one of us. Only then will the two goals be “objects.” This provides us with the adequate context of a spiritual world in which moral action can be viewed as a relation between the pure (universal) self (God) and the (singular) empirical agent. God is the infinite spirit for whom the finite spirit is “other” (and vice versa). The harmony of the orders of nature and freedom is God’s rational objective; the harmony of moral and sensible will is the objective of finite spirits.

It may not be obvious why Hegel says categorically that the “moments” have not become “objects” until God is postulated. This is true enough about the universal moment; but why is it true about the singular moment as well? The answer is that unless I postulate God I cannot have any rational confidence that my moral objective (harmony of Reason and desire) is an actual “object” in logic. Since my own situation is an infinite task which cannot be completed, my “objective” may be a squared circle. Also, of course, the attitude of trust in the infinite spirit justifies our theoretical resignation and practical unconcern about the antinomies contained in the first two postulates. Hegel develops the argument for the postulate of God carefully—he has not even stated it yet as explicitly as I have done—by showing in the next two paragraphs just how shaky the first two postulates are without it.

- 7./605. In action there are many duties according to the circumstances; and empirical failures arise through empirical ignorances. For me, only pure dutifulness is holy; yet every perceivable duty is equally holy. So it must be God who makes them so.

In general the dialectic upon which we are now embarking can be called that of “holiness.” God is postulated as the absolutely holy will. The argument is fairly simple. My self-certain knowledge of myself extends only to the pure principle of duty. But my actual duty is determined by *my* perception of the worldly situation that I am in; many duties can arise from the many aspects of that situation. As moral self-certainty I am already implicitly Conscience. One result of my action may well be a bitter regret that I did not do something else. That is an aspect of my luck; but I cannot become embroiled in a conflict of duties, in the way that Law-Giving Reason becomes embroiled in a conflict of laws, or Law-Testing Reason is reduced to nullity by the paradox that quite opposite laws can pass its test.

In the situation as it is empirically known to me, I know absolutely what my duty is; but there is much that I do not know about the order of nature, and the consequences of actions. As I learn more about myself and the world, my empirical knowledge generates a continuous series of different duties; and my empirical ignorance is one important cause (at least) of my practical failures.¹⁸ In the light of experience I may say to myself that “I *ought* to have done something else (Y rather than the X that I did).” But this only means that Y has *become* my perceived duty in

any recurrence of the situation (or that Z is my duty now, in order to put X right as far as possible).

This experience, on my part, is necessary, if I am not to fall back into Robespierre's kind of "virtue"; for I must recognize that "pure Duty" has many faces, and that others are bound to see faces of it that I do not. When I am in direct conflict with someone else, there is obviously something wrong with the "insight" of one or both of us. But I am not, like Antigone and Creon, blind to every duty that is not stamped in my "character"; and it is impossible that mine should be the one *actual* moral will, in virtue of which (like Robespierre or the Queen of Hearts) I can cry "Off with his head." Nor can I laugh (sadly) like Rameau at the hopeless contradictoriness of things; we shall come back to the acceptance of disagreement in Conscience, but it is not part of the moral position initially. My postulate must be that the "Other" whose object is the harmony of the two worlds has made many duties "holy." We, the finite selves, have to patch them together on the hypothesis that they are God's jigsaw puzzle.

(c) *The Dialectic of Duty*

- 8./606. God must be the perfect moral will in which the harmony between moral freedom and natural happiness is realized. The natural and moral orders are thoughts that can only be in one consciousness; so the third postulate is the divine Lord and producer of the harmony.

The dialectic of Perception is now repeated at the level of finite and infinite spirit. In place of the perceiving consciousness we have the finite spirit that knows itself within the infinite Spirit; and in place of the *Ding* we have Duty as the One with many aspects. The first position is that the unity of duty is (finitely) subjective, and the multiplicity of duties is "objective" (i.e. it originates in the infinite Subject). Upon this view every singularly perceived duty is holy because it is the commandment of God (it is a "property" of his moral world-order).¹⁹ For God there is no division (as there is for me) between the absolute principle of duty (which we both know) and the great complex of sundered species of duty. He comprehends the natural and the moral world-order in their perfect harmony. For me, on the other hand, the order of nature is external, and my moral relation to it is completely chancy. When I comprehend that I am living and moving, not in Nature (as I naïvely thought) but in God, this chanciness is swallowed up in an absolute moral confidence. We are not just moving the parts of the "order of Nature" about as if they were pieces on a solitaire board which we have to arrange in their "moral" order. The natural and moral orders can only exist for a thinker. So their harmony already exists for the absolute thinker.²⁰

- 9./607. My aim is to actualize *myself* as moral. Pure duty, the moral universal, must emanate from God, and it is only because he makes my specific duty sacred that it is sacred for me.

This actively comprehensive (distinctively Leibnizian) conception of the relation between the infinite and the finite self is directly inverted when we turn our attention to the “being-for-self” of the singular moral agent. I want to express my own finite self. I am not nature in general; I am *this* nature, this set of inclinations and capacities. I must rationally aim to make “myself” into the most effective moral agent that I am capable of being; it is this singular self that is the objective of my practical knowing. The absolutely certain knowledge of duty (which is “objective” in the sense of being the same for all agents) is therefore precisely what I owe to the presence of God.²¹ God makes my specific duty holy for me, not immediately, but because I know this action to be what *he* wants me to do.

- 10./608. So my finite consciousness is only an imperfect moral consciousness, marred by empirical ignorance, and sensible inclination. I must look for felicity only as a gift of grace.

Now the two selves change roles; and the autonomy of the finite self vanishes. Once the certainty of duty is admitted to be the presence of God to me, the finite moral consciousness is recognizable as the rationally self-conscious mode of the Unhappy Consciousness. I do my duty as well as I can. But the knowledge that makes it Duty is not *mine*. *That* belongs to God (as the community of all moral knowers). What is “mine” is the *imperfection* of the moral act. My decision is determined on the one side by the accidental limitations of my knowledge; and on the other side by the sensible inclinations of my empirical nature. So why should I be morally happy? To know what measure of felicity I deserve—or even to speak properly of measurement—is impossible. What is necessary and certain is always that I am undeserving. Felicity is not a necessary aspect of my moral self-knowledge; I can only *hope* to receive it by God’s “grace.”

This is one place in Hegel’s argument where we can identify a definite reference to a specific author. Kant makes this appeal to the traditional theological concept of “grace” in his *Religion*; it was in Book I of the *Religion* that the traditional concept of “original sin” was given a rational interpretation, and a recognized status in the theology of pure reason. Kant wrote quite a lot about “grace” as the divine pardon accorded to a moral conversion. The crucial passage is the following:

That what in our earthly life (and possibly at all future times and in all worlds) is ever only a *becoming* (namely, becoming a man well-pleasing to God) should be credited to us exactly as if we were already in full possession of it—to this we really have no legal claim, [Footnote: But only a *capability of receiving*, which is all that we, for our part, can credit to ourselves; and a superior’s decree conferring a good for which the subordinate possesses nothing but the (moral) receptivity for it is called *grace*] that is, so far as we know ourselves (through that empirical self-knowledge which yields no immediate insight into the disposition but merely permits of an estimate based upon our actions); and so the accuser within us would be more likely to propose a judgment of condemnation. Thus the decree is always one of grace alone . . .”²²

- 11./609. I do still know what duty *is*. Yet I expect God, the perfect moral self, to give me what I don't deserve—at least proportionately to my *trying* to deserve it.

Kant's conception of "merit,"²³ (the sincere desire and effort to be "pleasing to God") provides the second, comprehensive, inversion of moral self-certainty. The surrender of the standard of holiness to God is the first (or simple) inversion of the moral standpoint. But the self that knows itself to be in sin (because of its clear knowledge of duty) and seeks sincerely to deserve the grace of pardon, by its inevitably limited and imperfect moral effort, both is and is not moral. It *is* moral in a new way. It is an "imperfect" moral consciousness, but the opposed moments of its unhappiness are not absolutely sundered (as they were in the pre-rational Unhappy Consciousness). My knowledge of duty is still mine, even though the reality of the Holy Will is in the Beyond, just as it was in the Unhappy Consciousness. I give judgment upon myself as my own accuser before the Divine Judge. But I ask for pardon, pleading that the sinner has done his best, and that this effort should be accepted in lieu of the full performance of duty. In the context of the original certainty of duty as the true self, this procedure is quite outrageous. But we shall see eventually that it is the foundation of Hegel's own conception of Forgiveness as the final advent of Absolute Spirit. It is good to keep this in mind as we follow the ironic reduction of the moral standpoint to immoral absurdity by its own standards which soon follows.

- 12./610. The moral consciousness is now complete. It represents the holy will (as God); but at the same time, it is its own imperfect will that is actual; and both the actuality and the represented ideal count in turn as what is in and for itself.

At this point the moral world-view is complete because it is evident to the moral consciousness that the two "sides" (universal duty and singular actuality) are really moments of one actual unity. But that unity is a contradiction, not yet a unified "self"; and it is this contradictory unity that the moral world-view itself comes to be aware of in the final stage of its development.

We already know what the contradiction is, for it is directly involved in the fact that the imperfect moral consciousness both is and is not moral. On the one hand it posits its standard of "holiness" in the postulate of God. For as Kant says "holiness . . . is a perfection of which no rational being in the world of sense is at any time capable."²⁴ As other than the actual thinker, the ideal of the holy will is only a *Vorstellung*. It is a moment in the "being in-and-for-itself" of the finite moral consciousness. But it is a vitally necessary moment, to be sure, for without it that actual consciousness would simply be "not-moral."

The presence of that representation of perfection makes the not-moral consciousness itself able to count as "perfect." But this possibility of counting as perfect depends upon the opposite perspective in which the *Vorstellung* is taken objectively. God is postulated as what is in and for itself, and my imperfect moral effort is received by him with the grace of pardon, so that it is not any longer in conflict with the moral law. In itself and for itself too (since I am my own accuser)

the imperfect consciousness does not satisfy the standard of duty. But this imperfect consciousness is reduced to a mere moment in my plea for pardon on the ground that I repent and will try ever harder. Thus it is my “moral disposition” that “no longer contradicts morality.”

- 13./611. So moral consciousness does not develop its own concept. Instead, it postulates a world. It does not recognize the contradiction either formally or materially. It knows only the abstract essence of Duty as itself, and thinks its world without comprehending it. Its moral world, like the natural world, is not transparent to it, not its own self-substance. Its own objective actuality is not essential; but it is the freedom of an embodied thinking so it imagines its own being, in a world to which thought gives being. In the last part of its “intuition” the moral consciousness admits this.

Hegel now explains the contradictoriness of the Moral World-View as a direct result of the “estrangement” of Thought from Being. He will, subsequently, develop all the “contradictions” in it, even though he has treated it as “complete” in paragraph 610 without suggesting that it is already contradictory (and I have tried to show how it can be consistently interpreted). His eventual object is to use the consistent interpretation for a rational Faith that can finally be turned into knowledge. The aim of his dialectical criticism at this point is to shear away all the postulational rubbish that is produced by a “thinking” rather than a “comprehending” interpretation of it.

The moral self does not know that in its postulation it is developing its own concept of its self. The self-certainty with which the “absolutely free” consciousness sublated the patriot-traitor riding to the guillotine in the Place de la Révolution, has been replaced now by the trembling hope of God’s “grace,” and the daily struggle to “deserve” it. The moral self “keeps rolling forward” (*fortwälzt*) on its immortal path of moral improvement without any consciousness either of the “*Gegensatz* on the side of the form” (i.e. the ambivalence regarding what is “in and for itself,” and what is a “moment”) or of “the *Gegensatz* on the side of the content” (i.e. the contradiction between “holiness” and “actual morality”). On its strenuous (and endless) road it knows absolutely (but also exclusively) that the pure essence of Duty is its true self. This was its starting point, and the moral world-view is now complete, and has become a self-maintaining *Gestalt* because we have returned to that starting point. The meritorious disposition “does not contradict morality.”

The endless road which it repentantly travels is all of it projected by its own thought as a world of being. Unlike simple Faith, the moral consciousness does know that it is thinking. But it does not know how to express the fact that what it thinks is “necessarily true,” except in terms of the ordinary standard by which we determine the truth of our thoughts. We ask whether the thought as a universal proposition corresponds with the singular images of our sense experience; does it agree with the actual representations of the world that we have? By this criterion the necessary truths of moral experience must be representations of another “world”; so we postulate that supersensible world accordingly.

This “otherness” of the truths of moral Reason is the “absolute otherness” in which the finite rational self must recognize its own self, if the truth is to become self-transparent as “Science” (par. 26). At the moment we have only reached rational Faith not rational self-knowledge. We are so far from self-knowledge at the moment, that the empirical self is admitted to be just as opaque to pure Insight as material nature. One of Kant’s basic arguments for the hope of grace, is precisely that we cannot be sure that we do not fully deserve it. He says very properly, “the accuser within us would be *more likely* to propose a judgment of condemnation.” But it is possible that, in the presence of an intellectual intuition of our noumenal selves, the accuser would vanish. The knowledge of this “proper actuality” of the finite self is “not essential.” This empirical self is part of the order of nature. That order is posited as “free,” just as soon as the freedom of thought from it is posited: the Kantian noumenal and phenomenal worlds are the final shape of “estrangement.” But then the world of freedom, the world where I may legitimately *hope* “to know even as also I am known,” must be postulated on the same model. It is postulated, that is to say, as “unknown.” All that we can do (and are doing) is imagine it.

We shall soon see that this necessary opacity of what is supposed to be purely “intelligible” puts the sincerity of the moral consciousness—the very thing that has emerged as the absolute truth of its self-certainty—in question. All who take Freud seriously will agree that Kant’s insistence that we have no intuitive insight into our empirical selves is one of his great insights (though he was not, of course, the first to have it). But if we do not know our intelligible world—if we can only *imagine* it, and the self that is in it—why should we postulate it?

(d) *Postulational Idealism (Fichte’s Vocation of Man)*

- 14./612. .If we regard this “thought-world” as the very *concept* of the moral self-consciousness we get a new shape for the exposition. The first position is “There is an *actual* moral self-consciousness”; and it is the knowledge that only what accords with duty is essentially actual. Its objective therefore is that any non-essential actuality should be brought into harmony with morality. But the morally actual self-consciousness is not itself this almighty Concept. That is a Beyond; it subsists outside consciousness but only in thought.

Before the essential insincerity of this postulational procedure can be considered, however, the procedure itself must be turned round into an exposition of the moral world-intuition as a self-concept. This was the logical advance that Fichte made. But Hegel does not follow any actual exposition that Fichte gave us of his own views. The requirement of methodical continuity imposed by our scientific aim prevents this; and our strictly observational stance allows for the arrangement of the data in the *order* that the method dictates. That is part of our work as scientists. Hegel has already presented the Kantian position in accordance with the logical progression of the In-itself, the For-itself, and the In-and-for-itself. Now this same order imposes itself as we move from the critical realism of Kant’s postulational thought, to the critical idealism of Fichte’s practical “knowledge.”²⁵ This is

not a logical step forward in the Science of Experience. It is only the proper "result" of the dialectic of postulation. It will be this unified self that goes through "displacement."

When we begin with moral self-certainty in this Fichtean perspective, we have to take the "primacy of the practical" with mortal earnestness. Far from being simply "there" independent of consciousness, and hence "free" to be as it will, the order of nature is posited by the absolute Self for its own moral purpose. What is absolutely first is the "actual moral self-consciousness." The natural order is nothing but the repertory of means through which this self-consciousness actualizes itself. "The world is my duty" and the "final purpose" of the world is the moralization of all actuality. We cannot now distinguish between the postulate of the harmony of morality and happiness in the world, and that of the harmony of Reason and inclination within the self, because the realistic distinction between self and world has been overcome, and when we speak of the "moral view of the world" we know that we are discussing why the moral self must exist for itself as a natural order of "things" and "other selves." We are no longer caught up in the dualism of Cartesian thought, for which there are thinking and extended substances; we are doing the new Cartesian "metaphysics" in which there is only the "being of thinking."

The *systematic* importance of this transition for Hegel is enormous. His whole "speculative" standpoint rests on this Fichtean unification of the natural and the moral world-order. From this moment onwards we are truly in the "kingdom of the Spirit," and Spirit (as the community of moral selves) is knowingly the sovereign of its own kingdom. This is where Reason comes properly to the "certainty" of "being all reality"; but at the same time, the achievement of Fichte is a formal one only. As a concrete achievement of the World-Spirit, his work cannot rank with that of the two giants of "thought"—Descartes and Kant—to whom Hegel accords the honor of mentioning them by name. At the beginning of chapter V Hegel pays tribute to Fichte (without naming him) by presenting the world of Bacon and Descartes in the conceptual frame of Fichte's "Idealism" (in spite of the fact that Fichte was a complete nonentity in "natural philosophy"). Here, where it is the relative achievements of Kant and Fichte in successive generations that is at issue, he exalts Kant by expounding the Moral World-View completely in its "thought-form," before going through the Fichtean position rapidly in what he distinguishes as "another shape of its exposition."

The advance is just the formal transformation of "critical realism" into "critical idealism." The qualification "critical" reflects the fact that the finite moral consciousness which is actual in our experience does not have the actual "might" to realize the moral purpose (which it can only imagine). In the *Vocation of Man*, the "Self-Concept" becomes the rational foundation of our moral Faith. But even for Fichte's idealism "God" is a separate postulate. We live and move in Him, but he transcends us, and we must have faith in him as a transcendent power. In our thought of him, the unity of self-consciousness with its posited object is present; but for us it is only present in thought, or as the represented object of our faith.

- 15./613. So, secondly, the moral self admits that “a morally *complete* self-consciousness does not exist”; and since what is moral must be complete, the second proposition is: “There is nothing morally actual.”

The formal move from Kant’s moral realism to Fichte’s moral idealism does not change our actual situation significantly; it only changes the way we talk in certain respects. The moral goal of our life is beyond us, and we have to trust in God for it. Whatever our formally absolute “knowledge” may be, the truth of our experience is that in the actual world there is no complete moral self-consciousness. Only the divine self who posits the natural world could be that. So beside the formal philosophical knowledge that our absolute consciousness of duty gives us, we must set the flat contradiction offered by our experience as finite: “There is no self in our world who is morally actual.” There is a subtle difference between Hegel’s two statements of the second moral proposition. We go from “there is no *morally complete actual* self-consciousness” to “there is *nothing morally actual*.” We should probably read the second formula as “there is *no morally actual* [self-consciousness],” both because it is natural in the context and because a flat contradiction of “the first proposition” is obviously intended. The only “things” in this idealistic universe are “selves” anyway—Kant’s problematic *Ding an sich* has disappeared. So the grammatical question is not important. What the dropping of the word “complete” (*vollendet*)²⁶ signifies is the move from the noumenal standpoint to the finite empirical one. At the noumenal level, the moral community of selves are united in God.²⁷

- 16./614. Thus, finally, the actual unity of the moral self becomes for it an ideal to be achieved, a *Sollen*.

Because of the contradiction that is now apparent, we have to say that the finite moral agent is only implicitly moral, not actually so. But, in possessing the knowledge of what it is “in itself” (the absolute knowledge of the moral law and of the “primacy of the practical”) the finite self is completely rational. That is to say, the moral self really knows that it is *one* self, united with all rational selves in the moral world-order. Fichte does not share Kant’s “Freudian” doubts. The relation of the finite empirical self to that truly absolute standpoint is the relation of “what is” (which is intuitively known) to “what ought to be” (also intuitively known). We expressed the status of “what is,” earlier, in the slogan “the world is my duty.” We can express “my duty” as the comprehensive standpoint of the *Sollen* by saying: To be the actual moral self is my *Bestimmung*; it is my definition of my own goal, that to which the voice of Reason calls me, or my *destination*.

- 17./615. In this goal both self-conscious actuality and duty are sublated moments, since they are not separate and free (as they were defined to be). They are “objects” for each other with distinct content, but their interaction is only represented in a higher consciousness. Thus the not-moral actuality, being raised up in thought, is taken by that other to be moral.

The Kantian presentation of the Moral World-View is in the mode of Faith; that of Fichte is in the mode of pure Insight. This is what makes the Fichtean account formally so important for Hegel; but we can see here that it is still the matter of Kant's theory that has to be expressed in the Fichtean conceptual structure.

In the first position the rational self-consciousness is *actually moral*, i.e., it is identified with the knowledge of Duty; in the second position, self-consciousness is identified with the actual self of experience, and the pure knowledge of Duty belongs to the absolute self. At this stage both identifications are "posited as sublated moments." But their unity is "synthetic,"²⁸ because they are separately represented. This separate representation of the terms as "singulars" goes back to the initial thesis that the physical and moral worlds are free from one another. That position is denied by Fichte's idealism; we now have a world of appearance (the finite selves) on one side, and a noumenal world (the absolute Self) on the other. But the interaction between them is only *vorgestellt*; it is the noumenal world (the moral world-order) that is actual. All of the finite selves are moments of the absolute Self; and their world of physical appearance is likewise just a moment in the coming to be of that absolute community.

There are two perspectives on the finite self. In the world of appearance it is "unfulfilled," and actually not-moral; but in its pure intuition of the moral world-order it knows that its *Bestimmung* is to be "fulfilled" (*vollendet*). As pure thinking, it is already united (or identical) with God; there is no *separate* divine consciousness, but only the consciousness that every member of the Moral World-Order can have (and *does* have when conscious of Duty).²⁹ Hegel interprets the transition from empirical to intellectual intuition in terms of the reading he has already given of Kant's theory of the moral disposition praying for "grace." I am sure this was *not* how Fichte saw it (though I have never been sure just how he did see it); but Hegel does not care about that, because this reading of Fichte's Moral World-Order is the one that will allow him to return to the actual world (the imperfect, merely phenomenal world) as the true actuality of the Moral World-Order, without any need for the "postulate of immortality." Any other interpretation of Fichte is covered by the blanket complaint that Fichte's philosophy is a theory of the *Ought*, because the standard of "what is" is taken from "pure thinking" and does not properly embody the "actuality" of our experience as flesh and blood.

When the transition to the noumenal standpoint is interpreted as a "forgiving" of the "*actually not moral*" self, "because it is equally pure thinking and raised above its actuality," we can see that Fichte's Moral World-Order really does provide the "Concept of moral self-consciousness itself" (par. 612) as Hegel conceived it. It is only in the "representation" of the religious consciousness that the "forgiving" of the finite consciousness (the judgment through which it is "accepted as fully valid") comes from "another." God is simply the "absolute Self" of the repentant sinner; and in the moral "disposition" that is repentant for its inevitable finitude, the "first proposition" ("that there *is* a moral self-consciousness") is reinstated. This enormous debt to Fichte is far more important than any misrepresentation of Fichte's actual views. Hegel never claims to be representing Fichte's

views; and for the experiential foundation of his Science it is enough that *we* can clearly see what has been done. The Kantian wine has been poured into the Fichtean bottle. Fichte's own wine may have to be matured differently; but no violence is done either to the wine or to the bottle that are actually used. That "bottle" is the *Vocation of Man* of 1800.

Of course, the debt to Kant is much more important. It is vital for us to recognize that without Kant's formulation of the standpoint of rational Faith (in the *Religion*) Hegel's return to actual experience from Fichte's moral Insight would not be possible. The two standpoints have to be combined in order to produce the speculative interpretation of forgiveness. It seems clear that Hegel came to that initially by thinking *against* Kant as he meditated on the Gospels at Frankfurt. But his conceptual conquest of the leap from philosophy to Religion involved in his Frankfurt view, was achieved through the formulation of Kant's *Religion* in Fichtean terms.

VI C(b): Displacement

Already in the first phase of the Moral World-View we noted the analogy between the evolution of this position and that of Perception. The finite moral will and the infinite Holy Will changed sides in the matter of responsibility for unity and multiplicity like the perceiving self and the object (pars. 605, 607). Now we shall develop the reconciled concept of the Moral World-View into a contradictory judgment by exploiting this primitive Gegensatz within it.

In this repetition of the self-deception (Täuschung) of Perception, we shall be organizing the motion of the Concept, and not simply observing the movement it has already made; for as far as I know, no one had publicly attacked the postulational link between morality and religion in the way that Hegel does here. But we have acted in this way before, and we shall not be violating Hegel's method as long as we do not ascribe any shifts to the practical faith that cannot be found in the rationalizations typically offered in its defense. We do nothing except arrange the data in a logically effective order.³⁰ The truth to be brought out is that rational Faith is not Reason, but exactly what Freud called "rationalization"; and Verstellung is the technique of shifting one's ground by which the believer preserves the supposedly rational right to believe in "postulates" which do not have a necessary connection with experience at all.³¹ If this shifting does occur we can properly claim to observe it, even though no one has pointed it out previously.

(e) The Overcoming of Postulation

- 1./616. Consciousness begets the moral world-view consciously. It is not alien or unconscious. But it posits the objective truth *outside* itself. This positing is for the sake of consciousness.

The first paragraph of the new section establishes the observational basis of the critique that is to come. On the one hand, rational postulation is a conscious act.

But how can we posit an “objective essence” (the moral world-order) by simply “begetting” it from our own thought? Is not this just what Kant decisively overthrew in the famous case of Anselm’s Ontological Proof? Not quite, because the argument does not depend on “pure thought” here, but on our practical experience. So the argument from our moral experience to the existence of an unseen moral world-order is more like the traditional “cosmological argument” which posits an infinite author for the fragmentary natural order that is visible to us. Obviously the argument is more plausible if on the basis of our finite experience of our “selves” we postulate an infinite extension of that selfhood. That is why it is the Fichtean moral world-order that must be critically exposed.

The Fichtean interpretation of the “primacy of practical Reason” is the most extreme form of moral self-certainty; for he makes the *postulates* into absolutely necessary assumptions (not subjective postulates that a moral reasoner *may* adopt if he wishes).³² On the Fichtean view there can be no genuine science or rationality at all unless the postulates are accepted. But at the same time Fichte’s view is the most plausible and consistent, because it is *speculative*. The rational self seems here to come to the peace and satisfaction of self-recognition that we are searching for. Fichte states the concept of God as the spiritual unity of his community; the language of piety, which is *sub*-rational in Kant’s universe of the enlightened understanding, is recognized by Fichte as the discourse of a *higher* form of Reason. So Fichte’s moral error is more dangerous than Kant’s (in the very same measure that it is more crass). According to Fichte, God is the actual moral self in us; but at the same time he remains the almighty power who is outside and beyond us, and we can be perfectly confident of the moral good-will of that transcendent almighty power. The being that subsists in and for itself is posited as subsisting both on our account (as moral self-consciousness) and through us (as *his* self-consciousness).

- 2./617. So it is a “nest of thoughtless contradictions” as Kant said.³³ Consciousness just jumps back and forth from one position to its opposite; and it is quite conscious of doing so. It confesses that it is not serious about any of them [compare par. 131].

Not many world-historical individuals are mentioned by name in the *Phenomenology*. But Kant shares with Plato the distinction of being mentioned twice. Both times (the first was in the Preface, see par. 50) he is the object of negative criticism. This is especially obvious here, where his own verdict on the Cosmological Proof is given by Hegel against the Moral Proof. But each time there is an unmistakable intention to give due recognition to his enormous achievement, and his vital contribution to the project of turning philosophy into the Science of Experience. In his critique of the empirical proof of the existence of God Kant was faithful to that project; in developing what everyone tended to call “the moral proof” he was falling away from it. Hegel is here calling the Kantian spirit to witness against the Kantian letters.

Hegel’s attack on the practical “nest of thoughtless contradictions” does not resemble Kant’s simple listing of the mistakes that he finds in the Cosmological Argument. Instead the moral consciousness is accused of shifting its ground in

order to avoid the contradictions that it actually commits. The moral consciousness knows what it is doing, and it needs to make contradictory assumptions in order to maintain its postulated world; the conclusion to be drawn is that it is *not sincere*. The postulated world-order is not really needed. It will be interesting to see what sort of determinately negated result this produces.

- 3./618. There *is* actual moral consciousness. This is initially taken as self-evident. The harmony of morality and nature is postulated because it is not present. A moral agent *is* present but actuality is not in harmony with it. The moral consciousness *acts*; and so the harmony is actualized, and the consciousness of virtue is its own reward. The postulate was not serious. It is *not* needed.

Hegel has invoked the shade of Kant. But it is the identifiably Fichtean position of the “last part of the moral world-view” that is the object of attack. This helps to confirm our claim that the Moral World-View is Kant’s Faith poured into Fichte’s conceptual Insight. Hegel’s procedure is methodically “necessary” in any case. In Fichte’s view the self comes back into possession of its “world”; the postulated world—and especially the “holy lawgiver”—were the simple inversion of “moral self-certainty.” The “last part of the Moral World-View” (par. 611) is needed in order to put “moral self-certainty” firmly back into its position of primacy; and this “new shape of its exposition” is also where “postulation” is taken seriously. It is the method of postulation that is the target of logical attack here.

We begin, therefore, with the “actual moral consciousness” of paragraph 612. It could be challenged directly because in paragraph 615 it was shown to belong to the noumenal world and so to be only imaginary. But Hegel prefers not to attack it directly, because he claims that Fichte’s moral idealism is “dogmatic.” The actual morality of the Fichtean self-intuitive moral self is an assumption that is simply taken for granted. Fichte’s moral idealism is the dogmatic shape of the Kantian view—a shape in which the formal move from realistic thought to idealistic conception is made, but nothing else is changed. This dogmatism makes the shiftiness of Fichte’s argument plain, whereas Kant’s “critical realism” is so deeply impregnated with theoretical scepticism that he never asserts any of the positions of the moral consciousness categorically at all. One can drive Kant’s critical rationalism into an explicit “Philosophy of As If”; but one cannot make it fall down under its own weight.³⁴

It is Fichte’s categorical claim that the whole critical philosophy must be placed in the context of the intuitive self-certainty of the dutiful self that comes to grief here. When we drag it through the “experience” of its own postulational thinking, the moral self-intuition is shown not to be an “intuition” at all. By dragging it through the whole experience (rather than by expanding directly upon the internal contradiction that has already been indicated) Hegel can get a “determinate negation” that makes further progress possible.

The intuitively self-certain Fichtean moral self makes its first postulate: its morality actually exists in the moral world-order; and it acts, because that is its essential nature. This action is the manifestation of the noumenal self in the phe-

nominal world. The placement of “actuality” is thereby “displaced” (*verstellt*). For, after all, public success is not what is important. The self knows itself; and it knows that it has done its best. This first displacement of “actuality” establishes the necessary actuality, in experience, of the harmony that is supposed to be “postulated” in the noumenal world. The moral self is perfectly satisfied with itself; its “felicity” is completely present.

Consider, for example, the righteous attitude that Fichte exhibited throughout the *Atheismusstreit*. He was called an “atheist”; but did he ever for one moment suffer misgivings about the possible justice of the accusation? How could he? He was always more obviously “God-intoxicated” than Spinoza (upon whose perfect sobriety the epithet, bestowed so enthusiastically by Novalis, sits rather uncomfortably). It is precisely Fichte’s “God-intoxication” that obliges us to say that for him the “postulate” is not necessary. The harmony is experienced in fact; to speak of it as *postulated* is a pretence. The students with their duelling clubs, and the other professors with their obstinate intellectual prejudices, may have been far removed from blessedness; but Fichte was as much in the presence of God as he ever could be. If there is still a veil of some kind between him and the Kingdom of God, it is one that the Kingdom of God itself requires; and we shall uncover the necessity for it as we go further in our exploration of this world where all of the assumptions, arguments and postulates are only pretences.

- 4./619. The dissonance between “ought” and “is” is therefore not serious. Action is what counts. But no; for it is only one single act, and the goal of Reason is the establishment of moral world-order, so we never really get forward. But no again, of course we do, for it is my duty now that matters. The laws of nature cause me to fail? Oh no, for it is my virtuous intent that is my duty. But still it is acting and the wholeness of the world-order that matters.

Fichte’s conscience is clear; his action in the phenomenal world agrees perfectly with the world-order of Reason. But the happy consciousness of what he has already done is momentary; we can never seriously say “*Now* I am blessed,” because there is always so much more to do. The dialectic of sense-certainty repeats itself in the world of moral certainty. The *Now* “is and is not,” because it is *by not being*. The moral self is like Faust; it cannot “bid the flying moment tarry.” Some observers thought (I know not with what justice) that Fichte might have kept his chair at Jena, if he had not brought the students down upon him by attacking their duelling fraternities; but that had to happen. Winning the argument with the professors was only one step in the moral transformation of the phenomenal world.³⁵ The transformation itself is, in principle, incomplete. No matter how much good we actually do, the world remains essentially nothing but an infinite complex of moral problems. The perfect “harmony” which is the *allgemeine Beste* is never completed; so it is as if nothing “good” is ever really done, because the moral situation is always in principle unchanged.³⁶

But that claim is absurd, because I am “making progress” towards the goal here and now. My duty, as I see it, is what concerns me; so I must not say that “nothing

is done,” just because I cannot do everything. Jena (professors and students together) was too much for Fichte; he found himself obliged to leave.³⁷ But he went confidently on his way to the next task. One can always look at any moral problem either way, according to whether harmony or dissonance—satisfaction or a new challenge—is what is wanted at the moment. Thus I can always give up on the phenomenal world, and insist on my own unity with God; and when I shift back to this position after a practical defeat in the outer world, it is not the *same* position as it was initially. It is less optimistic, but it is inwardly deepened by the experience.

The deepening comes from the awareness that the actual transformation of the natural order is essential to the moral order. When we face a moral defeat, we can say that actuality as nature has “its own laws,” which frustrate our attempt to realize the moral order in the visible world of nature. But then, by making “pure duty” all that matters (the “essence” as Hegel puts it) we cease to be serious about fulfilment (*Vollbringung*). For the fulfilment of “pure duty” is its actualization in the material world of singular things (which is the direct opposite of the purity of thought, and the universality of duty). So the retreat into the inner sense of a dutiful union with God must again be displaced in favor of Kant’s first formulation of the categorical imperative. Here the “harmony of morality with nature” is stated as a duty: “Act as if the maxim of your action were supposed to become through your will a *universal law of nature*.”³⁸

- 5./620. But if it is this world-order that is essential, then morality is not what matters most, after all; for in the ideal world-order, natural inclination and duty coincide. At that point there is no action (no taking sides). Thus, the moral goal is that there should be no moral action.

When we are faced with Kant’s first formula the self-affirmative aspect of moral action has been sublated altogether. If the highest good were really achieved, if there were no veil between the “knowledge” and the “faith” of the moral self-consciousness, then the situation would become radically *anti*-moral. In the Garden of Eden, all “action” (all striving against the way things spontaneously are) is disobedience to God; and the same would be true again in Heaven. So, by our first cycle of shifting we have come to see how radical the paradox is. Moral action, as infinite self-improvement, moves towards an ideal limit at which any action would become immoral. The absolute goal of action is that it should not merely become unnecessary, but *wrong*.

- 6./621. The cycle is one in which each stage sublates the seriousness of the previous one. There is a series of displacements. And if the goal were to be reached, moral action would cease.

We have now reached the point where the dogmatic hypothesis that “moral consciousness is actual” must be replaced by the hypothesis that it is only a project to be realized, it is “what ought to be.” Having got back to the Garden of Eden we have understood that the Fall is the necessary presupposition of the salvation that we seek.

Hegel drives this home by summing up the progress by which we reached Eden. He gives a simplified version in which the *crucial* step of paragraph 619 is identified. But I shall use what he here leaves out, in order to progress to the next stage.

First we said that the moral Eden must be postulated. But as soon as we began to act, we realized that we were already there—and talking to the Lord God. But that, we said when we thought again, is a mirage, an Eden of this moment, and of this act only. We are really in the wilderness and the Promised Land is always just as far off as it was, no matter what we do. We can see it, but we cannot reach it. Then we gave this position up in its turn, because the moral life is lived in *this* moment, and we must take this moment seriously, and not dismiss the experience of it as a mirage. So we accepted our exile from Eden, with the sorrowful admission that the Promised Land must remain where it is, and always where we are not, because if we were *in* it, it could not be our *goal*. As I said, this anticipates the next step; at the moment we have only recognized that if we say, with Thornton Wilder's George Brush, that "Heaven's my destination," we are saying that the goal of finite rationality is to blot itself out. George Brush is aiming not to be George Brush any more.

But the movement is a "forward rolling" sequence (*fortwälzen*) and it does not stop at this point. The next move is obviously to say (with R. L. Stevenson, and, in Hegel's world, with Lessing) that "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive."³⁹ Kant and Fichte were *not* in fact serious about Paradise. But they *were* serious about the journey.

- 7./622. This sublation of activity must be displaced too. Moral action is the essence so there must always be a natural world to conquer; but moral *action* must be perfect (harmony of duty and sensibility). So the purposes of sensible life have to be reinstated. They are not to be suppressed, but to be in accordance with Reason; and in moral action they are so by definition. But the sensible impulse of nature is a real motive, and morality is not really the angle of inclination for inclinations; so the harmony is only a postulate. Even in the postulate, its fulfilment has to be displaced to infinity. Perfection must be given up because morality would be lost in it. Morality is both the activity of the pure purpose, and the consciousness of its self-purifying struggle to rise above sense.

The sequence we have gone through is a complete phenomenological motion. The postulate is sublated in action; the finite action is sublated in the *goal* (which is the postulate *fully* realized). But the defenders of the moral view were firmly agreed that the direct realization of the goal at this primary level *could not be* the true goal of moral Reason. The "*as if*" in Kant's formula ("Act *as if* the maxim of your action were *supposed* to become . . .") is crucial. It is not the perfect organization of the natural world that is the real goal of moral action because everyone understands that "felicity" means "*moral* satisfaction." Rather it is the perfect development of every moral self that is the goal; and for the fulfilment of that purpose, the natural world needs to remain a problem (and to be progressively but endlessly turned into an instrument of moral fulfilment). To put it another way, Kant and Fichte believed *not* in the "Kingdom of Heaven" but in the "Kingdom of God."

This provides a necessary transition from the first postulate to the second. For what we are saying in this shift of position is that it is not an observable harmony of the two world-orders that is important, but the self-ordering activity of the moral self. If this is set up as the true goal then it becomes *necessary* that no matter what progress towards moral harmony we make inwardly, the world as a whole must always be out of order. That is its (strictly instrumental) role.

But even the perfection of the moral self as an integrated will to put the world in order involves the same paradoxical unacceptability as a goal. Its achievement would annihilate the necessity for any *moral* striving (even if the inexhaustible problems of natural existence always left us with something to do).

The pattern of the dialectic here is somewhat different from that involved in the evolution of the first postulate. The moral agent starts by cancelling all of the goals of the sensible organism within the *pure* goal of Reason.⁴⁰ But this cancellation is displaced as soon as she acts. For there must be some sensible impulse or inclination that is validated by the moral decision and action. Thus, to take Kant's favorite case of deciding not to tell a lie for one's own advantage,⁴¹ I am still at liberty not to answer at all—and I may be silent for any of a great variety of reasons, moral or utilitarian. So if I *do* answer, it is not *simply* respect for duty that is involved in my truth-telling. I must have a more concrete purpose of self-affirmation in my action.

Kant would be in difficulty, certainly, if he did not grant the "morality" of Zeno of Elea, who is reported to have died under torture, refusing to name his fellow-conspirators in a plot against the local tyrant.⁴² On the other side Charlotte Corday's motive in proudly acknowledging her guilt at her trial was plainly not simply respect for the truth. She wanted to be a "martyr," a witness to her political ideal. Yet if Kant says—as I think he might—that her truth-telling was therefore "not moral," we can face him with the paradox that by making her *non-moral* motive so plain, Charlotte Corday was telling the whole truth about as completely as it is possible to tell it. In effect, her declaration was: I will be the only witness that you need, and that not just because it is my duty to the court, and I would disdain to tell a lie, but because it is my duty to the Nation to tell the whole truth about my motive as well.⁴³ She was an ideal utilitarian, and her "duty to the Nation" was determined for her by a purpose that overrode "respect for humanity" in the person of Marat; but if we ignore that and treat her as a Fichtean for this moment in court, how can a defender of the moral world-view either fault the morality of her confession, or deny that in her telling of the *whole* truth, *more* than a pure respect for the law was involved?⁴⁴

Hegel calls this self-affirmation "the middle or the means," without which the "pure consciousness" (of Duty) could not become actual; he clearly means to affirm that duty is the "determining ground" of the moral choice; but he insists that "choosing" involves more than the sense of duty, because action-choices are made in the sensible world. The moral consciousness recognizes this; and therefore it shifts from the first position (that inclination must be suppressed—*unterdrückt*) to the more moderate view that inclination must be in measured accord (*gemäss*) with Reason; and this is not a postulated harmony, but just what is actually brought

about by moral agency. The inclination (say Charlotte Corday's *patriotic* inclination) is in perfect accord with duty.

This position will not do either. It fits Charlotte Corday, who deliberately sought her situation (though she did protest at some imposed affronts to her maiden modesty). But it does not fit Zeno, who cannot have had any "satisfaction" in being tortured. There are many moral situations (especially those involving the virtue of "courage") which essentially require the painful sacrifice of natural comfort and welfare. But the impulse to avoid bodily suffering cannot be moulded into a natural "concordance" with the moral will; or perhaps I should rather say that in so far as physical pain can come to be sought and endured willingly, this "concordance" appears to enlightened Reason as a spiritual sickness, and hence as being immoral as well as unnatural. The moral degradation of the natural self in this way is the worst extreme of the Unhappy Consciousness.

So, when Hegel says now that "sensibility is a nature which has its own laws and impulse—springs implicit in it; hence morality cannot be in earnest about being the mainspring of impulses, the angle of inclination for inclinations," he expects instant agreement from the defenders of the ideal of moral harmony. The living body of the moral agent remains an object of moral respect; it cannot simply be reduced to an instrument of moral purpose—it has moral claims of its own. So the goal of moral action has not been adequately formulated as moral self-affirmation in the sensible world; again the goal must be displaced. It has become once more a harmony that cannot in fact be morally guaranteed; it must, after all, be "postulated."

But this displacement is a failure in its turn. For when we imagine the actual achievement of the postulated harmony, active morality disappears. There does not always have to be a conflict between moral will and natural inclination; but if it never occurs, then the self-positing of moral will in its independence cannot occur. The moral purpose needs to oppose itself to all others (at least theoretically) in order to be conscious of itself as "pure." But in a truly holy condition, even that theoretical self-knowledge would become an act of Satanic pride.

The consciousness of rising above the natural impulses of sensibility is essential to morality; so the moral self cannot be serious about the postulate of achieving a perfect psychological harmony any more than it was serious about making the moral law continuous with natural law. In fact, the second postulate turns back into the first one, as soon as we have to admit that our organic natural embodiment is an object of moral respect. Again we must shift to the postulate of an "infinite progress" in which the two sides of our being are "synthetically" combined as a perpetual alternation of opposition and reconciliation.

(f) *The Non-Moral Middle*

- 8./623. This intermediate state is what really counts, therefore. This cannot even be an advance in morality (for it involves a continuous diminution of it). But Morality cannot be more or less anyway, since the moral purpose is pure.

What we are now saying is that the condition of being between the successful “activity of the pure purpose” (where we experience the harmony of will and inclination) and the struggling awareness of a natural antithesis needing to be transcended and conquered, is the true moral goal. For this “in-betweenness,” this cycling from perfection to imperfection and back again, is the only way in which morality can be both “what is” and “what ought to be” at the same time (the state of being that is a postulate, and the postulate that is a state of being). It is the “infinite progress” in morality that is its final end. Now we have a visible contradiction, because the “infinite progress” is only progressive in reference to a “final end” that must not be reached. In other words, the moral standpoint is the standpoint of the *bad* infinite. “Coming closer” to the goal of morality means continually lessening the need for (and consequent existence of) morality; it is only because we know that the progress will actually be infinite, that we do not see that if it were a real progress it would also be a diminution (a loss of real morality for the future). The fact that the goal is (and must remain) infinitely removed means that the progress is not real. There is always the same infinite distance to travel.

Behind the paradox that the imagining of Heaven abolishes the moral life, there lies the logical fact that Heaven cannot really be imagined at all.⁴⁵ To take an example from the economic sphere (where quantification is natural) the fact that we have already achieved the outlawing of child-labor, and a forty hour week for adults, is not morally significant to those who are campaigning now for equal pay for equal work, or an economic system that secures full employment; and these are goals that can be quantified so that “progress” can be measured. Once we come to the problem of a *just* distribution of economic rewards for labor, or of securing perfect equality of opportunity in the choice of a career, no universally acceptable mathematical model or limit for “progress” can be defined; and if it could, there would still be the problem of whether *merit* should be defined in terms of actual performance rather than in terms of effort and potential.

Should we strive toward the social ideal of “rendering to each her due” (i.e. what she has actually “earned”) or towards that of “from each according to ability, to each according to need” (i.e. what the full development and deployment of ability requires)?⁴⁶ It is the actual dialectic of these conflicting ideals of justice that makes the supposition of an achieved consensus about equality of opportunity, or a just distribution of economic rewards, absurd in the first place. It even renders any permanent consensus about the meaning of “equal pay for equal work” impossible. This is the logical reason why a postulated “harmony between is and ought” cannot count as “absolute knowledge.” The postulated object of knowledge is not knowable at all; it is simply an evasion.

- 9./624. Thus being serious about the middle state is being serious about non-morality. We come back to the first postulate from the other side. Why should happiness be a demand, when it is not deserved? It can only be hoped for as an act of grace. This certainly is immoral, to hope for the irrational.

For Hegel, the sort of analysis that I have just given would be an “external reflection.” He is ready to offer this when no better way is open (e.g. in his use of the example of “property” against Law-Testing Reason). But if the *Gestalt* we are observing can be shown to destroy itself logically in its own evolution, he prefers to let it do so. So he calls the concern with the bad infinite progress a concern with “non-morality” and he lets the position go its way.⁴⁷ The conceptual summation (or “totality”) of the bad infinite progress is the conception of the “moral disposition.” The “worthiness” of this disposition is its pure will as such, its inward intention to resist temptation. This pure intention within the totality of embodied nature (partly disciplined, partly beyond discipline) is now supposed to deserve felicity, not through established merit, but by the free gift of grace on the part of an intuitive intelligence which can comprehend the whole extension of the bad infinite progress.

As I said earlier (par. 609) this is the comprehensive inversion of the moral certainty of Duty. The active self has recognized its failure, but remains sure of its intention; it has become radically unsure of itself, but it trusts absolutely in the other infinite self that truly knows all. In the sequence of actual displacements of the truth or “essence” that the moral consciousness takes to be crucial, this is the first one under which anything like “hypocrisy” (in its ordinary sense) can be comprehended.⁴⁸

Before we consider that extreme, however, we must look for a good paradigm of how the experienced independence of nature forces the moral consciousness to abandon the bad infinite cyclic experience of good works and moral satisfaction (Kant’s *Verdienst der Werke*, the theological “justification by works”) in favor of the surrender of the self-consciously imperfect moral consciousness to a hoped-for “justification by grace” (Kant’s *Verdienst, das uns aus Gnaden zugerechnet wird*).⁴⁹ The case of successful endurance of torture provided a clear example of why Heaven must be “postulated” as a reward for the actively deserving; that of breaking under torture provides an equally clear case of the merit that only a noumenal Judge could assess.

An almost perfect example is provided by Savonarola (as portrayed by George Eliot in *Romola*).⁵⁰ He is not at the level of a strictly moral Faith; but his unclarified Faith is at least partially penetrated by Pure Insight. Thus, he refused to allow the great “trial by fire” in April 1498, when two monks were prepared to walk through a fire, the one testifying that Savonarola was a true prophet, the other that he was a heretic; but he was convinced that God would support him when he came to the torture chamber himself. He found, of course, that he was mistaken, broke quite soon and confessed that his claim to be a prophet was false, before going to the fire himself as a declared heretic on 23 May 1498.

A few days before his death, he retracted his confession and declared that if he was to suffer he would suffer for the truth. He was tortured again, and affirmed his confession again. We can be quite certain that no one who had already experienced his own weakness would go through the trial again, unless he was utterly sincere. So there can be no doubt that in his own mind Savonarola died as a betrayer of the

truth and of God's light; but equally no sincere believer in immortality and the Holy Lawgiver can doubt that he hoped for and received the grace of pardon at the hands of his Judge.⁵¹

About Savonarola's "merit" we need not be sceptical. But once the "moral intention" becomes the absolute criterion of justification we must, it seems, stretch the range of the Divine Mercy to embrace even the lifelong self-deceiver Mr. Bulstrode in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. Mr. Bulstrode—who must count as one of the supreme creations of the moral imagination in fiction—has for some thirty years been a champion of righteousness and good works in the town of Middlemarch. He is a banker, generally respected, though widely disliked for his overbearing insistence that everyone he supports must hold his opinions and live by his standards. But this piously authoritarian mask hides the guilty conscience of one whose fortune derived originally from the "fencing" of stolen goods; and he inherited it from his first wife, by deceiving her into believing that her runaway daughter by a previous marriage was dead. Bulstrode is Hegelian enough to take the public revelation of his secret as God's decisive rejection of the life of service with which he had always comforted his conscience. But his wife forgives him wordlessly—for even to *her* he cannot admit that what the public knows is the simple truth.⁵² And we cannot doubt that in his communings with God, he devoutly—"sincerely" is a radically "shattered" word in Bulstrode's case—hopes for "another chance." Can those who are prepared to postulate the Beyond (as Hegel, George Eliot and I are not) properly deny his claim? It seems to me that they cannot. But we cannot deny that both by Kantian standards and by those of common sense, Bulstrode is a *bad* man.

When Bulstrode, in his habitually self-deceiving way, manages to murder the derelict alcoholic who knows his secret, without consciously admitting to himself that he is doing that, we can say, I think, that he is plainly immoral. But in this paragraph, Hegel calls the "middle state of non-fulfilment" *non-morality* (*Nicht-moralität*) rather than immorality. In paragraph 636 he will say that the "imperfect moral consciousness" is "immoral" because it is "impure." Savonarola, who had as keen a sense of "purity" as anyone ever has had, would agree with this latter verdict. The difference between that context and the present one, as I think, is this: the "imperfect" moral consciousness judges itself with reference to its breaking, its failure to do what it intends, and its actually doing something else. In that perspective it is "immoral." But at the point that we have reached it is the "moral disposition" that counts. This is the constant intention to do right, or the unwavering desire to be "pleasing to God" (as Kant puts it in the *Religion*). Of this one cannot say that it is "immoral." Even the morally repulsive Bulstrode is moral "in his heart" as he might say; and we could perhaps agree, if we could ever find a heart in him, as his wife does.

But this "good heart" is a lot less than the actual moral will. So it is surely correct to call it "not-moral." We may even want to call it "immoral" in its prayer for what it does not deserve. But Hegel's point is that the *thought* (or the dream, or the hope) of arriving at the goal, of being united with God, must always accompany the

agent who thinks in terms of “progress,” or of another chance. Anyone who thinks in these finite terms of “doing better every day”—or even just “doing better next time”—can only have a burdensome conception, or *task*-consciousness, of what she is doing. The reward is necessarily put off; it is somewhere else, at another time. The high consciousness of doing God’s work joyfully and being his true blessed prophet, which we can observe in Savonarola, before he loses popular support and comes to judgment, is not for such a one as this.

Thus there are two kinds of postulants for grace: those who come from the endless road of finite burden-bearing (the road on which the joy is finite too, and the longing for a rest from one’s labors always present); and those who have the ideal vision of true “purity” (and a joy that is Heaven already) but who fail irretrievably to stand the test that they lay upon themselves. The repulsiveness of Bulstrode arises from his being a mixture of the two. He nourishes the conviction that he is in the second class, when in fact he cannot meet the ordinary finite standards of the first.

The important thing about the appeal for felicity as a gift of grace is that it is asking to be “let off,” either released from the treadmill, or simply forgiven for its failure. So “felicity” independent of moral effort is now what counts. The first time we went round the circle, we considered the case of the moral consciousness that is serious about its own actuality, so that this absolute relief from effort is rejected as unsatisfactory as soon as it is understood. But now that the actual moral consciousness has admitted its failure, now that it no longer claims to be “actual,” and has sunk into a “disposition,” there is nothing contradictory about the desire for “simple felicity.” What is problematic at this stage is how anyone can be rightfully excluded. We can only properly wish everyone good luck.

- 10./625. This second side of the moral world-view shows that the assumed disharmony between morality and happiness does not exist. If we are all struggling imperfect sinners, then good or bad fortune is only fortune not injustice. One is only cloaking envy of good luck if one complains morally. One ought to be glad for the lucky.

In paragraph 624 Hegel argues that the transference of moral judgment to the finite level of “improvement” destroys the basis for any absolute use of the predicates “moral” and “immoral.” As a result the position becomes “non-moral” and the real object of concern on the part of the non-morally active consciousness is to escape from its endless task, and to obtain a felicity which it freely admits that it does not deserve. This consciousness is “not-moral,” because it freely and clear-sightedly admits that morality is not achievable; and it *hopes*, this time without any real inconsistency, to be rewarded for its efforts to “make progress” in the light of the unattainable ideal. It hopes to be released from the moral treadmill. The real objective of its activity is not the self-made harmony of duty and inclination that arises in the full “actualization” of the “One Virtue, One pure Duty, One Morality” (par. 623); the inevitable suffering and frailty of the body have shown that such a self-made felicity is impossible. Its objective now is the felicity that comes as a free gift of divine grace; the moral agent has come back to the standpoint of the

reconciled Unhappy Consciousness. She knows—this time without the intercession of a mediator—that her suffering service in this world, imperfect as it is, will be balanced by blessedness in the Beyond.

But in this perspective, the supposed disharmony of morality and felicity in this world becomes an arbitrary assumption. We say that the good come to grief and the evil flourish like the green bay tree; but what do we know? We agree that the best that any of us can offer to God is a “disposition” to please him; and how do we know who has that? If we envy someone else’s “luck,” and compare it critically with what we can see of her outward record of action, all that this certainly shows is a bad, unpleasing disposition on our own part. None of us are really moral, for we do not find our all-sufficient felicity in “the One Virtue, the One pure Duty, the One Morality.” If we did, we would look neither right nor left at that sort of outward prosperity or failure.

In the “imperfect morality” which admits that duty is never really done dutifully (i.e. joyfully), calling someone “immoral” is only an arbitrary judgment; no one calls herself “immoral” (seriously) in this situation. The “immorality” that may be spoken of is only the imperfect aspect of her “morality.” Envy is a moral weakness against which we must fight; the general goodwill which is the disposition that is pleasing to God dictates that we should be glad for the mundane good fortune of anyone, and be disposed to believe that they can and will deserve it.

- 11./626. If our morality is *impure*, then the standard of purity must be in God, the holy law-giver. Actual morality becomes diversified because it operates upon a given world; but the multiplicity of duties are always the same duty in the moral consciousness that strives to be pure. The multiplicity is sacred as given by God. But this is a displacement because *my* duty is essentially mine as I know it. No external power can make it sacred for me; for no external power can be “holy.”

As soon as we restore the validity of the infinite standard of the “One Virtue, One pure Duty, One Morality,” our non-moral good-will towards the good fortune (whether heavenly or mundane) of everyone, becomes immoral. We are obliged to make this shift from the finite standpoint back to the infinite one, because our *hope* of non-moral felicity requires the postulation of a will which, being almighty, can achieve the absolute harmony of duty and inclination within itself. Our finite non-morality aims to be “pleasing to God”; it is “non-moral” because it seeks a non-moral kind of felicity. But it becomes “immoral” as soon as it views itself in the light of this perfect holiness. “Imperfect morality” is “non-moral” as long as it has two sides, the moral disposition, and the immoral hope. But in the light of the *pure* will upon which that hope hangs, only the immorality shows. If, like Savonarola, we move straight from the failure of actual morality to the throne of grace, there is no intervening stage of finite or imperfect moral consciousness with its non-moral hope. We pass directly from the moral to the immoral consciousness. Or rather (since the historic Savonarola’s whole horizon is bounded by faith and grace, and he never has the experience of “rational self-certainty” at all) we pass from simple union with God to the self-abnegation of the last phase of the Unhappy Conscious-

ness. Savonarola does not belong to our world of fully-developed Reason, because no “fall” as direct and dramatic as his can occur in our world. He belongs to the world of “Faith” (i.e. to the world of a Reason that is still undeveloped; and he falls back straight into the living hell of Luther before he left the monastery).⁵³

The imperfect moral consciousness that postulates the “holy moral lawgiver” now repeats the dialectic of the unity and multiplicity of duties. As the only holy will, the Lawgiver is the standard of morality as such. Like Savonarola, the imperfect will “counts as nothing.” But, as self-certain knowledge, this is the one conclusion that it cannot allow; so it is the Holy Moral Lawgiver who must in the end disappear. The certainty of its own knowledge has been the one unchanging constant that drives the moral consciousness through all of the displacements.

When we have been driven by our imperfection to accept our finitude and our estrangement from God and his Kingdom, we shall only fall back into heteronomy if we try to say that all of our duties are holy because they are God’s will. Savonarola can do this, but Fichte cannot.⁵⁴ Fichte knows that “autonomy” is the essence of morality, perfect or imperfect. What is not holy for me through my own knowledge is not holy in itself; and it cannot be made holy by another. So I cannot seriously maintain that God makes my duties “holy,” or even that any God who can be objectified as a *Vorstellung* is “holy.” That sort of *Vorstellung* cannot constitute my duty; so I cannot make that object holy either. Here we have finally displaced the essence into a simply *contradictory* form.

- 12./627. No. We need not postulate the holy will for *that*, but to provide a securely objective standard of what duty is. Duty as I know it, is all mixed up with inclinations. I have to be truly free, and know what to do; that knowledge can only be found in a supernatural being.

The pious moral consciousness (as I shall call the imperfect consciousness that is logically driven to postulate a holy will) now tries the opposite perspective. Instead of claiming that the holy will makes the content of duty “holy” by establishing the order of nature, it takes the multiplicity of duties to arise from its own “nature.” God is necessary to the imperfect consciousness as an ideal of the unity that it cannot achieve in its finite, toiling awareness of the moral life. God is precisely my *pure* knowledge.⁵⁵

Hegel himself does not seem to know how to express this “placement” clearly. It is a moral shape of the Unhappy Consciousness, and as far as I can make out, it is designed as a way of admitting that we may not know exactly what *our* duty is, or whether we have done it properly, because we are *biased* by our inclinations. We can always know what duty as such is, however, because God is present to us, and we can always turn to him if we will freely do so. This “pure knowledge” has to be “independent” of our finite nature; and since the empirical truth for the “imperfect” consciousness is that we do not *know* when we are acting “freely” the real existence of this “pure knowledge” in another, is a necessary postulate for the consciousness that is *disposed* to be moral but does not have any intuitive certainty

about how to do it. In this “shape” Kant’s problematic scepticism makes its way back into Fichte’s “self-certainty.” “God” is a *regulative ideal*.

- 13./628. God is the *perfect* moral consciousness, therefore. But since he is above sensible nature, he does not (cannot) do any actions. Either he is a happy consciousness without needing to deserve it, or he is no consciousness. We have to give him up.

But now it is precisely the “purity” (or the “holiness”) of God that is contradictory. The contradiction in the heteronomous postulation of God was objective. It was a conflict of thought, a conflict in the abstract concept of holiness: holiness cannot come from outside. In this final displacement the contradiction is concrete. The “holy” will, as a moment of my consciousness, is not a moral will at all; indeed it is not a will of any sort. God is above nature; not having nature as a context for action, he cannot do any actions. He does not realize himself, because he is not involved in any struggle, he does not have to negate anything. The poor tortured moral agent who breaks in the struggle to deny the natural self, knows at least that the struggle was worth something. It bears witness to the truth that moral being is a *made* harmony, something beyond nature. The absolutely Holy Will testifies to nothing.

God can be *said* to be “beyond” Nature if we choose; but he does not have to make over his naturally given self in order to *go* beyond nature. Spinoza’s God was generally held to be the purely positive affirmation of nature (i.e. not to be morally beyond it); that view was universally condemned as “atheism.” But if we give the “positive” relation up, as well as the “negative” (or active) one, what are we left with? Fichte’s God is beyond nature—which is the not-self that it posits. But in its moral beyondness, it ceases to be a self-consciousness altogether. Either way—whether as *almighty* will or as *holy* will—God is of no use to the moral consciousness.⁵⁶

- 14./629. In its “God,” however, consciousness can see the contradictions united; this makes the transition to conscience necessary.

In its experience of the Holy Lawgiver, the Moral World-View finally explodes its postulational attitude. God, as the postulate of that perfect morality which moral knowledge was originally certain of in itself, brings all the displacements together into the final shape in which the moral self-certainty is forced to recognize itself. The Moral World-View is a very interesting case of determinate negation, because it negates itself directly. “Experience” shows that the moral self does not need any postulated intelligible world. The dialectic of *sense*-perception was precisely what led us originally to postulate that intelligible world, as the concept within which the “displacements” of sense-perception could be reconciled and consistently comprehended. Now the dialectic of moral-perception has brought us round to the recognition that the intelligible world is truly within rational self-consciousness and nowhere beyond it.

The “determinate” aspect of this self-negation is precisely here. The moral law-giver is only absurd as a postulate. In the course of our “shifting” we have noticed

that everything “postulated” is actually experienced; and the “imperfection” of the rational moral consciousness, which the sequential development of moral displacement obliged us finally to acknowledge, is a positive advance. But the ideal standard of morality which the imperfect consciousness was led to postulate as an almighty power that graciously grants to it the felicity that it cannot secure for itself, is nothing but the logical imperfection (of heteronomy) into which the imperfect consciousness has fallen. In its final shape of the paradigmatic “holy will” (which cannot be “holy” because it would have to be moral first, and it cannot be that) the postulate of God becomes visibly what must be internalized. The “holy will” is not an independent being; in that status it is quite plainly a contradiction. But it is precisely the moment that the confidently “actual” moral consciousness lost hold of, when Savonarola was “put to the question.” This moment must now be comprehensively internalized. God is not a power to be postulated. We shall find, in the end, that he is indeed the giver of “grace”; and our receipt of grace will, in fact, take us beyond the moral level. But it will not take us beyond our own actual world of sense and Reason; and it will be a matter of experience, not of hope and prayer.

- 15./630. The moral consciousness knows it is “imperfect” because it is sensory, and its natural situation creates many duties (like “thing-properties”). It needs God, but its God only displays what Morality is in full. The “imperfect self” is the abstract thought, “God” is the concrete whole. Both conscious dutiful intent and natural being are essential aspects of moral actuality. The “shifting” has been between pure intention, and actual performance as essential.

The “imperfection” of the moral consciousness has several aspects. In the first place its situation in nature (both human nature and nature in general) clouds its purity. Our sensible nature is the source of many temptations, and Kant was wise to insist that we have no intuition of the purity of our own motive, even when it seems to us to be moral. In any case, external nature can put such pressure on the finite sensible organism which exists within it, that even a supposedly rational intuition is abandoned or betrayed.

Secondly, our empirical situation determines what we identify as our concrete duty in any case. Savonarola tells Romola, when he refuses to save her godfather from the death penalty for treason, “there are many grounds of action in this matter.”⁵⁷ His “many grounds” are the “host of duties through which consciousness is nonplussed” (as Hegel puts it). It is in this connection that Hegel makes the parallel between the Moral World-View and the perceptual world-view fully explicit. The active moral consciousness lives in a world of situations that are like perceptible things. Moral intuition is like sense-intuition. It makes us aware of the many moral “properties” of each situation.⁵⁸ “Displacement” has been a sort of logical hunt for a method of identifying the “essence” of the “moral thing.” But the quest has an illusory goal. Like sugar or salt dissolving, one moral situation dissolves into another when we act. The “other being” to which our quest has led us is like the universal world of intelligible forces; and the intelligible force in this moral world is manifestly our own Reason. The moral world is real because it is just the world that

we establish by our actions. The divine consciousness that comprehends the natural order is just a *Vorstellung* of our concrete moral situation. It is *our* moral Reason that comprehends our finite situation in the natural world. The basic contradiction of *Verstellung* consists in the pendulum swing between the “pure duty” that is “to be done” (an empty *Gedankending*) and duty as fulfilled (a perfect harmony of Freedom and actual existence). We need to realize that the “moral action” is a concrete whole, in which the “in-itself” of thought is identified with the “in-itself” of actual “thereness.” The conscious agent takes up the sensible situation and gives it an intended shape with a moral meaning. All of these moments are necessary in our moral activity: and they are all present in it. We do not need “God” as an almighty Other.

(g) *The Concept of Conscience*

- 16./631. The Moral World-View collapses because in the end it can see through its own distinctions. The phenomenal world is both irrelevant and vital; and pure duty must be both beyond and here. In the end consciousness can see that this is nonsense, and that everything pushed outside or beyond it, is really kept within it. Displacing one moment outwards (or beyond) is hypocritical. As Conscience, the moral consciousness rejects this hypocrisy. But taking all the “displacements” into the self will not change them. The self-certain Conscience ignores them; but that is just the first manifestation of hypocrisy.

At the beginning of chapter VII (par. 673) Hegel remarks that there was no Religion of Consciousness because “the supersensible, the Eternal, or whatever else one may call it is devoid of self.” He also confirms, however, that the religion of the Enlightenment makes good this defect, and that in the religion of Morality, God gains a “positive content” (pars. 675–676). But, says he, this positive content is “a being which is at the same time taken back into the self and remains locked up in it, and a *distinguished content*, whose parts are negated just as immediately as they are put in place.”

This tells us how we should interpret the whole section on Morality. In the final section, on Conscience, the Beautiful Soul, and Forgiveness, we have a divine content that is clearly understood to be within the moral self. This is the “religion of Morality” properly so called. But in the Moral World-View we have a “content” that is taken to be independent. For the consciousness that makes the postulates, God is, to begin with, another being in his own Kingdom. But the development of the concept of Morality itself, teaches us that in order to preserve moral autonomy God must be conceived as the Moral World in which we all live and move as noumenal selves; and the experience of Displacement has now shown that the whole procedure of postulation is illegitimate. We cannot make the Moral World independent of the self that supposedly lives and moves in it. No matter how we distinguish the “parts” of morality, and no matter what we try to project into the independent world, the projection has to be negated as soon as it is set up. Try as we may to justify projecting God outwards, and giving him an independent role

and responsibility in the world of the moral understanding, he remains locked up (*eingeschlossen*) in the moral self. We cannot make this God into “another self,” because then he would have to be our equal. The Holy One to whom no moral agent can be equal is a logical abortion.

When we postulate the noumenal world, we find ourselves forced to say contradictory things both about our phenomenal world and about the noumenal one. Phenomenal nature is morally null; but also it is this world that must be reshaped to display the noumenal reality; and the Good Will is the absolute essence, whose *noumenal* reality is all that counts; but it is not a will at all if it does not *act* in this phenomenal world, where its existence can be recognized.

When the whole experience is internalized in “Conscience,” the pattern of displacement and contradiction will necessarily repeat itself. So Hegel wants us to cast our minds back to the beginning of the Moral World-View, as we come to its “third movement.” We have to be mindful that what is internalized at the new beginning is the *result* of Displacement. We have to recognize the transition here as a conscious internalization of *God*: “what [this consciousness] declares to be the absolute *subsistent* (*Seiende*) outside of consciousness, it keeps locked up within the self of self-consciousness instead.”

The two extremes that we have tried to put upon God—the mastery of nature, and the holiness of duty—are simply the identical opposites involved in our own moral autonomy. It is right to identify the extreme of holiness with God finally, because only we in our finitude can experience the harmony of fulfilment. But we must not forget that this pure knowledge of duty was exactly the result that came forth by determinate negation when the “despotism of liberty” ended, and the virtuous tyrant himself went to the guillotine that he had set up. “Pure Duty is the essence,” we said then; but now we have been trying to reinstate Robespierre as the Holy Moral Lawgiver. We cannot picture God so, because Duty is just what must be *done*—and only we, not He, can do it.

So we are not serious, finally, about this last displacement. The holy voice of Duty is not the voice of Another, in another world; it is the voice of our own Conscience, the knowledge that we share with God, the divine voice within us in this world. To maintain the final displacement would be *hypocrisy*. This is what becomes clear when the imperfect moral consciousness begins to pray for the grace of a release from the moral treadmill. At this point the moral self, which postulated its own world in order to give meaning to Dr. Guillotin’s chopped cabbage or the gulp of cold water, recoils in moral disgust from the whole journey that it has made in the noumenal world. Life in our own phenomenal world must certainly have more meaning than was shown forth by the termination of Absolute Freedom in a death made quick and painless by science. But that deeper meaning is not to be found in an endless paean of gratitude for release from an impossible task. The Almighty Pardoner must be given up, and the Holy Lawgiver must be recognized as just the absolute moment of the free moral self from which the movement of postulation began.

This is a very formal advance. As we shall see, it is one that Fichte himself made; but he could never be accused of “despising the moral world-presentation.”

That description of the transition points to Jacobi's "immediate knowledge" as the comprehensive inversion that is needed. The inversion is simply from what comprehends us, to what we comprehend. We move directly and immediately from the standpoint of moral Understanding, which takes its object to be Beyond, to that of Reason, which knows that its object is "within." But we are also moving back to the level of "immediate certainty"—whereas the Holy Will was the infinite object of moral Understanding. We have only to remember the excesses of self-actualizing Reason, and the shiftiness of the rational individuality that is "real in and for itself" in its own eyes, to realize that the absolute content will not stay "locked up" in the dutiful self. God is no man's prisoner. Our initial moral sincerity turned into hypocrisy; we have inverted that hypocrisy into a properly conscientious sincerity again, now that we have recognized it. But we shall find that this is only the first "displacement" of the hypocrisy that we have unmasked. The God within us is still the Almighty Pardonner even if he cannot now make the Heaven and Earth of nature pass away for us. His whole existence as self-certain knowledge must now unfold; and the unfolding will bear a necessary resemblance to the story that we already know.

Notes

1. D. Jähnig (1971) states Hegel's view of the relation of the French to the German Enlightenment in its simplest terms. The French Enlightenment was anti-historical. H. Boeder (1977, 157) cites Joyce's *Ulysses* very aptly: "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." The German Conscience can be historically situated once more.

2. *Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 1292–1307.

3. Hegel's title for the first subsection that is about to start—"The Moral World-Inshowing (or Intuition)"—directs us at once to *Fichte's* moral theory as the basis for his own dialectical "completion of the Kantian system." Kant himself spoke more often of the "Kingdom of Ends" than of "the Moral World" (though he did use that expression too).

There is a valuable discussion of this section and the next one by K. R. Westphal (1991). He examines Kant's position both in its original formulation, and in the reconstructed version offered by Onora O'Neill, and concludes that Hegel's "objections" (which he has extracted from the text here) are largely sound. His approach is thus quite different from that which I have adopted; and it forms (in my view) a valuable *complement* to my discussion. (I hope the converse will also be found to be true.)

4. Charlotte Corday tried first to obtain access to Robespierre. The "wild beast" Marat was only a second-best choice for her.

5. What his moral situation is *vis à vis* the unknown but aggressive traveller who was his father I shall willingly leave to more expert students of the Moral World-Order than myself.

6. Conscience need not be "high-handed" in any ordinary sense. It acts as wisely as it can, and begs forgiveness for errors caused by ignorance. The plea is made by Sophocles (for *Oedipus*) and accepted already by Aristotle (*Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 521–548, and *Ethics* III, 1, 1109b 35–1111a 2).

7. *Glück* belongs to this world, but *Seligkeit* is the "blessedness" of the other one—I shall call it "moral happiness" or "felicity."

8. It is a *logical* truth that the moral self can have no “sight of its object realized” because “pure duty” is an infinite object. But whether it sees its finite self realized is a matter of chance, and *must* be experienced as such. (Compare R. B. Pippin, 1991, 535–541.)

9. Kant’s concept of this Summum Bonum appears in all three *Critiques*: see *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 838–840; *Critique of Practical Reason*, *Akad.* V, 110–111; *Critique of Judgment*, *Akad.* V, 450 (sec. 87, where it is called *Glückseligkeit*). But see also especially Fichte’s *Critique of All Revelation*, section 2 (iii) (*Werke* V, 34–39; Green, 55–59); section 3 (*Werke* V, 41–42; Green, 61–62); and section 4 (*Werke* V, 60–62; Green, 77–79). Kemp Smith gives the original pagination of *Critique of Pure Reason* in his margin; Beck and Meredith give the pagination of *Akad.* V; Green’s Fichte translation likewise gives the pagination of *Werke* V.

10. In his useful survey of this section L. P. Hinchman remarks (1984, 162) that “Hegel’s account . . . differs substantially from Kant’s.” Hegel states everything in a different *way*. But it seems to me that, *as a whole*, his account represents Kant’s position justly. For an examination of this section which discusses its legitimacy as a direct critique of Kant see J. P. Vincenzo (1987). Cf. also J. E. Smith (1973 or 1974) and Q. Lauer (1973); but the best “Kantian” reading of the section—far more rigorous than mine—is K. R. Westphal (1991).

11. See in general the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Book II (*Akad.* V, 107–148; Beck, 111–153); and in particular *Akad.* V, 110 (Beck, 114–115). Since Kant himself regards the whole doctrine of the postulates as part of the “Dialectic,” I suppose he would not be much disturbed by the dialectical difficulties that Hegel develops; and since Hegel understood Kant’s conception of dialectic I suppose he was well aware of this—see especially *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 345, lines 25–35 (Cerf and Harris, 95). His object is not to criticize Kant’s view, but precisely to show how Kant’s conception of the dialectical character of pure Reason can be overcome. (J. Robinson, 1977, 40–50 is very sensible about the whole question.)

12. The fittingness of the will to the moral law, and the infinite progress required for it, is spoken of at *Akad.* V, 122; compare V, 130–131. See also Fichte, *Critique of All Revelation*, *Werke* V, 38–39, 118 (Green, 59, 128).

13. I picked this up in general reading during my schooldays. I cannot find it now in the Penguin *Selected Letters* (trans. L. Tancock, Harmondsworth, 1982). But there is good evidence there that my forgotten source was not misquoting her!

14. I do not suppose Madame de Sévigné had read Abelard’s *Ethics*, but she has summed up his conceptions of “duty” and “Providence” in a single sentence; and yet his sense of moral urgency remained as intense and strenuous as Fichte’s. (G. Mensching [1988], who agrees with me about the epochal importance of Abelard’s moral theory, believes that it is “liquidated” in Hegel’s ethical theory. As will be clear by the end of chapter 9, we are at opposite poles on that issue.)

15. See *De Officiis* I, 46 (and other similar passages).

16. I suspect that something like this argument of practical irrelevance must occur in the sources (probably in Fichte). But I have not managed to find it. Kant certainly regarded the infinite progress towards a limit as being identical with the limit of God’s eternal standpoint (cf. *Religion*, *Akad.* VI, 48; Greene and Hudson, 43).

17. Kant’s discussion of the *Endzweck der Welt* is in the *Critique of Judgment*, section 88 (*Akad.* V, 453–455). But see also Fichte, *Critique of All Revelation*, *Werke* V, 50–51, 60–61, 93–94 (Green, 68, 77, 107–108).

18. I am not sure whether it is logically the *only* cause of any “failure” that is genuinely *mine* (as long as my will is good). Perhaps Hegel thought so (and perhaps the case can be

made out if the rigorous antithesis between the causal determinism of “nature” and the “freedom” of the moral world-order is presupposed). But I do not think the question is very interesting, because the presupposition of a rigid antithesis between “determinism” and “freedom” seems implausible to me.

19. For Kant’s doctrine of duties as divine commands see *Critique of Practical Reason*, Akad. V, 129–130. Compare Fichte, *Critique of All Revelation*, Werke V, 51–58, 88 (Green, 70–75, 102–103).

20. In view of Hegel’s earlier insistence that the common sense of the Enlightenment is to be interpreted in the light of the “Cartesian metaphysics,” it is worthy of note that the “postulate of God” can be found already in Malebranche, Berkeley and Leibniz in a form that corresponds quite well to Hegel’s sketch of the argument. Part of the reason why he ignores so many of the niceties in the distinctively Kantian forms of rational postulation, is that he is intensely conscious (and he wants to make us conscious) of the *continuity* of the tradition of rational theology. Whatever they may have thought and said about the “dogmatism” of their predecessors, Kant and Fichte were arguing as dogmatically as any of them. They owed much to Leibniz in particular.

21. Hegel puts it that there is “another essence which is consciousness, and the holy law-giver of pure duty.” This may be an echo of Kant’s “holy lawgiver” in *Critique of Practical Reason*, Akad. V, 131 note. But the context is rather different. Fichte (who uses the expression “moral lawgiver” often—e.g. Werke V, 60, 62, 88; Green, 77, 78, 103) also speaks of the “law-giving of the Holy one” and of “obedience to the moral lawgiver” being “moral only when grounded upon the *Vorstellung* of his holiness” (*Critique of All Revelation*, Werke V, 105, 140; Green, 116, 147).

22. *Religion*, Akad. VI, 75–76 (Greene and Hudson, 70).

23. See *Critique of Pure Reason* B, 836–837; *Critique of Practical Reason*, Akad. V, 130. (Compare also Fichte, *Critique of All Revelation*, Werke V, 37–39, 50, 86; Green, 57–59, 69, 101. But in Fichte there is no conscious loss of certainty.

24. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Akad. V, 122 (Beck, 126).

25. Kant regarded himself as a critical *idealist*; and his view of the world of our natural experience justifies this. But Hegel’s interpretation of the “postulation” of the noumenal world is that reflective thought is logically impelled to employ a “realistic” standard of truth. Fichte’s interpretation of the “primacy of the practical” turns Kant’s practical postulation into “self-knowledge.” But God still turns out to be a “moral postulate” upon this view.

26. In the idealistic perspective the moral consciousness is *vollendet* (complete) because it is all-comprehensive; in the realistic perspective it was *vollkommen* (perfect) because it needed nothing of what was thought of as remaining outside it.

27. Fichte was miscalled an “atheist” for identifying God with the “moral world-order”; by making the point about the difference between God’s “almightiness” and our moral *faith*, Hegel implicitly defends him against that highly prejudiced accusation.

28. The triad “thesis, antithesis, synthesis” is peculiarly Fichtean in Hegel’s view (and I believe that he never uses it except when he is discussing Fichte’s views). But “synthesis” comes from Kant; and the dyad of “thesis, antithesis” comes from the Antinomies of Pure Reason. Hegel does not use any of them in reference to his own speculative theory—cf. G. E. Mueller (1958). I use “antithesis” to translate *Gegensatz* (which Hegel took over from Schelling); and like Hegel himself, I use the triad only with reference to the Critical Philosophy.

29. This was the ground of the accusation of *atheism* brought against Fichte.

30. In large measure this arrangement has already been done. So, like the “Truth of Enlightenment,” this section appears very repetitious. It would be illegitimate if it were not so. K. R. Westphal (1991, 137) says “Hegel barely attempts to follow the procedures required by his own method.” But, in fact, it is his method that obliges him to deal with the material as he does.

31. On the meaning of *Verstellung* (and its English renderings) see especially J. Robinson (1977), 72–75. (P. Moran’s brief discussion [1980, 122–123] is not helpful.)

32. I do not pretend to know exactly how Kant regarded the postulates. But this seems to me to be the minimum position that he *must* have held; and I think that Hegel wants to attack the supposed rational grounds for the Kantian “hope,” as well as to suggest that it is only doubtfully moral.

33. This was his verdict upon the “Cosmological Proof”—see *K.R.V.* B 637. He formulated this proof as follows:

If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, at least, exist. Therefore an absolutely necessary being exists. The minor premiss contains an experience, the major premiss the inference from there being any experience at all to the existence of the necessary [B 632–633].

The resemblance of this to the argument from “any moral consciousness” to the “absolutely necessary Holy Will” is obvious.

34. Hegel’s method is powerless against the “Philosophy of As If.” But we should always remember that Hegel does not want to “refute” *anyone*. It is part of his basic thesis that all of the *Gestalten* of the Spirit are self-sufficient, so that a rational self-consciousness which identifies with one of them can always mend its position in response to any critical attack. From the experienced impregnability of the theoretical standpoint of Perception which we all spontaneously adopt, and which none of us ever really leave (as Dr. Johnson showed so graphically in his “refutation” of Berkeley) we know already that the defensibility of Kant’s position is not what matters to Hegel. Kant’s system is the critical understanding of precisely that “perceptual” standpoint (in all its self-protective shiftiness both “scientific” and “moral”) which appeared *obvious* to the enlightened Protestant culture of Kant’s time.

35. See “On the Ground of our Faith in a divine Government of the World,” *Werke* V, 177–189. It is in this essay that the “Moral World-Order” is first spoken of. The *Critique of All Revelation* remains within the context of Kantian “enlightenment.”

36. J. Robinson (1977, 78) takes a different view of this transition: that “nothing gets done,” literally, because the agent becomes paralysed. This is a *possible* reading—and indeed to a common-sense reasoner it may seem to be the best one. (It is better, in my opinion, than that of L. P. Hinchman [1984, 164]). But once we grasp the fact that the dialectic of moral certainty repeats that of Sense-Certainty my interpretation follows naturally. (It is not logically possible for an “actual moral consciousness” to be “paralysed”; the “nothingness” of its necessary actuality springs from the lack of ratio between the “finite” and the “infinite.” I have expressed this reflective judgment as commonsensically as I can by my “as if.” But in actual moral experience “nothing gets done” because the moral situation remains unchanged; it is “what ought to be done” that moral certainty continues to be focussed upon. That is why the logical next step is to consider the situation where there is no “ought” left to focus on).

37. A very good sketch of how Fichte’s self-certainty caused him to put himself in a false position can be found in Daniel Breazeale’s “Introduction” to Fichte (1988, 40–95).

38. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Ethics*, Akad. IV, 421; Beck (1949, 80).

39. See Thornton Wilder, *Heaven's My Destination*; R. L. Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque* (essay vi, *El Dorado*). Stevenson was probably familiar with Lessing's famous choice between truth and the search for it (*Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Paul Rilla, Berlin, 1956, VIII, 27).

40. Hegel's word is *vertilgen* not *aufheben*; but the *Vertilgung* of the goals of sensibility is called an "*Aufhebung* of the sensible *Wesen*" as soon as we come to its displacement. What the "cancelling" or "sublating" means here is best inferred from Kant's account of the "determining ground" of the moral will. See *K.P.V.*, Akad. V, 24–25 (Beck, 1949, 135–136):

The principle of one's own happiness, however much reason and understanding may be used in it, contains no other determinants for the will than those which belong to the lower faculty of desire. Either, then, no higher faculty of desire exists, or else pure reason alone must of itself be practical, i.e., it must be able to determine the will by the mere form of the practical rule without presupposing any feeling or consequently any idea of the pleasant or the unpleasant as the matter of the faculty of desire and as the empirical condition of its principles. Then only is reason a truly higher faculty of desire, but still only in so far as it determines the will by itself and not in the service of the inclinations. Subordinate to reason as the higher faculty of desire is the pathologically determinable faculty of desire, the latter being really and in kind different from the former, so that even the slightest admixture of its impulses impairs the strength and superiority of reason, just as taking anything empirical as the condition of a mathematical demonstration would degrade and destroy its force and value.

41. Compare *K.P.V.*, Akad. V, 92–93 (Beck, 1949, 198–199) where Kant also makes the point that the happiness that is thus discounted *need not* be *in conflict* with Reason.

42. Diogenes Laertius, IX, 26 (Zeno gave false answers, but he was obviously being defiant, rather than seeking to mislead the tyrant. Kant, who is a willing casuist for the servant told to say "not at home," would surely accept this distinction.)

43. Her advocate (who was a stranger appointed on the spot, because the friend to whom she had written asking him to act for her, was away from Paris and did not receive her request) recognized that this very *wholeness* of her confession constituted the only plea that could be offered in mitigation of sentence. His speech for the defence was:

My client admits this murder; she premeditated it, in the very presence of death she shows no remorse, nothing but political conviction could have armed her hand and given her this calm, this sublime abnegation. I commend myself to the prudence of the Jury. (Joseph Shearing, 253).

44. In case anyone thinks it is morally outrageous to abstract from the fact that Charlotte Corday was telling the truth *about* a political assassination, we can easily find a suitably proto-Fichtean substitute in her first and most remarkable devotee, the German delegate from Mainz, Adam Lux. He had already been dissuaded from a public suicide in the Convention at the climax of a speech in support of the same Girondist political ideal. After he witnessed Charlotte's execution he worked night and day on a pamphlet about her, with the deliberate object of going to the guillotine in her honor. When it was published he was promptly arrested, and eventually he achieved his object. (He was *not* a utilitarian, and he regarded the assassination as a heroic *error*.)

45. Fichte (in the *Closed Action State*) and even Kant (in *Perpetual Peace*) thought otherwise. But they were thinking not “comprehending”—Kant’s distinction between a regulative Ideal and a constitutive one acknowledges the difference, but in the case of the Ideals of moral Reason, he did not properly acknowledge their antinomic character, because he had to postulate moral freedom, and a noumenal order. By taking “freedom” as an intellectual intuition and inverting the relation of the noumenal and phenomenal worlds, Fichte unwittingly revealed the implicit absurdity of Kant’s attempt to evade the antinomies of “pure thought.” That is what Hegel is now seeking to show.

46. No doubt Simonides (whose outward-looking definition of justice was used by Plato as the foundation for the first great systematic exposition of the inward-looking view—see *Republic* 331e) was citing a proverb; Marx (*Critique of the Gotha Programme*, 1875) was quoting Bakunin’s declaration (for the Lyons anarchists) in 1870 (see J. M. Davidson, *The Old Order and the New*, London, 1890).

47. *Moral* action aims at *moral perfection* (par. 622); “non-morality” aims at *doing my imperfect best*.

48. It must be said, in this connection, that Robinson’s discussion of “Displacement in Practice” (1977, 86–97) is based on a mistake. *Many* types of “displacement” are possible in a dialectical system such as Hegel’s. Only those that involve a *Kantian* concept of duty, combined with moral-religious faith in a noumenal order, can be accurately classified as *Verstellungen* of the self-certain moral world-view. (I have discussed Robinson’s cases in more detail in Harris [1987, 23–24].)

49. See *Religion*, *Akad.* VI, 75; Greene and Hudson, 70.

50. George Eliot was a consummate master of the “Moral World-View” in all its guises—having herself lived through its evolution into the final, properly Hegelian, shape of the “Choir Invisible” (which she has now indubitably joined in fulfilment of her highest hope). She knew that Savonarola did not fully belong to the “Moral World” (see note 52 below); and except for his necessary involvement in the affairs of Romola, Eliot’s portrayal of Savonarola’s career is rigorously controlled by her study of the historical sources. Since both her moral insight and her philosophical sophistication are far beyond that of most historians the portrait in *Romola* is to be preferred to all others here. (For the “Choir Invisible” see George Eliot’s *Poems*.)

51. See *Romola*, especially chapters lxiv–lxv, lxxi–lxxii. George Eliot’s own verdict (at the end of chapter lxxi) deserves to be quoted:

There is no jot of worthy evidence that from the time of his imprisonment to the supreme moment Savonarola thought or spoke of himself as a martyr. The idea of martyrdom had been to him a passion dividing the dream of the future with the triumph of beholding his work achieved. And now, in place of both, had come resignation which he called by no glorifying name.

But therefore he may the more fitly be called a martyr by his fellow-men to all time. For power rose against him not because of his sins, but because of his greatness—not because he sought to deceive the world, but because he sought to make it noble. And through that greatness of his he endured a double agony: not only the reviling, and the torture, and the death-throe, but the agony of sinking from the vision of glorious achievement into that deep shadow where he could only say, “I count as nothing: darkness encompasses me; yet the light I saw was the true light.”

52. See *Middlemarch*, chapters 10, 12, 13, 17, 18, 31, 41, 44–45, 53, 60–61, 67–76. (We discover Bulstrode's secret in chapter 61; the story of its public emergence, to the point where Mrs. Bulstrode learns of it, is in chapters 67–74. We shall have occasion to examine the significance of Bulstrode's inability to confess when we come to the *Gestalt* of "Forgiveness" later.)

53. See note 51.

54. Kant speaks quite often of a "holy lawgiver" (see note 19 above, and K. R. Westphal [1991, 154]). But the doctrine that obedience to the "moral lawgiver" is moral only when grounded upon the *Vorstellung* of his "holiness" is Fichte's (*Critique of All Revelation*, *Werke* V, 105, 140; Green, 116, 147). Kant never explains how obedience to God's *commands* can be "moral." It is clear that for Fichte this language is only a "sensualized image." But how can it be no more than that, if we are forced to admit that perfect morality *only* exists in that "image"?

55. This seems like the best moment to point out that the relation between Kierkegaard's conception of the "leap" of faith, and Hegel's sublation of faith, is far more complicated than appears in an account like that of W. P. Pomerleau (1977).

56. Fichte's Absolute Ego is explicitly declared to be "unthinkable" (see *Wissenschaftslehre*, 1794, *Werke* II, 253–254; Heath and Lachs, 224–225).

57. The crucial exchange between them is the following:

"My daughter, it is enough. The cause of freedom, which is the cause of God's kingdom upon earth, is often most injured by the enemies who carry within them the power of certain human virtues. The wickedest man is often not the most insurmountable obstacle to the triumph of good."

"Then why do you say again that you do not desire my godfather's death!" said Romola, in mingled anger and despair. "Rather you hold it the more needful he should die because he is the better man. I cannot unravel your thoughts, father; I cannot hear the real voice of your judgment and conscience."

There was a moment's pause. Then Savonarola said, with keener emotion than he had yet shown:

"Be thankful, my daughter, if your own soul has been spared perplexity, and judge not those to whom a harder lot has been given. *You* see one ground of action in this matter. I see many. I have to choose that which will further the work intrusted to me. The end I seek is one to which minor respects must be sacrificed. The death of five men—were they less guilty than these—is a light matter weighed against the withstanding of the vicious tyrannies which stifle the life of Italy, and foster the corruption of the Church; a light matter weighed against the furthering of God's kingdom upon earth, the end for which I live and am willing myself to die." (*Romola*, chapter LIX.)

The episode is fictional but it dramatizes one of the most difficult moral dilemmas of Savonarola's religious protest. He objected to the partisan policy of the Papacy, because he felt that it violated the ideal of Christian brotherhood; but his own resistance forced him to become a partisan.

58. This point was first made about the Ethical Substance (par. 446). But there "custom" and "nature" (sexual character) combined to save the ethical agent from the embarrassment of free choice.

Chapter 9

Arrival

VI C(c): Conscience, the Beautiful Soul, Evil and Forgiveness

The concept of the moral consciousness as a World-Intuition has been developed from its own initial certainty that “it is,” into the hypothetical judgment that “if it is, then it is not, because it really is in Another”; and that Other is not moral either. So we are thrown back to the original certainty of the moral consciousness that “it is.” But we now know that this certainty is not the intellectual intuition of a world that must be postulated by Faith; it is the actual “inner world” in which all of our spiritual experience occurs. As such, it is properly more comprehensive than the world of sense-experience. But it has still to reach back and envelop that world consciously. This is what happens in the Syllogism of Conscience, the Beautiful Soul, and Forgiveness.

The behavior of Conscience under the critical assault of “moral experience” will be quite different from the behavior of moral Faith. It will not move—except that its situation changes (par. 648). The “object” moves while the “subject” stands fast, until at the end of the attack, we can see that the Truth in its unshakable self-certainty is something quite opposite to what Conscience takes itself to be. When the full significance of its “going back into itself” is appreciated Conscience will stand forth as the Beautiful Soul.

Because Conscience, as “Spirit that is certain of itself,” is so close now to our own standpoint as spiritual observers, it is difficult to distinguish between the experience of this inversion “for Conscience” and the experience “for us.” On the one hand every Beautiful Soul must know that it is a Conscience which has a new and deeper insight into itself; the transition cannot just happen without being noticed. But on the other hand, not every Conscience has to make this transition. Indeed, it is not usual for a “good Conscience” (i.e. a dispositionally serious one) to make the transition; and a good Conscience (in the sense of a Conscience that has made the circle back to the final “grace-hoping” position of the Moral World-View) will be intuitively aware of how morally perilous the move to the position of the Beautiful Soul is. Most Consciences that reach the final position of mutual Forgiveness do so without any conscious transition through the Beautiful Soul. The “difference” between ourselves and the Consciences that do become Beautiful Souls, is that what we see as the movement of the Concept (i.e. as a logical “necessity”) is experienced as an act of free creative transcendence of finitude. (Every transition in Hegel’s “Science” has both of these aspects. That is why the “necessity” of the movement is so easily overlooked or misunderstood.)

The Beautiful Soul does not “obey the law that it lays upon itself.” From being an autonomous legislator, it becomes a “creator.” The “God” internalized in it as its “Law-giver” becomes directly known to it as its own creative essence. Thus the conceptual exposition of Conscience is not (as in the case of the Moral World) the prelude to (or map for) a “shifting” experience, but rather the revelation of an absolute autarchy which can only break open dramatically, when we find the right key. At first, under the critical impact of the world, it defines itself ever more closely, and becomes more and more evidently impregnable until it reaches the ultimate fastness of “genius” where it ceases to need criticism altogether, and haughtily declines to respond to it. Normal Consciences make the transition to Forgiveness with us; but some Beautiful Souls we shall just leave behind.

(a) Conscience as a World-Concept

- 1./632. Because there is and there is not actual moral consciousness, the actual consciousness with all its limits and imperfections has to be given validity. The gracious gift of happiness became the function of God, but that was a step backwards. What is thus projected (estranged) is for us (or logically) the pure self. So we can pass on to *Conscience*, the finite self that knows itself to be valid in all its contingency.

The crucial stage in the actual experience of the Moral World-View was when the postulated intelligible world became a place where the supposed moral consciousness was graciously, i.e. non-morally, rewarded, for wanting and trying to be moral when its “knowledge” was that it was not, and could not be, actually moral. It was formally contradictory for this non-moral consciousness to call itself moral, and to postulate felicity for itself; and the postulated Holy Will, which does nothing except grant this felicity, is a material contradiction; it contains contradictory moments in its content. This contradiction on both sides is important, because it is resolved into a consistent identity when the two sides are brought together. The “determinate negation” of the contradiction is a new self-consistent Concept that comprehends both the perfection of moral knowledge and the imperfection of moral experience.

The actual moral consciousness is the pure knowing of duty as such, the very same self-certainty from which we began after the death of Absolute Freedom; and that certainty is the very certainty that the self actually *is* because it thinks. But we know now that the intuited world of the moral consciousness is just the “pure thinking” of that actual self. Hence, although the Moral World-View can go on spinning indefinitely through the “displacements” of the moments that it inherited from Faith, *we* can now put the elements together and pass on to observe the self of the moral Conscience (which, as we have now realized, *contains* the moral world). Conscience contains the world, in the way that the Understanding with its Kantian concepts synthetically contains the great variety of sense-perceptual intuitions.

- 2./633. This is the *third* self emerging from the third spiritual world. Out of the ethical world came forth the [legal] *person*. This self is what it is formally recognized to be. It does

not form itself. The second self was the one that formed itself, and gave itself back to itself out of the estrangement of culture, the free citizen of the Revolution. Here U and S have sundered. U (the *general* will) is the object and content of the self, but it does not have a free existence as object; so this self has no world. Moral self-consciousness lets its universal constitute a world, but holds onto it at the same time (so becoming a play of displacement). Only as Conscience does it become an integrated self with its duty in this world.¹

The German word for Conscience is *Gewissen*. The word *gewiss* means “sure” or “certain,” and *Gewissheit* is “certainty.” So the “self of Conscience” is the spirit that is “sure of itself as absolute truth and being.” It has come forth from the moral world-order just as the self with legal rights emerged from the ethical world of True Spirit, and the self with natural rights came forth from the estranged world of Culture. The possession of “moral rights” is now to be compared with the possession of “legal” and “natural” rights.

The legal self is the “person” defined and recognized by law; even the slave has some rights in the legal order. It may be hard for her to secure those rights at the best of times; and (in defiance of Gibbon) we may well doubt that the Condition of Right ever was “the best of times.” But even the slave did have rights, and she could sometimes get “justice.”

In court the person has rights which exist because they are recognized by the law, and therefore, in principle, by everyone whose universal will is expressed by the law. Even the “will” of a dead person is “executed.” But it is only the law that is effective; the legal person is like a point upon that universal ground. The law is not the will of any self recognized by it; and the legal self is not free to assert itself in free self-creation—except perhaps in the matter of that will which is executed after its death (and even that is bounded by legal limits).

The “free” self with “natural rights” is the rational person who knows that *all* are free, and that the law should be the guarantor of everyone’s freedom. This is what is declared in the “Rights of Man and Citizen.” But this “absolute freedom” is identical with the point that stands for the singular free agent; so it guarantees nothing but death. No world is constituted by this law of rational freedom; it is the “spirit of estrangement” given back to itself. Every free and equal self has this General Will as its own objective. Absolute freedom is the freedom of the patriotic self. But this General Will has no mode of being that is independent of the self. The fact that this has already been seen to be true about the moral law of Conscience also, is ominous.

The moral self-consciousness lets its General Will, its moral law, go free to constitute a moral world like that of legal recognition; but at the same time it holds onto it like the self of naturally rational freedom, so that its world turns out to be just a displacement from one side to the other like a pendulum. Conscience must now integrate the two sides properly by finding a content in its own world (the restored legal world that is in process of construction now that the “despotism of liberty” is over and done with) for the morally autonomous will that emerged as absolute freedom at the climax of the “second world.”

Hegel says that the moral self finds a content for all three forms of law “in its self-certainty.” But what he calls here “the previously empty duty” was called the “self-certainty” or “pure self-knowledge” of the moral consciousness. The “self-certainty” of Conscience has to be something different from that; and the difference consists precisely in its concreteness. Conscience is certain of itself in its new legally-ordered world of equal “natural rights”; and it is certain of itself as the absolute freedom that defines, asserts, and realizes its own personal self. Hence it is certain of the self that is actually there in the world—the world in which the legal constitution is now founded upon “natural reason.” Consciousness, as Conscience, has immediate self-certainty; and this is not the intellectual intuition of a noumenal self in a moral world-order, but *das Dasein selbst*.

- 3./634. Conscience has attained a truth that corresponds to its certainty. So all displacement is overcome; it is a self-actualizing moral Spirit.

The “concreteness” of Conscience is what is underlined in paragraph 634; this paragraph simply repeats and reinforces the logical transition from the Moral World-View to Conscience. The criterion of Duty in the Moral World-View was the empty Categorical Imperative that we met in Lawtesting Reason. Conscience is not an empty form; it is a “concrete Spirit.” What that means was summed up in paragraph 633. The post-revolutionary Conscience incarnates its own legal world, with its “natural rights,” and its actual political freedom embodied in a determinate social structure. It does not claim (as Fichte did) to be able to project the ideal structure of a visible social order which would be directly continuous and harmonious with the Moral World-Order. Even Kant thought that this could be done for the world-order of the free communities. But the spirit of Conscience goes out to fight for Napoleon (and also against him) without any hesitations or displacements. It is a self-actualizing Reason that is not “subjective,” but confidently and firmly “situated” in its actual social world.

- 4./635. A case of moral action is an instance of active sense-certainty, a direct transformation of what sensibly is there into what morally ought to be there. In primitive sense-certainty, the spirit unconsciously transforms world into self [a linguistic universal]. Conscience does the same in the light of its immediate interest [“My child is ill,” says mother]. Conscience does not perceive its situation; for then it would have many duties. When one is being purely conscientious, one *knows* what is to be done. One is neither making nor testing “moral laws.” The “moral consciousness that was deedless” now moves into action.

In the moral world (as in the ethical world) cases of action were “things.” But Conscience goes right back to the beginning. It has the moral equivalent of Sense-Certainty quite spontaneously.³ Hegel presents this transition as one which the moral consciousness makes knowingly; and indeed Fichte made it. We have to remember the enormous influence of Kant and Fichte, and the great range of examples and applications of their views that they gave, in order to understand why

Hegel needs so many repetitive negations. I have tried in the analysis to isolate the positive doctrine and the systematic connection of Conscience with Sense-Certainty in Hegel's view. The text is fairly easy to follow, so the analysis is easy to check. In my commentary I shall concentrate on filling in the positive doctrines against which the negations are directed.

"Spirit that is self-certain" does not need either the casuistry that Kant so industriously supplied, or the Utopian constructions that Fichte offered. Hegel's language of "moral sense-certainty" should remind us of the "moral sense" school (especially Shaftesbury, who came within Hegel's cultural horizons quite early—probably at Tübingen).³

Kant was antipathetic to the moral sense theory. He insisted that Duty must be known, that it was universalizable as a "law," that it is not directly sensed or felt. So he belongs essentially to the Moral World-View, and we find him only negatively present in the Hegelian theory of Conscience. But Fichte—who gave the intuitively certain version of the "rational faith" in his earlier works (and climactically in the *Vocation of Man*)—is also a notable philosopher of Conscience, as immediate moral certainty.⁴ There is no such thing as a conflict of duties, he taught, because the criterion of duty is conscientious "conviction"; and that is a feeling. This "feeling of truth and certainty is the absolute criterion that we were seeking of the rightness of our conviction of duty." According to Fichte, "Conscience never *errs*, and it cannot err; for it is the immediate consciousness of our pure original Ego."⁵ One is reminded of Rousseau's dictum that "the General Will is always right, but it is not always enlightened"; and of course "the Law of the Heart" which we traced hypothetically to the Savoyard Vicar in *Emile*, is an important statement of the (still unsituated) morality of conscience. Conscience is now preserved from the excesses of sentimental conviction into which it there falls, by the definition in the legal and social order that it has now achieved.⁶

It is also Fichte (in the *Vocation of Man*) who regards moral action as the immediate conversion of sense-certainty into the implicit being (*das Ansich*) of the Spirit. Hegel attacks his sublime disregard for the independent reality of Nature in *Faith and Knowledge*.⁷ The stable world of Sense-Certainty is full of nameable things in space. But in time it is perpetual transience; and Conscience operates in the negative medium of time, so that actions are the responses to the moral sense and impulse of the moment. In the Kantian perspective of the Moral World moral situations become spiritual "things," so that conflicts of duty, or at least disagreements about duty, become possible, because the interests and impulses of the moral observer's place and moment become mere "properties" of a moral thing which is situated in a certain place (and can be observed from many other places). For Conscience this is impossible. The conscientious agent is in one definite place, and she must act at this moment. The situation of Conscience is unique, so all casuistry is ruled out.

We cannot fail to remark on the resemblance of this position to that of Antigone and Creon. Conflicts will not arise automatically from such natural factors as sex, because "characters" are no longer fixed by such factors; moral commitments are

more variable in the world of liberty, equality and fraternity. But there will inevitably be diametrically opposed views about virtually every action, precisely because the *natural* feelings of the ethical substance have as much validity as any others. Thus (as the Suffragettes discovered) there are now both men and women who agree fervently with Creon on one side; and on the other side both men and women who agree with Mary Wollstonecraft's argument in favor of universal education for moral development. Fichte was a member of this second party, but he would be appalled to see where moral education has led, with respect to the liberation of practical interests (and consequently of conscientious feelings). In this world of feelings the most harmonious seeming tendencies are full of social dynamite.

The final displacement of the Moral World-View left all of us as conscious sinners in the presence of a Holy Will. Neither side is capable of a proper "deed." The moral consciousness remains "deedless" (*thatlos*) because it could never decide what the object of action was. This was because it was so preoccupied with the inadequacies of its *Anschaung*. Now the internalization of the Holy Will as the voice of Conscience has produced a rational will that can act. It has a content, and it knows what the content is. It is "moralische *Handeln* als *Handeln*."⁸

5./636. Conscience is in no way insecure about itself. It needs no God-given standard.

6./637. It is not tied in knots about whether it really *is* acting freely (morally) or not. It knows that it is not doing pure Duty; it is following its own singular conviction.

The strict doctrine of Conscience eliminates all the problems that arise from the mingling of knowledge with faith. Fichte was as much involved as Kant in the effort to rationalize religious experience into a continuum with scientific knowledge. He constructed that continuum at the level of *Anschaung*, which was the basic level of theoretical experience in the Kantian critical philosophy. But it is plain that for Fichte "religious obedience" (even when mediated by the *Vorstellung* of "holiness") is only an alienated imitation of true morality. So the encounter with God (whether as gracious savior, or as holy will) does not properly belong to Fichte's moral world-order; and those who accused him of "atheism" were justified in the sense that the only law-giver for Fichte was the finite moral self.

It is exactly here, however, that the problem of Conscience arises. How is the blind and dark immediacy of moral feeling (which is supposed to be unerring) to be conciliated with the intellectual intuition of "moral law"? Fichte has climbed to his position by using the ladder of Kantian cognition. He cannot simply throw it away (and, as we shall see, he does not do so). Conscience is a mode of universal knowledge as well as a uniquely singular feeling.

It is clear that Conscience needs none of the "displacements" of moral knowledge except the last. The top rung of the moral-world ladder—the last placement of our moral feet—was the Holy Will as an objective standard of pure Duty in its unity. That standard (in the inverted shape of the knowing agent, instead of the observing judge) is internalized in Conscience.

This brings out a different aspect of what Hegel meant by saying that "the preceding moral consciousness" was "deedless." The intuition of the moral world was

concerned not with doing any specific thing in the empirical world, but with the fulfilling (*vollbringen*) of “pure duty.” “Pure duty” was the object of its intuitively absolute knowledge. Wanting to bring forth something else (such as a recognizable self-affirmation, compare par. 602) is “impure.” The consciousness of pure duty contradicts itself about this (par. 602 is exactly where Hegel declares for the first time that “*individual conviction* and the knowing of it make up an absolute moment of morality”); but if we look at the whole cycle of displacements when the test of experience comes, we see that it is the *Gesinnung* that is put before God in the end. Only in my disposition, i.e. only in so far as I do *not* act, am I moral. Any action of mine fulfils a determinate duty—one that is flawed or imperfect because I am the one who has determined or defined it. It does not correspond to my “pure” knowledge, and others can criticize it. When I am made aware of its one-sidedness I can only pray for God’s grace on the basis of my pure intention.

Conscience dissolves all the displacements—and particularly the final reliance upon the “purity” of the moral disposition—in the recognition that I am my duty, *and* my duty is to be *me*. The uniqueness of “my own conviction”—*eigene Ueberzeugung*, underlined by Hegel as an unmistakably Fichtean expression⁹ which also carries an echo of Luther at the Diet of Worms—is what makes my duty mine. My conscience is my singular self-certainty as Reason: “Here I stand, I can do nothing else”; and (like theoretical Reason) this practical Reason is “all reality.”

- 7./638. Conscience identifies its being-for-self [its conviction] with its being-in-self [its duty]. This resolution is a running negation. The self contains its own nature, and conscience expresses its law as the “distinction” of duty at this moment.

Fichte’s definition of Conscience contains two elements. First, one must be formally conscious that some act is one’s “duty.” Here all of the familiar critical apparatus of the Kantian philosophy is brought into play: the good will, the moral law, pure respect, the Categorical Imperative. But secondly, this duty is imposed upon one in its absolutely specific form by one’s own “conviction.” Others may see other duties here, in perfect conformity with the abstract concept of duty; but those duties in the plural are not Duty in the singular. Concretely there is only *this* duty given me by my conscience which has determined this (formally satisfactory) duty as *mine* by “conviction.” So, as Hegel says, whereas the moral consciousness (in its World-View) grasped itself only as the *Ansich* or essence, when it becomes Conscience it grasps its “being-for-self” (or its self) as well. It has not lost its grip on Duty as “the essence”; but there is no longer a conflict (or disharmony) between “pure Duty” as universal, and “actuality” as singular. The self-affirmation of the necessarily existent and singular self has been accepted as a moment of Duty. The positivity of duty (as universal thought), and the negativity of the self (as unique thinker), run together into “pure” negativity. This coincidence is logically possible because Duty is always an Ought; nothing that already is can be Duty, but only what (as pure thought) is negative of what actually is. It is the universal and the singular negativities that “coincide” (*zusammenlaufen*). This pure negativity of the thinking self is not a living organic body, but a Cartesian pure

intellect. It simply “distinguishes” within the range of possible duties (the pure essence) which one is to be validated at this moment. The one which is thus distinguished becomes the concrete unity of Duty (the in-itself) and Conviction (the for-me). That is to say it becomes valid “in and for itself.” This unity is actualized in what I conscientiously do.

- 8./639. This negative will is strictly universal. It is only the duty I know to be mine, that is really Duty. The law is for my sake, not vice-versa. But formal Duty is the aspect of being-in-itself, which is distinct from the being-for-self of conviction because it is for others too. This being-for-another is incorporated as a necessary moment in conscience.

The possibility of turning the concrete moment of conviction against the formal moment of duty as such is at once clear. It is especially obvious to someone who has not had a Kantian education. Charlotte Corday meditated long and hard; and she had as strong a conviction of doing her duty as anyone has ever had. But none of us can call assassination a “duty” without mental discomfort. So Hegel did not use the word at all, until we reached the Moral World-View. The correct understanding of Duty, as he uses it, is given by Kant. Therefore we must now look for the self-affirmation that subverts the Kantian formal concept with full knowledge of it, and for the sake of an ideal which “fulfils” the moral law, but claims to be higher.

It is legitimate to say about Fichte’s doctrine of Conscience that “it is now the law that is for the sake of the self, not the self that is for the sake of the law.” For it is personal conviction that makes duty concrete. But the thinker who said this was consciously sublating Kantian morality, not just supplying the moment of concrete content that it lacks. Jacobi was, of course, inspired by the example of Jesus, when he made his rather grandiloquent claims in his open letter *To Fichte*:

Yea, I am the atheist, the godless one, the one who, in defiance of the will that wills nothing, wills to lie as dying Desdemona lied, or to lie and deceive as Pylades did in feigning to be Orestes; to murder like Timoleon, to break law and oath like Epaminondas, or John de Witt; who wills suicide like Otho, or temple-robbery like David—yes, I even will to pluck the ears of wheat on the Sabbath for no other reason save that I am hungry, and because the law is made for man and not man for the law . . . For I know, I know with the most holy certitude within me—that the *privilegium aggratiandi*, for crimes of this sort against the pure letter of the absolutely universal law of Reason, is man’s authentic right of majesty, the seal of his dignity, of his divine nature.¹⁰

Hegel does not want to go to this extreme of “subjective Beauty” yet. He has introduced Jacobi’s claim at this point for the opposite reason. For the moment he wants to show us, not how the Beautiful Soul is implicit within “Conscience,” but rather how “duty” remains present in conviction as the “essence” of morality. I may be quite convinced that what I do is my duty. But what I do (my *Handlung*) exists as a public “fact” (*Tat*); it is a “being,” and everyone knows that I was the one who did it. Everyone else can evaluate it by the formal standard of pure duty. This

variable evaluation is only an abstract moment compared with the concreteness of duty in action; but it is a necessary moment, because conscience produces actions, not an inward disposition. It makes the self exist visibly for others as well as for itself. For this reason, as we shall soon see, conscience must speak its conviction; the “deed” cannot speak for itself.

- 9./640. This being-for-another remains as the separate substance. But Conscience must be recognized in it. Conscience exists in a community of consciences—a difference from the Moral World-View which has no recognized status [cf. par. 447] and so is a play of subjective uncertainty. Personal conviction *is* personality as self-conscious. What is done with this recognized conviction, is therefore moral consciousness existing—the recognition is its *harmony*.

Conscience operates upon a singular immediate certainty. It is not a great whirl of competing certainties, but the simple global certainty that “Now I must do this” (like “Now it is Day”). The “substances” that are not really there for it at the beginning, are generated by its actions. The completed act—analogue to “Here is a tree (or a house)” —is “Here is what I have done.” For Conscience, as for Faust when he translates the Gospel, the only acceptable translation of *logos* is a radical rewriting: “In the beginning was the Deed.”¹¹ But the deed creates the *fact*—Faust’s word *Tat* means both. We all hear him commit himself. Our common memory is the element and the substance in which his action “has *standing* and *actuality*.”

Again, the contrast with the Moral World-View comes to our aid. What remains constant in all the shifts of consciousness in its moral world is the morality of “duty in its purity.” But that does not show at all, in our ordinary world. There is nothing moral “out there” that is universally recognized. The “moral disposition” is not actual; and the “achieved actuality” is not spiritual. Conscience has overcome that problem; it has successfully united Duty with actuality, because explaining itself is a necessary moment of the act. To speak (as Faust does) can be a self-sufficient act of conscience. Usually there is something else I must do; but I must always be willing and able to say what I have done. Otherwise it will not be “my act” that is seen at all. We can see, now, why it is only self-expression in *speech* that fully satisfies the concept of “action” in the spiritual animal kingdom. The post-Revolutionary “animal kingdom of the “spirit”—the rationalized bourgeois society of 1806, in which the singular rational selves are “real for themselves, in and and for themselves”—is the world of conscientious agents.

Of course, I don’t have to be explaining all the time, in order to be conscientious. It is enough that I know what I am doing, and can describe my duty if I need to; Conscience must essentially be reflectively thoughtful.

- 10./641. Looking back to paragraphs 394ff., we see that initially the *Sache selbst* was treated as a predicate [pars. 411–412] by the honorable consciousness. Now this abstract goodness is the subject in which all the moments of objectivity are united. Having been first ethical custom, then law and external authority, the *Sache selbst* is now subject [cf. pars. 17ff.] and has concrete content.

The individual with a satisfied conscience is at peace with the world. She will not rail at the luck of things (as the moral consciousness does in par. 601) or envy the situation of others (as the imperfect consciousness does in par. 625). This rational self-sufficiency first appeared in the Spiritual Animal Kingdom"; but Conscience is not an image of the world of nature in which a multitude of separate individual beings strive to preserve and express themselves. That animal kingdom is now "inverted" because the objective "common good" of the enlightened kingdom has now been internalized by the self. "Conscience" is the same "self" in everyone; it is a fully spiritual world.¹² The conscientious person is not "worthy," "honorable," "public-spirited"; she *is* her own personal conscience; and she is its abstract essence, which carries with it the principle of universal respect for conscience in everyone.

Hegel gives us a very useful summary of the stages by which the *Sache selbst* arrives at this Kantian universal subjectivity. Beginning as the "general good"—the abstract logical category that can be "predicated" of worthy agents and actions—the Thing Itself becomes the "ethical substance" in the world of True Spirit. Here it has two sides: the tribal custom and the political constitution. In the world of *Bildung* it gains outward thereness as God's Law. For after the external compulsion of Roman Law breaks down, the long process of self-reconstruction depends upon the ideal authority first of the unselfconscious projective thought of Faith, and then of the consciously rational action-programme of the Enlightenment. The experience of the Revolution turns this outwardly oriented programme inward, so that in the postulational theory of Kant and Fichte, the *Sache selbst* gains the "self-knowing essentiality of thinking." But only now in Conscience is the Thing Itself plainly recognizable as the universal *subject*, i.e. as the "subjectivity" of the "ethical substance." The "ethical substance," moreover, has become universally moral on the way, i.e. it has become the universal community of liberty, equality and fraternity.

If we want a name for the *Sache selbst* that will cover all of its "shapes," "the human good" would not be wide of the mark (the qualification "human" escapes Aristotle's strictures on the Platonic Idea of the Good, while retaining enough Platonic resonance to connect the *Sache selbst* of Chapter V with Hegel's definition at the beginning of the Introduction: "the actual knowledge of what truly is"). It is "the general good" that the "honorable" consciousness grasps; and it is essentially a predicate, for it is the *good of* humanity as such. So with only a small effort of supplementation, we can give a coherent interpretation of the *Sache selbst* in all of its important appearances in the *Phenomenology* on the basis of what Hegel says here.

In Conscience this "predicate" becomes "the *subject* that knows these moments upon itself." It has "substantiality in general" in the form of the "moral law," the *Ansich* which it makes into a recognized substance in the action. It has outward *Dasein* as a visible (and spoken) fact. Its "essentiality of thinking" is the concrete inward consciousness of this duty as mine by conviction. When we say that Conscience "contains" this moment and "knows it *an ihm selbst*" we are again insisting that Conscience must be explicitly self-conscious in a verbal way, i.e. it must be able

to explain and justify itself. None of the moments is self-sufficient. Conscience has “lordship” over them (*sie beherrscht*). What this means is that Conscience can shift from one to another in its explanation, according to what is needed; but this shifting will not be a redefining of what is “essential.” As the unity of the moments, Conscience itself remains always what is essential; and it can make all of its moments visible. It never needs to retreat into an invisible sphere.

This comparison with the abstract *Sache selbst* completes the account of Conscience as a Concept. We shall now see, at some length, that it is not just a formal concept (like the Moral World which “shifts” at every turn in experience) but an actual Concept that keeps its balance in all circumstances.¹³

(b) The “Experience” of Consciousness

- 11./642. Conscience is, first of all, knowledge. It needs to know the *whole* situation, but it also knows that it does not know everything. I do not just express *myself*, but act in the world, which is not a mere manifold, but a system of circumstances. I cannot know or consider all the ramifications. I do my best, and for me, that is enough. My situation is what I know it to be.

When we first reached the Concept of Conscience (in par. 631) Hegel pointed out that the “world of displacement . . . will not become anything else in its essence through its going back into itself.” We shall now see just how true that comment was, as all the aspects of “moral perception” reappear. But the “experience” of Conscience does not shift it round in a circle; it drives the Concept deeper and deeper into itself until it inverts into the Beautiful Soul.

In practice the criticism of Conscience begins with the question of what knowledge a conscientious agent needs. The main drift of the argument is obvious, so we can use our intuitive preconception of it to follow the movement of Hegel’s technical language. This is a valuable advantage, because there are always places where we have to struggle with the conceptual armour to elicit the precise import of the argument.

A *Gegensatz* makes its appearance in action (viz., the antithesis of “what is” and “what ought to be”). This has several specific aspects (“singular determinations”) of which the first is the agent’s knowledge of the actual situation. This is the moment of universality in or upon this conscientious knowing. What that means (as Hegel explains in plain language) is that we ought to grasp the situation in an “unrestricted” way. This may be a deliberate invocation of the “bad infinite,” but let us take it commonsensically, i.e. let us set a standard that might in ideal circumstances be met. We would ordinarily say that in acting “conscientiously” we need to know everything morally relevant to the visibly finite list of options that are open to us. But knowing is only one moment in action; the crucial point is that we have to decide and to act now, before the control of the options is lost to us. So what we might ideally achieve if the understanding of the situation were our main object (and not just the necessary first moment in our deciding what to do) is just what we

cannot achieve right now, when we need it. We know (says Hegel, but in strict logic we are only bound to fear and to suspect) that we do not (read: *may* not) know everything relevant. Since we ought to be “sure,” our decision, whatever it is (and however lucky we may be with the results) does not meet the standards of a rational conscience.

The mention of “luck”—which I have injected deliberately in line with my commonsensical reading of the text so far—brings up the other limit of knowledge in action. We almost certainly do not know all of the relevant existing circumstances (which might be possible for us if we made “knowing” our object). But on top of that we *cannot* know all of the morally significant consequences of whatever action we may decide upon. In the “genuinely universal and pure connection of knowing” we simply want to know how things are, i.e. we want to make being and thought coincide in a perfect identity. But in action there is the antithesis between how things are and how they ought to be. To know how things are is possible (with a degree of accuracy appropriate to the subject matter as Aristotle might say); to know that our action will produce the situation that our conscience dictates is not.

The reaction of the actual world to the negative activity of our active thought is not completely foreseeable. Even if we do produce the situation that we envisaged, this intended result of our action still has a hidden side; and with respect to consequences I cannot conscientiously keep the bad infinite out of the picture. I do know categorically, whenever I act, that the consequences will spread out indefinitely in all directions; so I cannot conscientiously ignore that knowledge. I am thoughtfully conscious of the natural order (the “absolute *other*”) as a “manifold in itself.” But like a stone thrown into a lake my action generates novelty in all directions. It makes the bad infinite exist *für sich*, or on its own account.

Hegel says that the “actuality subsisting in itself,” against which action is directed, is an “absolute multiplicity that divides and spreads out endlessly, backwards . . . sideways . . . forwards . . .” The forward chain of consequences needs no comment; and the “sideways” effect upon the active situations of others (whose actions have their own independent chains of consequences) is easy enough to grasp. But the spreading of the actuality “backwards into its conditions” needs some consideration. The “obvious” interpretation is to say the situation is already a bad infinite of “conditions” before I act (and hence it is a logical truth that it cannot be known sufficiently well to meet the rational standard of conscience). But when I avoided this interpretation earlier, I was not simply guided by my own commonsensical empiricist prejudices (though I admit they are there). I was influenced more by a properly Hegelian imperative. We must not allow “absolute scepticism” to raise its head again.

Hegel seems to assert clearly at this point that the bad infinite only becomes “actual” because of the action. It is only as a result of my action that the situation *becomes* a bad infinite of backward-spreading conditions for me. There are morally significant facts about my own motivation, and about the way I interpreted the situation, and the way other people represented themselves to me, which only become knowable by me in hindsight. It may seem now as if I am simply reading my own

post-Freudian conception of action back into Hegel's world. But, in fact, there is a Kantian doctrine of the unconscious self; and the whole Hegelian doctrine that "philosophy is the comprehension of its own time in thoughts" rests on the clear recognition that the past always belongs to the present, and hence it necessarily has a perpetually novel aspect constituted by our present standpoint upon it.

I think this is what Hegel is referring to here. In the perspective of Conscience it is the Kantian negative insight that is important: we do not intuit our own motives, we do not comprehend the "conditions" of our supposedly conscientious conviction; and the action itself, as we and others react to its consequences, opens up a backward vista that is like a bottomless abyss. Psychoanalysis has given us techniques for handling this, and even (in a measure) for comprehending it, and mastering its terrors. But any reader of the Bible, of Dante or of Shakespeare, knows that the discovery-experience itself is not exclusively post-Hegelian.¹⁴

This self-knowledge is, by definition, what the conscientious agent cannot have; and the actuality of the bad infinite in *all* directions is generated by the action itself regarded as a *Gegensatz* between the existing situation and the objective goal of conscientious action. Thus an honest Conscience is always guilty. The self-satisfaction of conscientious "conviction" is just the internalized form (comprehensively inverted because it includes all the finite limitations of the previous moral consciousness) of the almighty and all-knowingly gracious God who accepted the incomplete performance as complete, the imperfect as perfect; and the God's-eye view is impossible. But the inevitability of "guilt" is a "metaphysical" concern. Come what may we do have to act; and we all agree that when someone does "the best she can" in the light of what she knows, the action deserves to be called "conscientious."

- 12./643. There could be many duties even within the situation as I know it. I decide (by conviction) what my duty is. This conviction is an empty form (it can apply to anything) but it actually has my natural inclinations as its content. My conscientious duty can only arise out of *my* feelings. If it came from anywhere else it could only be an imposition on me. So Conscience is necessarily capricious.

The "second determination" of Conscience involves what we may call "abstract deliberation." When I am thinking about what I ought to do, then (on the assumption that I do not decide that I must find out more before I can act upon the case—in which event it would cease for the moment to be my own concrete case) I find myself with various options depending on how I look at it, which aspects are important to me, and so on. No matter how firmly I insist that a "concrete" conflict of duties is impossible, I do have to choose between duties in the abstract, or between the possible "maxims" (to use the Kantian expression) that could be made categorical by my personal conviction. "Pure conviction" is like "pure duty." It is an empty subjectivity to match with the empty objectivity of the moral law. The actual subjectivity that identifies duty by conviction is my empirical self with all of its "natural" content of impulse and inclination.

Thus the “conviction” upon which I act is a concreteness of my embodied being. No objectification of the self that we have so far come upon has the concreteness that attaches to my feelings and sensations. I may of course be a “patriot” (like Adam Lux, however, rather than like Charlotte Corday);¹⁵ or I may be a public-spirited civic “worthy”; or a parent concerned for my children. But my conscientious conviction about any of these things comes from what we rudely but insightfully call a “gut-feeling.” “Conscience” is a gut-commitment; and it is not Reason that the guts are full of.

- 13./644. This capricious decision is my “duty.” I can think of it as my duty to get rich (for family’s sake, or for the sake of my social usefulness). Others may think this is a *Betrug*. Violence is moral self-assertion, so-called “cowardice” is the duty of saving my (socially useful) life. One is only immoral if one does not know what to say.

We have lots of “gut-feelings.” So conscientious conviction is at the mercy of the “free will” that Kant called *Willkühr*. As observers, we can set up an abstract scale topped by the patriotism of a good Fichtean like Hölderlin’s friend Jakob Zwilling, who died at Wagram;¹⁶ and containing, in order, the civic respectability of Hegel’s Frankfurt employer the wine-merchant Gogel;¹⁷ and the parental concern of Hölderlin’s mother Frau Gock.¹⁸ At the bottom of this scale comes the gut-conviction of the Abbé Desfontaines that he has the strongest possible right to go on living—and to do it in comfort.¹⁹ Any of these “convictions” (or a host of others that can be placed along the scale between them) can become the actual conviction of Conscience.

The wine-merchant Gogel certainly wanted every year’s end to find him a little richer than the year before. He ran a family firm, and his dead brother’s children depended on him as well as his own; so if he was sometimes a bit like Scrooge in his business we can easily see how he could salve his conscience with the argument that Hegel here provides. He did become a Senator of Frankfurt in 1806; so he was certainly alive to “the *possibility* of being useful to his neighbors.” But we may well imagine that customers whose unsatisfactory wine he would not take back, or Hegel himself, as the house-tutor of the Gogel children, sometimes thought that Johann Noé’s “worthiness” was all a *Betrug*—just the hypocritical façade erected by someone who was already well-off, but was insatiably greedy for more.²⁰

The soldier who runs away can always claim that the battle was lost anyway, and that his *duty* is to save his life with all of its potential social usefulness. What others call “courage,” or his duty to stay and fight, he sees as a violation of the only *real* duty that he had left. Hegel “abstractly” divides this conscientious duty into two, with the obvious intention of suggesting that there is a *Betrug* involved in arguing that self-preservation is a “duty” because one is socially useful. But the real vitriol comes out, when he suggests that “immorality” can only consist in the clumsiness or ineptitude of not knowing what to *say* about what one is doing or has done. Conscience is self-sufficient, as we have already seen, because it knows how to explain itself, or how to accord itself the proper recognition.

- 14./645. An outsider's opinion is irrelevant. He only sees a single side of my case. I can accept or reject his advice as I choose. There is no content that is universal as such; hence nothing is duty until I decide that it is. The good of mankind or of my community is not an object of duty more than my welfare; as opposed to my welfare it is just as determinate. *My* prosperity is a contribution to the general welfare; my spending puts money in the pockets of others. Duty is not to be determined by calculations of utility.

The deepest logical problem about Conscience is that all genuinely felt "convictions" are equally immediate. There are only the two pure forms, the objective form of Duty—or the Categorical Imperative as a test of "maxims"—and the subjective form of Conviction—identification with my "self." The two empty forms can coincide upon *any* content; and once they have both closed upon it, the resulting "Conscience" is unassailable. Every other content that might be put forward is equally determinate. Since every actual duty has its universal and its singular side, we might think that abstractly singular duties can be compared with respect to their universal scope. But consider the case that Sartre made famous. Is there any point in telling the young man who is supposed to have a conflict of conscience about joining De Gaulle's Free French force in Britain, as against caring for his widowed mother, that "la patrie" is the general good? Obviously not. He will do whatever he is going to do without really being affected by that.²¹

In the peacetime situation, when the Republic and its constitution are firmly established and safe, the argument will be even more pointless. A "crisis of conscience" will arise then only through a protest against the subsisting general order of things, i.e. it will emerge as the Law of the Heart. Morality as personal conviction wants always to be more than a heteronomous obedience to established law or custom. But this actually means that, in principle, the "freedom of conscience" is a right to be and to do *less* than was categorically required by the ethical identification with objective "justice" that was spontaneously achieved by True Spirit. Charlotte Corday knew that the assassination of Marat was "against the law." But she had a "good conscience" about it; and although we can hardly call her a true paradigm, we must admit that she had a better right to a good conscience, than Eichmann or others like him, who have claimed to have a good conscience because they were only "*obeying* the law."

The most interesting aspect of Conscience is its ready assimilation of the bourgeois doctrine that there is a necessary harmony between private and public prosperity. Not only does getting rich mean that one is able to be more benevolent, but by spending for one's own enjoyment one shares the wealth. Thus private prosperity is good for the community as a whole. Hegel seems to have brought in this "economic" argument about the harmony of private and public good in order to distinguish the standpoint of the "Real Individuals" from that of "Conscience" proper. For, of course, a good Conscience never *uses* this argument; but a merchant with a "good conscience" will indignantly reject the argument that a public servant is more conscientious than she is. The moral response to all utilitarian arguments is that nobody can actually measure private and public good successfully; and the self-sufficient certainty of "conviction" despises all this calculation of more and

less. But the consequence is that we have to leave Conscience to define itself.²² No external standards, either of custom or of rational calculation, can be imposed on it.

- 15./646. Conviction is the unity of pure thinking and individuality, of duty and inclination. It recognizes no independent authority, and takes charge of Peter's keys. Duty is self-determination pure and simple.

Hegel now summarizes and repeats the argument of paragraphs 642–645. The object of this summing up, which emerges at the end of paragraph 646, is to facilitate the move from a Fichtean to a Jacobian position. As a result of its complete self-sufficiency with respect to knowledge, and its absolute impregnability to criticism with respect to its decision, Conscience “has the majesty of absolute autarchy, to bind and to loose.” The unmistakable reference to the power that Christ gave to Peter, which the Papacy inherited, leads us directly to Luther's defiance at the Council of Worms, and so to the *Protestant* conscience as the power that can bind and loose itself. This is the “majesty” that is above the law (as Jacobi claimed). Conscience is “self-definition.” It knows no Lawgiver, because it is itself the Test of Laws. It is in accord with duty (*pflichtmässig*) because it *says* so.

According to its explicit claims, conscience is the unity of *pure* Duty (the being-in-itself of the rational self) and perfect Conviction (the being-for-itself of *this* self). Luther is convinced that he “can do nothing else” because “God” requires him to stand firm. God is the absolute object of his “pure thought,” and it is he, the individual Martin, who must stand by God, just as he prays that God will stand by him. In this communion of the two, the mediating unity is “the self-certain Spirit.” Nothing can stand as an independent authority against this spirit. God's truth, for example, is in the Bible; and Martin does not claim to be the only, or the best, scholar of the text. But he must act in terms of the knowledge that he has; and it is just the obstinacy of a gut-conviction, just the fact that his reading and his feeling are *his*, that he sets against the long tradition of the Church. He was by no means the first to argue long and hard for this view, without convincing the Council. Why can he not give in? Because it is against his *Gewissen*, against the certainty of the “Spirit” within him.

But if the soldier can argue that he has a conscientious duty to save his life, and the merchant can prove that by enriching himself, he is automatically doing his duty to his fellows, what does “conformity to the moral law” mean? “Duty” is an absolutely empty form that is sublated in Conviction; and Conviction affirms whatever the “natural individuality” of this specific Real Individual (or “spiritual animal”) supplies as a content. No one has ever put the argument of Luther's opponents at the Diet more powerfully than Hegel does here. Against all the traditions and discipline of the universal community, Luther sets his nakedly opinionated self-will. To stand firm was his duty, because he saw it as his duty; and the important thing was that his own community supported him. However self-willed it may be, Conscience is never simply “private judgment”: it is a private judgment that demands universal recognition. This is what we now have to observe.

- 16./647. This pure knowledge of self is what has to be respected by all as what their *own* self-hood is.

Luther's experience is essential to Conscience, because the Spirit is explicit in it. He has to stand by *his* reading of the Bible, because Christ, the "selfhood of all," rose for him in it. But there had been others before him, who were "convinced" of their duty to stand by their own insight.²³ Luther was the one who had a community behind him strong enough to maintain his "self-certain Spirit." His community recognized the universal right and duty of maintaining one's own conscience as one's own. It is important to put the "right" first, because Luther's opponents understood well enough that he thought he had a "duty." What puzzled them was the origin of his supposed right to define it as he did; it is the *right* of Conscience that must be generally recognized.

The right involved here is the right of a "being" to exist. Even in the sphere of legal right, the recognized being is a "spiritual" one (which means in empirical terms a "being" that is constituted by language). The law constitutes an unborn baby, or a child too young to speak, or a lunatic, or a dead man, or a trust set up by the will of someone long dead, or a company of investors, as a recognized "person" with rights that are defined by the law. But Conscience is the *self*-definition of a person in terms of a law that she gives for herself at the moment of definition. Thus, we cannot exclude the self-definition of the merchant who holds it is his duty to get rich, or that of the soldier who says it was his duty to run away. These, too, are self-defining individuals, just as much as that lonely figure of blind obstinacy or divinely inspired insight (or simply of a new form of social consciousness, depending on your point of view) at the Council of Worms. Consciences are all (materially) *different*; and they are all (formally) *equal*.

- 17./648. But what I do exists for observation apart from me; and others may or may not approve of it. So my universal certainty and their universal recognition become dialectical uncertainty and non-recognition in actual situations. Others judge me by what I did and said; but I may be just as much beyond it as they are. So displacement starts again.

At this point we move from the "moral certainty" of the agent, to the "moral perception" of the observer or judge. The Moral World is intellectually intuited as a kind of "space." All of the "views" are together, and we try to make them into a rational order of coexistence on the model of the world of perceptible things. But Conscience, as the moment of intellectual certainty, is a time-line. It does constitute moral "things"; but the "things" do not pre-exist for it (as they do for the Kantian moral Perception). The moral things that it constitutes are its "actions"; but it demands recognition for its "self" as the self-positing, or self-defining, agent. So there is, after all, room for a dialectic of displacement between the things that are posited, and the self that posits or defines itself in them.

The things in their simple being, the actions once done, are nobody's Self at all. Everyone can arrive at their own opinion about any act. Discovering that we all

disagree about something, in a sphere where everyone's opinion deserves respect, creates a situation of "perfect uncertainty" about the actual spirit of the agent. She may be inspired by the Devil, who is a liar, and the father of lies. The actual self who did the action can protest against this cloud of judgment in two distinct senses. On the one hand, no one else can really enter exactly into the conviction of the moment when I acted—"You weren't *there*," as we say. On the other hand, I myself have now moved on too; I am just as much somewhere else as all my judges are. I may still remember how I felt then; but there is nothing necessary about this. In other words I can claim that everyone else's judgment is *misplaced*; but equally I can *displace* myself. So universal displacement is just as much a necessary aspect of Conscience as universal recognition, because both sides (the active conscience, and the recognizing community) are "free from the determinacy of *this* action."

- 18./649. In so far as what I did is not what the other would have done he can justly suspect my motives; and he needs to assume the worst.

The observers cannot help but be in doubt about the agent Conscience, once they find that their views of the act differ. But this uncertainty must be resolved in the negative, says Hegel. For if Conscience is sure that it is right, then it must, in its own defence, be self-righteous. Many consciences do not work like that. But it is obvious enough that some do; and Hegel will show that the ones that do not, are no longer in the pristine condition of absolute self-certain "conviction."

Between Luther and his opponents, for example, there was no possibility of compromise. They were bound to see one another as servants of the Devil. How can he say that his arrogant defiance of the whole world is his duty? Does he not know that one must be humble, ready to admit the possibility of mistake, and so on? But the opponents of Luther had not reached the "autarchy" of Conscience at all, so we must move on to a case where there is genuinely reciprocal recognition. Consider the attitude of a soldier who fought in some battle till he was wounded and left for dead, when he hears a staff officer (who never came under fire himself) speaking of the moment when he realized that the only "right thing" left to do was to get away while he had the chance. For the man fighting in the line next to him who ran away, and admitted afterwards that he was just "scared to death," the soldier who almost died might have some sympathy. But this officer who sent others to their death, and then quite "conscientiously" saved himself, must appear *evil*. That choice was not on our soldier's moral map at all. His own action, which we are assuming he does not in any way regret, would make no sense if he allowed that the staff officer's choice was conscientious. The choice that coheres with his own would have been for the officer to ride the other way down the hill, and throw himself into the battle properly.²⁴

This example does not work in quite the same way in both directions. Even if the wound was permanently incapacitating, the staff officer does not have to claim that the soldier who is now a pensioner, or a Blue Coat beggar, did "wrong." He can say simply that their situations were different, and so their "duties" were different.

Conscience only becomes necessarily “self-righteous” when a negative judgment of the other is directly implied by what I did, or by what I now feel that I must do. In other cases, I still have all the abstract casuistry of the Moral World-View at my service. Thus, the man who was wounded can say of the one who panicked that he fought bravely enough until it got too much for him: “He did his best (and God will pardon him).” But when he says “May God have mercy on him” about the staff officer, he means something else entirely. There cannot be any proper “forgiveness” between them as long as the officer maintains his “conscientious” stance.

- 19./650. Once the moment of conscientious commitment is over, the act appears to be simply the satisfaction of a desire. An act of conscience has to be respected in its relation to the self.

Even the conscientiously unforgiving self does move on. So the time may come when it does not matter any more. If we take our battle to have been Marlborough’s victory at Blenheim (1702), and suppose our wounded woldier to have been on the winning side, we can readily imagine him coming (years later) to much the same view of the whole business that Robert Southey’s “old Kaspar” expresses to the little boy who wants to hear about it:

“But what good came of it at last?”
 Quoth little Peterkin.
 “Why that I cannot tell,” said he,
 “But ’twas a famous victory.”²⁵

Someone a bit more philosophical than Kaspar (as one of the losers might well be) could perhaps join his staff officer over a mug of ale while they compared their stories and laughed over their adventures in what appeared years later to have been a pointless commitment in any case. The battle does appear to us in Southey’s poem as fulfilling the “pleasure and desire” of someone (though hardly of the direct participants); and once the surviving participants come to this view of it, the need for moral judgment lapses.

It is not immediately obvious what fresh point Hegel wants to make in this paragraph. But if we look at the flow of the argument as a whole, it becomes clear. The moment of *Dasein*—abstract and concrete—is what is at issue. Hegel says in paragraph 649 that both the agent and the observers are free from the *Bestimmtheit* of duty. But, he adds here in paragraph 650, the “action” is not just this *Bestimmung* of being. The “knowing and conviction of it as duty” is what must be recognized. The “determining of being as such” produces only a “common actuality” (something to be laughed over in the tavern years later). It is the “known being” (the *Gewusstsein*) that requires to be recognized: the action as informed by the agent individual’s knowing of it. This is the *Dasein* that has to be the “recognized being” of Conscience. In other words, Hegel is once more setting aside the babel of external criticism. He uses it only as a means to bring out the verbal character of Conscience as its absolute form. It is not what is done, but what is said about it by the

agent, that matters. We begin to learn here that what others say is not decisive. This is confirmed by what follows. The fact that others are bound to take my conscience for a bad one, only becomes important when I begin to have a bad conscience myself—and that is not yet the case.

I said earlier that unlike the consciousness of the Moral World, Conscience does not shift or displace itself. But Hegel himself speaks of its “displacing” what it sets before the community in paragraph 648. So we should look more closely at what happens in paragraphs 648–650. The reappearance of displacement is a mark of vulnerability. But for the present it only serves to reveal why and how Conscience is absolutely invulnerable from outside. Conscience does not adopt a different position like the “moral consciousness.” It holds firm to its own position always; but being “moral sense-certainty” it is perpetually displaced by the world. Willy-nilly it has to go on to the next moment of its life all the time. The situation that it is in, changes; and what it says about itself must change too, because the *past* self is not its “actual” self any more (but only a sublated moment of the present self). Thus “forgiving and forgetting” is a normal part of the life of Conscience; and for the moment, this is just the last phase of the “experience” that teaches it how to escape from external criticism altogether.²⁶

- 20./651. The *self* enters into being in conscientious action. What is *respected* is its conscientiousness. General recognition is not concerned with the act’s effects, but with the agent.

In the world of Conscience everyone understands the limits of conscientious knowledge and control. That is why we feel that Oedipus is unfortunate, and not a criminal. Oedipus himself, as Sophocles portrays him at Colonus, has discovered the position of Conscience. He demands general recognition of the fact that, in spite of the objective horror of his deeds, he has done no moral wrong.²⁷ His “immediate” actions are not what count. We have to comprehend the situation, first of a man attacked by strangers on the road, and in real fear for his life, and then that of one invited to become king of a strange city, with marriage to the widowed queen as the necessary condition for this. The “action in itself” has its intrinsic being in the order of nature; but the conscious act of the self has its being in consciousness; and although the singular self may forget, and must eventually die, the general consciousness is permanent. So by its recognition it can give to the conscious act an objective reality just as permanent and stable as that which the natural (or immediate) act enjoys. The natural effect of Oedipus’ marriage is that his own children are his siblings. But that was never known and meant to be, and it does not *have* to be recognized. Both Oedipus and his children can fairly complain—as both he and Antigone do—that they have not been accorded proper moral recognition.²⁸

- 21./652. Thus here again it is language that is the mode of being of Spirit. My conscience is what I *say*.

Conscience is the linguistic existence of the self *for* itself and for others (cf. par. 508). The *statement* of conscience is the objectification of the self involved in Fichte's Identity principle. "I the subject am identical with this objective definition" is what is symbolized by "I = I." In order for this to be true, however, *every* "I" must accept my self-definition as truly "what is there." The statement of Conscience is the statement of "what is *here*," and everyone must see it as "what is *there* in *that* place."²⁹

- 22./653. This self-definition is not self-inverting but self-certain [contrast pars. 520ff.]. Ethical life could command and lament. The Moral World-View is silent. Conscience is a *voice*; and language is the essential medium for the mutual respect of its self-definition. Without that, the self could not distinguish itself from what it has done. Conscientious action is the actualizing of self-certainty, not the making of a plan into a visible thing.

Because Conscience is self-definition (in action and speech together) in the sphere of universal recognition, it cannot suffer inversion, as the language of honest Culture does, through the fact that language exists for others as well as oneself. That is why the dialectic of uncertainty, which forces those who are conscientiously opposed to me to regard me as *evil*, does not affect the absolute *autarchy* of my conscience. Others may misunderstand me, so that I am obliged to explain myself further; but no matter how long this goes on, I remain the authority. If the other says she understands, but the understanding contains a secret inversion (like the one that is explicit, not secret, in the discourse of the Young Rameau) then we are not at the level of Conscience, but have simply slipped back to the level of *absolute* Culture. We must distinguish this sort of conceptual backsliding from the forward movement of Conscience itself toward confession and mutual forgiveness.

The "return of the Spirit into itself" is what is expressed in the fact that the last word in any proper discussion of Conscience is with the conscientious self. Oedipus and Antigone bewail their lot, but they know that they must bear it. The Chorus does not respond with conscientious sympathy, but with the insistence that one cannot argue with what the Gods (or the City) decree.³⁰ So although Oedipus, particularly, states a conscientious position, it is not founded in the universal context of a self-conscious community.

Hegel's characterization of the Moral World-Consciousness is interesting. He sees the process of *Verstellung* as arising because this consciousness cannot say what it knows. It cannot define the essence of its position in objective terms, because it remains in the inner world, and has only an external connection with the publicly visible world of *Dasein*. Conscience can overcome this alienation, precisely because its expression is essentially linguistic. The conscientious self is visibly "there" for the first time in a sensibly public world that does not limit or impede its spiritual freedom. The determinate action is finite (and may have an objective essence that violates what Conscience was really aiming at, like the actions of Oedipus); but the speech of conscience faithfully expresses its conviction.

Thus conscientious action is just the sort of immediate transition from inward secrecy to outward publicity that was defined as the “action” of Reason in paragraphs 401–404. One might be tempted to think that a merely verbal performance cannot be of much significance; but it was everything to Luther at Worms. Mere speech is often *not* worth much; “hypocrisy” is the shadow that Conscience necessarily casts, because it is so easy to say what is false. But that of itself makes the importance of conscientious speech vivid—as we can see in the story of Peter’s denial of Christ.

- 23./654. Conscience is what it says it is. It is not legitimate to doubt its “truthfulness.” That everyone should define himself thus, is the essence of the right.

Peter was convicted by his own conscience instantly as soon as Jesus looked at him. But when one *is* speaking as conscientiously as one can, it is no use to object by raising the Kantian critical possibility that there is a hidden selfish motive. We do raise that possibility, but when we do so we are not at the level of Conscience proper. We are either being cynical with the Young Rameau, or we are beyond the stage of simple conviction altogether, and are communing with a conscience that knows its own essential badness.

When Oliver Cromwell adjured the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (in a letter of August 1650): “My brethren, I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken,” I am sure that he was not challenging their conscientious “honesty.” He wanted them to reconsider the facts, and to come to a different conscientious conviction. His very language shows, I think, that he *relied* upon their conscientiousness. This is the world of the saints, who are communing with one another. Some of us in the visible community may not be saints, of course; we may be among the damned. But that is a matter of God’s predestination and election; with that theological doctrine, we have put the Unhappy Conscientiousness (in its final shape of Kantian rational scepticism) decisively behind us. We hope to find ourselves among the elect; and the only earnest of our hope that we can have is to live conscientiously, and to express our genuine moral convictions. In this perspective, a conscientious declaration is not a statement of empirical belief; it constitutes the truth performatively. Any errors that can be proved or suspected in it must be such as to leave this constitutive function unaffected.

Conscientious truth is not testable like empirical assertions; it is the truth of “self-definition.” As such it is not subject to doubt, or to further investigation; it is the object not of doubt and question, but of moral respect. All that we have the right to ask, is that it should declare itself. Conscience must recognize its community, as surely as it demands to be recognized.

(c) *The “Loving Heart” (Novalis)*

- 24./655. Thus Conscience is “above the law” [cf. pars. 375–377]. It is moral *genius*, which knows that its voice is the voice of God, and that obedience to it is divine service.

The Conscience that has come to perfect self-consciousness in response to all of the abstract criticisms that can be offered, has transformed its own Concept in the process; from being the voice of God as Lawgiver it has become the voice of God as Creator. In its perfect autarchy it does not give and obey “laws” (as it seemed to be doing when it first appeared). The character of its language has changed; it *defines* itself; and that self is the universal self. But the definition is *not imperative*. Conscience demands absolute respect; so, of course, it must accord absolute respect likewise. In rejecting all the imperatives that others see as valid, it must reject any imperative interpretation of the significance for others of its own self-definition. Instead, it uses language aesthetically; it *creates* itself, and it sets us an example of how to create ourselves.

Logically, the Beautiful Soul is the *Gegensatz*, the contradictory shape implicit in the shape of Conscience. We have seen Hegel reduce the duty of conscientious conviction to “truthtelling”; but being “true to oneself” can be quite consistent with “telling a lie” in the phenomenal world. Earlier we quoted Jacobi’s claim that Conscience has the “right of majesty” (the right to pardon offences); and the first example he offered was “dying Desdemona.”³¹ Jacobi’s “moral Self” is plainly the sort of ideal *Gestalt* that we need at this point. But Hegel’s further designation of sovereign conscience as “moral genius” (*moralische Genialität*) brings in several other figures by implication—notably the brothers Schlegel and Novalis. We shall come upon an unmistakable reference to Novalis, a little further on (par. 668); and this, together with the jibes at “genius” in the Preface (pars. 68–71), confirms the reference to that circle. Among the geniuses who philosophized in “fragments” was Schleiermacher (he was one of the anonymous contributors to the large collection published in the *Athenaeum* in 1798).³² This is important because in *Faith and Knowledge* Hegel identifies his *Addresses on Religion* (1799) as the highest “potentiation” of the Protestant principle of subjective “beauty.”³³

The figure of the “Beautiful Soul” has its philosophical origin in Shaftesbury; and it was naturalized in German literature by Wieland. Hegel certainly read Wieland; but Jacobi was more influential in his development. Jacobi’s *Woldemar* (1779) was certainly important in Hegel’s early reflections upon this *Gestalt*, since he read and discussed *Woldemar* in a group at Tübingen (perhaps as early as 1790).³⁴ The most widely known example of the Beautiful Soul, however, was in Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795) Book VI.³⁵ Novalis does not use the expression, but his *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* contains, in Hegel’s opinion, the perfect shape of the Beautiful Soul as unsatisfied (and hence “unhappy”) *Sehnsucht*. Hegel would expect his readers to know all of these sources, and also Schlegel’s *Lucinde* (1799)—where some earlier pious model of intellectual beauty (from Wieland or Jacobi?) is vigorously assaulted and dismissed by a new paragon of *sensual* liberation.³⁶

For all of these writers the most important philosophical influence is that of Hemsterhuis (although Jacobi may depend on Shaftesbury as well); but the crucial definition of this ideal of “beauty” in the Kantian terms of the Moral World was given by Schiller in his essay “On Grace and Dignity” (1793).³⁷ Goethe himself

exploits in a very gentle way the same dialectic of moral “dignity” and aesthetic “grace” upon which Schlegel seizes so vigorously.

Finally, Hegel’s text makes it perfectly clear that the *Hyperion* of Hölderlin (1797, 1799) contains the most perfect (and the most positive) projection of this *Gestalt* of consciousness. But as we shall see when we come to it, the use that Hegel makes of *Hyperion* as the “hard heart” is one that tells against any reference to this model at the beginning of the discussion.

As the allegory in Friedrich Schlegel’s *Lucinde* dramatically suggests, these necessarily “fragmentary” ideals of pure subjectivity are all different. This is inevitable, just as their “fragmentariness” is inevitable, because we are now beyond all possible rational laws and rules. “Love and do what you will” is the only principle of action left. But the Beautiful Souls do not have to “love one another.” If Schlegel is right—and I think that at least he is logical³⁸—they cannot do so. His ideal grabs the face of the one that I take to be Jacobi’s, and tries to wrench it right off, saying that it is only a mask. These subjective ideals can criticize one another, but there is no common standard by which a decision can be reached between them. It is the impossibility of constructive communication and argument implied by their subjective “fragmentariness” that makes them “evil” in Hegel’s eyes. He accuses both “common sense” and “genius” of

trampling underfoot the roots of humanity. For the nature of humanity is to drive towards agreement with others, and its existence is only in the bringing to pass of a community of consciousness. The anti-human, the bestial, consists just in standing still within feeling, and only being able to communicate through feeling (par. 69).

The “fragmentary” variety of the divine feelings of “genius” would make it difficult (and even misguided) for Hegel to focus his critique upon a single target. We should be sensitive to the fact (which Schlegel’s “Impudence” uncovers) that Hegel’s attack can strike opposite enemies at the same time. Thus the accusation that “its action is the intuition of *its own* divinity” may seem to be valid only against the explicitly *humanist* religion of Schlegel and Novalis. But by intimating that the “Beautiful Soul” of Jacobi and Goethe wears “Modesty” as a mask, Schlegel himself is showing how the complaint can be made valid against the writers whose piety is outwardly more orthodox.³⁹ Hegel’s agreement with this view can be inferred from what he himself said (in *Faith and Knowledge*) about Schleiermacher’s conception of the Protestant minister as a “virtuoso of feeling.” Schlegel and Novalis are, if anything, slightly superior to the orthodox religious aesthetes, because at least their intuition is not an “art without works of art,” even if it has only their completely “idiotic” private selves as its subject matter.⁴⁰

25./656. This lonely service is at the same time a communal one. What the voice says is “objective,” and has universal force. To express it is to set oneself up as a pure, hence a universal, self. Everyone respects it and we all feel good for being conscientious. The voice can still be distinguished from what I do; but I know that God is within me, not outside. I refuse to be alienated from that divine voice (so God remains

present not lost). God and I are related within my consciousness, and the relation is unity not distinction (which would require a middle): I know that I am one with God (a religious knowledge which is expressed outwardly as the utterance of my community).

The orthodox writers (and especially Schleiermacher) fit Hegel's description of "this solitary divine service" as one that is "at the same time the divine service of a community." But it is Novalis whose artist-figure is most truly solitary or lonely (*einsame*); and just as the Heinrich of Novalis is questing for a new kind of religious community, so it is clear too that Schlegel is striving to project the image of an Earthly Paradise, as a first step toward its creation. The creative artist is actually the best model of the perfect closure of Conscience, because whereas Conscience depends upon recognition by a community of like consciences that already exist, there cannot, by definition, be a community already prepared to recognize the genius-Conscience, at the point of inward antithesis where it passes beyond "law" and *creates* a higher kind of duty. As a *world*-shape (or a *Gestalt* of Spirit proper) the moral Genius logically has to *have* a community; but this community is one that it must itself create. This project is already implicit in Schleiermacher's conception of the Protestant ministry; but it becomes perfectly explicit in the work of those writers who do not have any formal qualification as preachers, and who do not themselves occupy a pulpit.

A novel like *Lucinde*, or the *Lehrlinge zu Sais* of Novalis is the outward expression (the "intuition") of this lonely "divine service" as an object of consciousness. For in works of this kind (or even in the "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul" in Book VI of *Wilhelm Meister*) the "objective element" provided by the literary portrayal is "the utterance of its knowing and willing as those of a universal." The self of this genius-Conscience becomes universally valid, and its action becomes a "deed in execution" (*ausführenden Tat*) in the literary work (just as much as in one of Schleiermacher's sermons, though the present participle *ausführenden*—"in process of execution"—does rather favor the actual preacher in the pulpit).

Certainly not all readers of the literary works took them as seriously committed declarations of Conscience (though it is hard, at least for me, to find anything "entertaining" in *Woldemar*, or even in Book VI of *Wilhelm Meister*). But they are all just as earnestly intended as Schleiermacher's *Addresses*. So we are doing no more than justice to them (and to Hegel) in applying what Hegel says to them:

The actuality and stability of the self's doing is the universal self-consciousness [of the readers]; but the utterance of Conscience posits the certainty of itself as pure, and hence as universal self; the others [i.e. the readers] let the action count as valid, for the sake of this talk in which the self is expressed and recognized as the essence. The Spirit and the Substance of their union [*Verbindung*] is thus the mutual assurance of their conscientiousness, good intentions, the rejoicing over this reciprocal purity, the cordial refreshment in the sovereign grandeur of the knowing and uttering, the cherishing and fostering of such outstanding excellence.

Because of the direct continuity of this with the final moment of the normal Conscience, it may seem as if the description can only apply to a real congregation like Schleiermacher's. But in fact the Protestant congregation does not indulge in this self-congratulation. They let the pastor do it for them. Any reader of a few pages of *Woldemar* on the other hand will find the characters doing it *ad nauseam*; and it is we, the readers, who have to let the talk, the embraces and the enthusiasm, pass for the real "activity of soul in accordance with virtue." When we turn to *Lucinde*, the scandalous knowledge that makes this book "conscientious" (i.e. the awareness that Schlegel is writing about his union with Dorothea Veit, then still a private relationship for which no public recognition had been demanded or received), neutralizes any sense of spiritual edification in the ordinary sense. But if we ignore that scandalous aura—as we can do easily enough in our own social context—the tone of virtuous mutual congratulation becomes quite evident.

It is clear, however, that Hegel has Jacobi and Schleiermacher in mind at this point (rather than the conscientious "immoralism" of Schlegel).⁴¹ Julius and Lucinde cannot congratulate themselves in the language of *Conscience*; and Hegel now goes on here to consider the relation between the Sunday-consciousness of living in God, and the weekday-consciousness of living in the physical world. In so far as the Beautiful Soul still distinguishes its "abstract consciousness" in the noumenal world from its self-consciousness in this present world, it has its spiritual life "buried" (*verborgen*) in God.⁴² But withdrawal from the everyday world provides no solution. The perfected Conscience has already overcome this distinction between the self-consciousness of life in this world and the "abstract" objective consciousness of the noumenal world. That distinction is typical of the Moral World-View; the Beautiful Soul cannot return to it. It still knows, just as the ordinary dutiful, rule-guided Conscience did, that the religious presence is identical with the actual consciousness of just this self, now and here in the real world. This self, here and now, is one with God. God is not buried in the inward depths of an intellectual world that is somehow "beyond" this one.

The Beautiful Soul falls short of "absolute Spirit" because it is aware of this identity in an immediate way. We must take seriously the proposition that it is "one with God." We have a properly spiritual connection when the two terms (the infinite and the finite) each recognize the other as "other," and they are only united in a third term that mediates their otherness through its identity. The Beautiful Soul still lacks that mediating term, because it is the immediate consciousness of identity with God.⁴³ But it is already a form of *Religion* because it

knows the immediacy of the presentness of the essence within it as the unity of the essence with its self [or in other words, it knows] itself as the living in-itself, and this knowledge as Religion—which as intuited knowledge, or knowledge that is out there, is the speech of the community about its spirit.

As we know already, this absolute self-sufficiency is the "evil" side of the "knowledge of good and evil." Hegel said in the Preface that "the anti-human, the bestial, consists just in standing still within feeling, and only being able to commu-

nicate through feeling” (par. 69). We can underline the justice of this comment very dramatically by pointing out that Hitler saw himself, and was seen by some of his admirers, as a “Beautiful Soul.”⁴⁴

But we must not overlook the fact that this absolute evil, the very pit of the self, is also the portal of salvation. When the middle term is finally introduced into this closed self, we shall have the *absolutely* human community, the community of the comprehensive knowledge that “forgives” all in coming to know it “absolutely.”

- 26./657. Here the self of self-consciousness has become [Fichte’s] absolute Ego. This is an extreme where both consciousness and world have become abstractions. This *pure* self-consciousness is the poorest shape of consciousness, a disappearing, a certainty that is absolute *untruth*.

The intuition of the identity of the self with God is the intuition of Fichte’s primordial Ego which posits itself as equal to itself. Fichte himself describes this “intellectual intuition” thus:

Briefly: this thinking is the absolute principle of our being; we strictly-constitute our own essence through it, and our essence consists in it. In other words, our essence is not a material content [*Bestehen*], like that of the lifeless things; on the contrary it is a conscious-being, and a *determinate* consciousness to be sure; that which is to be pointed out at present.

That we think in this way, we know immediately; for thinking is just precisely immediate consciousness of the determining of one’s own self as Intelligence; and here especially of the intelligence pure and simple as such-a-one. An immediate consciousness is called *Intuition*; and since no material content [*Bestehen*] arising from a feeling is intuited, but the intelligence immediately as such, and only that, this intuition is rightly called *Intellectual Intuition*. But it is also the only one of its type which occurs *originally* and *actually*, without freedom of philosophical abstraction [from it], in every human being.⁴⁵

This “impulse of absolute self-activity” may be more easily recognizable by most of us in Goethe’s “creative force within us which can create what ought to be.” Self-consciousness has become *for itself* this pure Concept. The way the Romantics conceive the absolute primacy of Genius, or Fichte conceives the absolute spontaneity of the Ego, is exactly the way that we are now portraying it to ourselves. The distinct moments (of self and world) through which it is “real”—i.e. through which it is consciousness of “self” and “world” empirically—are volatilized into abstractions for this consciousness itself. Everything in the world gets its value and its interpretation from the creative act of the self. What it is “for itself” (its action), the “in-itself” (truth, duty, the “essence”) and “what is there” (nature and culture) are all equally mere abstract concepts. The actual Concept is the creative genius.

This pure and absolutely creative self-consciousness is the poorest and emptiest *Gestalt* of consciousness. It is “poor” in the same way that sense-certainty is poor (par. 91). But there is this difference: whereas Sense-Certainty is robbed of its “riches” by necessity, the creative “genius” robs itself. What matters morally is that

the “truth” of this self-certainty is also the absolute “untruth” of arbitrary subjectivity. It is the sort of free self-definition that has *no* objective validity even for itself (not to speak of others). Hegel has already argued that Conscience must be condemned by others (par. 649). Now he wants to show that the pure soul must face its own impurity, that the Beautiful Soul must be ugly “for itself.”

- 27.658. The substance here is the self’s knowledge as its own. The self is its own object, and all distinction is lost in it; it is the Unhappy Consciousness turned into Self-Consciousness. It is a union with God that is purely negative. It is a creative experience that loses everything, a speech that hears only its own fleeting echo. The echo cannot be identified as a return to self, because this self never leaves itself at all; it refuses to let Nature be, or to accept being for itself. It flies from the world and has its own emptiness for object; this beautiful soul is a *lost* soul.

The Substance that is implicit within this absolute self is “knowledge as its own knowledge.” There are several *implicit* meanings here. First, for all of the creators of “beautiful soul” images, the “knowledge” that is implicit in the created picture is Fichte’s “doctrine of science”; the *Wissenschaftslehre* is the science of all human knowledge (and of all experience as a function of the rational self’s necessary knowledge of what knowing and experiencing the world is). Even in Goethe’s picture—which is less “modern” than the others, and closer to the religious experience of the pre-Revolutionary world—we can see this. This Beautiful Soul is “always going forwards, never backwards” and “feels every day more facility in doing what [she] holds to be right”;⁴⁶ she is the Fichtean Conscience to a T.

“As consciousness it is divided into the antithesis of itself and the object which is for it the essence. But this object is precisely what is completely transparent, it is *its own* self.” This “antithesis” will eventually become serious; but at the moment, the “object” is God, and God is the inner self. “God” as the self’s knowledge of its own rational “essence” is the “*substance* that subsists *in itself* as *its own* knowing”; this Beautiful Soul feels itself to be in unity with all life.

But this perfect union turns into the immediacy of a quite self-absorbed self-expression, when the Beautiful Soul attends to its actual life in the world. The Beautiful Soul is the Unhappy Self-Consciousness, but it does not *feel* like that. It feels “happy” for the very same reason that the Unhappy Consciousness is “unhappy”: because it cannot achieve any abiding “objectivity.” The Unhappy Consciousness cannot overcome the world; the Beautiful Soul will not let the objectivity of the world count for anything. It lives in its own dream world instead.

Even Julius and Lucinde in Schlegel’s literary vision exemplify this extreme. Their life together is an image of “Pleasure” unshadowed by “Necessity”; and we know that that is what they wish for, rather than what they actually experience. Julius claims that they have actually *achieved* the Garden of Eden pictured in sentimental love stories:

Today I found in a French book this statement about two lovers: “They were the universe to each other.”

It struck me—and I was moved and smiled at the idea—how something that had been set down so thoughtlessly as hyperbole had become literally true with us!

Actually it's also literally true for this kind of French passion. They discover the universe in each other because they've lost their sense for everything else.

We haven't. Everything that we loved before, we love even more warmly now. It's only now that a feeling for the world has really dawned on us.⁴⁷

But this life is from moment to moment at the level of "sense-certainty"; and there is no sign of an honest acceptance of *death* in this Arcadia. "The *Kraft* of *Entäusserung*, the *Kraft* to make itself into the thing" is lacking. Nothing but the book (the speech-echo) was made of this life; and as far as "dread" and Unhappy Consciousness is concerned, Hegel proved a true prophet—for these "free spirits" were soon to become devout Catholics.⁴⁸

Except for Friedrich Schlegel (and Novalis) the "object" that is the "essence" for the Beautiful Soul is the empty feeling of "divinity"; and even in the aesthetes, the empty sense of "genius" is all that many of their officially philosophical fragments expresses. What saves *Lucinde* is the fact that it is written for (and is largely about) Lucinde not Julius. *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is not so exclusively narcissist as Hegel's rather cruel comment (in par. 668) about dying of consumption would lead us to believe. But it does illustrate Hegel's complaint that "all life and all spiritual essentiality . . . has lost its *Verschiedenheit* from the *Ichselbst*"—for there is nothing in it that is not strictly emblematic of the poet himself and his "magical" creative power.

For the most part, however, Hegel is thinking of the orthodox religious philosophers here. The "unhappiness" of their condition is concealed by the empty abstraction of their experience. The conscious "alternation" of salvation and damnation has become a fluctuation of aesthetic emotion that is adequately expressed and exhausted by *words*. But we are now dealing with a *Gestalt* of Reason, and indeed with the most perfectly self-conscious *Gestalt* of human rationality: the Self-Concept. The Unhappy Consciousness, even in its perfectly stabilized or reconciled shape (that of the sinner absolved) was only implicitly rational. The Beautiful Soul absolves itself in its conscientious speech; but this speech, like sense-certainty, lives and dies in the moment. Language is the only expression that is spiritual enough to be adequate to this self; and just for that reason the self is evanescent. It does nothing in the world except to die.

The clearest case of this ultimate failure of the Beautiful Soul is to be found in Hegel's complaint against Schleiermacher's conception of Protestant devotion as an "art without works of art."⁴⁹ The speech is completely "satisfied" in its immediate expression. It does not ask for a critical response (cf. par. 69). It is not a "cultural" movement towards the *Dasein* of a new self, through the negation of the actual self.

Hegel is now setting up the antithesis between "talk" (*Rede*—including artistic utopias) and effective action; and the *involuntary* fragmentariness of much Romantic work (its actual incompleteness) illustrates his point quite well. The

Romantic “genius” was always ahead of himself, escaping from himself, beyond what he conceived yesterday, but did not manage to finish. He was always a creator for himself, never a satisfactory creation—never an achieved actuality, because so intensely an agent. In the moral religion of a Protestant thinker like Schleiermacher, even the fragmentary works that the romantic artists did achieve could not be recognized as valid.

But, in any case, like the artist’s self-realization in *Rede*, neither private life and private happiness, nor a “yearning” for some higher “heavenly” condition, will satisfy the criterion of *Dasein* and *Wirklichkeit* that Hegel is employing in this paragraph. Only political commitment to the creation of a new social world would be adequate. Hegel’s comment about “living in the anxiety of soiling [*beflecken*] the heavenly glory through action and thereness, and fleeing from contact with actuality in order to preserve the purity of its heart,” may be an echo of Hölderlin’s *Hyperion*.⁵⁰ But the identification of the source is not equivalent to the identification of the intended reference, since Hyperion is precisely the Beautiful Soul who does *not* let this anxiety paralyse him. When Alabanda will not explain his conspiratorial connections, Hyperion suffers the temptation to go home and cultivate his garden (like Candide or Julius and Lucinde); and he does, indeed, go home, but he does not stay there. When it turns out that staying home would have been the path of wisdom, because the glory and purity of his political ideal does indeed get badly stained, Hyperion dies in battle (at least symbolically, for he is taken to be dead when his body is carried from the battlefield).

Hyperion’s is the full story of the “hard Heart,” to which we have not yet come. The importance of his “temptation” is that it shows us what is meant by *Handlung* and *Dasein* here. All of the “beautiful souls” are devoted to “good works”; but their private domestic activity is not *historical* action. Historical commitment is what all of the beautiful souls are afraid of (and only Hyperion overcomes the fear). As far as the public world is concerned, they are satisfied with preaching and pious talk. The figure for whom his whole “world” is just the echo of his talk is easily recognized as the Heinrich von Ofterdingen of Novalis.⁵¹ But the one who actually goes home to his garden—specifically to the Garden of Eden—is Julius with his Lucinde; and in that instance the avoidance of *Dasein* takes an important *symbolic* form. In their private Paradise the “outward action and thereness” of a formal marriage service is deliberately avoided. Their marriage is a “conscientious” one; they *say* they are married, and that makes it so.

Schleiermacher defended this “conscientious” concept at the time.⁵² This is important, because his religion of inner feeling is the most significant philosophical and social manifestation of the “hollow object” which—in its “yearning” aspect at least—is metaphysically “unhappy.” I am obliged to speak of “metaphysical unhappiness” here, because none of the “Beautiful Souls” that are portrayed in the literature is unhappy in its own perception of itself. Julius and Lucinde enjoy the life of Paradise Regained. Similarly Goethe’s model is plainly convinced that she has finally achieved the only true happiness that is possible on Earth.⁵³ When Hegel finally uses the term “beautiful soul” he applies it directly to the ideal of an author

who never uses the term at all (Novalis); and he qualifies this completely “blessed” ideal as “unhappy.”

He also uses the name ironically, for his use of the qualification “so called” clearly implies that this soul is not *really* “beautiful” at all; and I think the adjective “unhappy” fleshes out the irony. The “unhappiness” of the “Beautiful Soul” is like the unhappiness of the unjust man in Plato (let us say, specifically, the “unhappiness” of Thrasymachus or Callicles). It is something that *we* can observe, but which the souls themselves are unaware of. Hyperion is certainly aware of unhappiness, until he becomes the “hermit in Greece.” But then, when he has actually reached the ultimate depths of metaphysical “unhappiness,” he also takes himself to be blessed. Hegel’s reference to the Unhappy Consciousness fulfils two functions: on the one hand it rounds out the career of “rational selfhood” into its full circle; and on the other hand, it shows what a gap there still is between our view of the observed consciousness, and its view of itself. We are now only a single step away from a perfect coincidence with our object, but it is the furthest of all steps: the Beautiful Soul takes itself to be enjoying “blessedness” when it is really damned in the Hell that it has made for itself.⁵⁴

The “beautiful soul” of the literature—and the aesthetic religion of Schleiermacher’s *Addresses*, or the “loving life” of Fichte’s *Way to the Blessed Life* (1806)⁵⁵—is a *lost* soul, and the aesthetic cult of Paradise is a cult of Paradise Lost. The beauty that it loves is an object of longing; it is precisely what it *not* visible in the world.⁵⁶ We can see what is wrong most clearly by comparing this religious “love” with the Greek religion of art. In the Greek experience the beauty is realized, present, and political; and in tragedy even human mortality is faced and accepted into the synthesis. Reconciliation with death is where even Schlegel’s religion of the Earthly Paradise breaks down, and stands revealed as being just as much a hopeless “longing” as the purely spiritual ideals of “inner beauty.” Either Julius or Lucinde will die, and the other will have to come to terms with that loss. In the end both must die anyway, and if the real significance of life is in their shared experience of life as “sense-certainty,” where is the “substantial” meaning of it? Is it not “hollow”?

To put it another way, what response can Friedrich Schlegel make to Sartre’s dictum that “Man is a futile passion”? Of course the Hegelian response to that dictum would not satisfy Sartre in any case; but at least there *is* a Hegelian response. Julius and Lucinde, on the other hand, seem to be in exactly Sartre’s situation; they “want to be God” in an unrealizable sense. That is their “unhappiness”; the difference between Schlegel and Sartre is precisely that Sartre *knows* he is unhappy.

28./659. We have still to consider this absolute self-consciousness as an actuality that appears; i.e. we must consider conscience as agent. As *this* self it is distinct from the rest of the community (which is a multitude of singular consciences). In this aspect the right of conscience is just the right to justify having my own way. The content of this self-will comes from my natural individuality; and I am well aware that my purpose is my own, and that the others can see this too.

The Concept of the Beautiful Soul has now been completely stated. When we turn from the speech of the Beautiful Soul to its actions, we are coming to its "experience." The difficulty that the Beautiful Soul faces is that in the actual world it is only a singular agent; and even if its words are its world, an outside audience for those words is needed. This audience are all "reflected out of the universality [of their mutual admiration society of life in God, or of the "love of humanity"] into themselves [as private beings-for-themselves]." All are agreed that it is the spontaneous impulse to do what is beautiful and loving that matters; but they come into conflict both with their spontaneous impulses and with "general feelings"—the "antithesis of singularity to other singulars and to the universal necessarily enters." Thus "the antithesis between what it is for itself and what it is for others" is necessarily one aspect of the Beautiful Soul's consciousness.

We saw already (in par. 649) that others (i.e. some others, at some point, necessarily) are bound to find fault with the "good" conscience, and declare it to be "evil." This practical situation is not changed by the sublation of Kantian moral maxims with their formal universalizability. We do, indeed, already have a perfect model of the shape that critical judgment must take here, in the assault of Schlegel's "Impudence" upon the "Beautiful Soul" of Jacobi and Goethe. The action that can be evaluated in many ways as long as we are in a world of Kantian consciences, can be evaluated only in two ways when we are among the moral geniuses. In the world of "tested laws" my action could be "good" in many respects (some of which might not concern me) and "bad" in many respects (none of which would trouble my "conviction"). But now the act can only be "authentic" (from my side) or "hypocritical" (from the other side).

In the community of the moral genius, everyone is self-exempted from the continuum of rational discussion. We are all "exceptions." We may talk much about our "principles" in the world of Conscience, but we *all* become "exceptions." We are all "beautiful souls" just as surely as we are "conscientious."

One of the great values of *Lucinde* as a *Gestalt* is to make us see this. The exception from social rules that was claimed by Julius and Lucinde has now become almost commonplace. It is certain that most of us now agree that the inner "marriage of true minds" is what is essential, and that the socially recognized bond should be dissolved when that living bond is dead. Very many, though not a majority, now think that the social ceremony is superfluous; and many more, who would not claim an exception for themselves, can see the "beauty" of the ideal involved. Indeed, since our courts are more and more willing to maintain the full rights of these "beautiful people," they have almost ceased to be socially exceptional in any important sense. But they still illustrate perfectly the logic of the conscientious exception; and we can still understand why *Lucinde* was in Hegel's time a very scandalous book. I hope it is also obvious that the book is no longer scandalous because we now comprehend the logic of conscience more fully, and realize that every conscientious person is necessarily an "exception."

The concomitant of this comprehension is that we now talk about "hypocrisy" rather than "immorality." Any exception whose "beauty" is not visible to us

becomes an arbitrary self-exemption from the abstract principles that are still there in the background ready to be called upon whenever we want to justify a negative response. Here in paragraph 659 Hegel lets this submerged critical context come to the surface again. Its new shape, which I have largely anticipated, is in paragraph 660.

- 29./660. On the side of outward being, the values of self-consciousness are reversed. Inwardly it is the self that is concrete universality; outwardly, for the communal consciousness, it is *duty*. Any single self must therefore count as evil in that it wants its own way. Its protestations of conscientiousness are *hypocrisy*.

The moral genius does not live simply in the ideal community of its imagination (or the community of its real, but fortunately invisible, readers). There is a real community of which it is part, but which it can ignore, because they do not understand. This was true even before it became a “genius,” since even the convinced conscience must expect a babel of criticism, which it knows how to discount (par. 650) because “they simply are not in my position.” The full emergence of the shape of Conscience as the creative act of self-definition (which follows necessarily from the discovery that there is no critical voice that can effectively reach the convinced conscience) inverts the primitive belief of Conscience itself that it is “dutiful.” But it also shows us the way in which the self-certain Conscience can finally be reached and broken open.

The explicit argument of paragraph 660 (along with that of par. 659) only spells out in full the underlying structure of what is stated as a simple *fact* in paragraph 649. But at that point it was not gone into, because it was not relevant anyway; the convinced conscience blandly rejects the opinion of others that it is evil. It knows that the others don’t “know” (Fichte’s stout defence in the *Atheismusstreit* is a perfect paradigm case). Now the *Gegensatz* (between what *is* and what *ought to be*) is internalized in the beautiful conscience itself, through the opposite evaluations made by the consciences that recognize one another.

This “reflection out of its universality into itself”—this consciousness of the self as a singular member in a “universal consciousness” that belongs to the community—can only occur when the determination of what is essential swings over to the side of the observing community. Initially the balance is all the other way. The moral “genius” is precisely the dutifully convinced conscience that has recognized that its conviction is all that counts (or that it “creates” its own “duty”). But the observing community is still there, and for it the moment of “duty” is still bound to be the “essence,” i.e. duty is still distinguishable from the moment of self-affirmation (or at least distinguishable from what *is there* for an outside observer). Duty is the *Ansich*, the ideal of what ought to be there.⁵⁷ The observing consciousness declares the active genius to be “hypocritical” in claiming to be “conscientious.” Why should the renaming of the evil strike home at this stage, when the simple accusation of being “evil” was shrugged off before? That is what we still have to discover.

- 30./661. The movement of the antithesis is that *first* the conscientious self must be brought to confess its selfishness; its hypocrisy must be exposed. The simple fact that it *pretends* to be good is only the reality of hypocrisy. For cloaking one's own self-will in good words is using what is supposed to be the real thing [the in-itself] as instrument (showing contempt for it and proving that it does not really matter).

Hegel marches to the goal with great deliberation. This paragraph gives only a clear statement that the Beautiful Soul must confess its hypocrisy, and a clear definition of hypocrisy as the conscious admission to oneself of what one does not confess to others.

In Schlegel's "Allegory of Impudence" the Beautiful Soul is accused of wearing a mask; and since Modesty has already accused her of "wanting to *use* me," we even know what the mask is. But why should Goethe's "Beautiful Soul" (in particular) heed this criticism? and under what circumstances would she do so? It is not enough, here, that *we* can see the point, for we are now observing "Self-Consciousness Itself" so to speak; whatever we can learn, it must by definition be able to learn too. Yet if it is the "essence" of Conscience to be quite unmoved by all the different views that can be offered either before or after it comes to a decision, why should the Beautiful Soul be sensitive to the charge of "hypocrisy"? "Such *impudence!*" is exactly the response we might expect.

Goethe's Beautiful Soul is a hard case, perhaps the completely stabilized unreachable case where the "hypocrisy" is as "metaphysical" as the unhappiness. When we take leave of her she is meditating sadly on the fact that her uncle keeps her away from his children, while they are educated in accordance with his romantically "impudent" ideal. She admits to "feeling vexed" and accuses him, in effect, of hypocrisy: "When it comes to practice, no man is tolerant!" she says. She does not reflect that her own desire to bring the children "to intercourse with themselves and with their invisible, one and only true Friend" while they are still young, is the very same intolerance. "Uncle" wants the children to become adults who are in harmony with their own natures, and able to make their own self-creatively autonomous decisions.⁵⁸

This is the only line of criticism I can think of that might move *this* Beautiful Soul to admit that her "vexation" is hypocritical; and the point of my raising it is that she *loves* her uncle, and respects him as a free soul in his way, just as she is in hers. This is the key to the riddle. Schlegel's allegory is a very good "allegory" indeed; not just because the characters are not simply personified abstractions, but because his picture is deeply ironic. The inward experience that is outwardly symbolized can only come to pass in a spirit quite opposite to the one that is portrayed. Only in a community of *loving* selves can "hypocrisy" be experienced and confessed as soon as it is pointed to.

But this "immediate" transformation of good conscience into bad, followed by its immediate restoration to goodness through confession, is not "hypocritical" in the normal sense, at all. It falls under our ordinary use of the concept of "hypocrisy" only as a limit case. For, as Hegel himself makes clear here, "hypocrisy" is

precisely the subjective condition that pays its tribute to the truth, by not confessing its own falsity.

Mr. Bulstrode, in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, must go on living in the private hell that is brought to perfect fruition by the exposure of his secret, because even when the truth is known, he still cannot bear to tell his own side of the story to his wife (whose love is sturdy enough to survive that disaster).⁵⁹ This is the most completely fulfilled *Gestalt* of hypocrisy with which I am familiar; and we can see that confession—however inadequate and partial—would be the beginning of its *sublation*.⁶⁰ This case shows clearly why the Beautiful Soul's spontaneous confession and contrition proves that its normal state is not "hypocrisy in and for itself."

- 31./662. Nothing happens if the active conscience simply sticks to its guns, or if it simply gives in. If it sticks to its guns, then there is no mutual recognition any more; if it gives in there is no hypocrisy any more. By admitting it is only the "law of the heart" it admits to being "evil." If I follow my self-created conscience in dealing with others, I am mistreating them. Actual conscience is universal in its intent and claims recognition as such.

Mr. Bulstrode is the "evil" consciousness that one-sidedly persists in its conviction. What makes his case "conscientiously" interesting is that Bulstrode himself sees his public exposure, the creation of a "universal consciousness" in his community, as God's final rejection of him. But even in this valley of the shadow, he is as obstinate as Job in his refusal to confess his guilt. The absolute "unlikeness" or "inequality" (*Ungleichheit*) is what persists.

Bulstrode is a paradigm of "ordinary hypocrisy" carried to the last extreme. There is the same "inequality" present between the position of Fichte, and that of the community that called him an "atheist." But here we feel sure that he was *not* a hypocrite, and that it would have been "hypocrisy" for him to give in to the general opinion. The two cases serve only to illustrate the fact that in Hegel's analysis we have passed the point where "ordinary hypocrisy" is in question. All of the abstract arguments about "duty" (and even arguments about the meaning of the word "atheist") have been submerged in the impulse of the Heart.

The moral disagreement that we are concerned with in the evolution of the Beautiful Soul is the clash between two loving hearts. The heart that is "hardened" in this situation we must consider later. The one that "gives in" is easily dealt with. If one party accuses the other of being self-centred under the cloak of altruism, and the accused admits, as soon as the accusation is clearly understood, that it is true, then the moment of "hypocrisy" is sublated as soon as it becomes self-conscious. Pure self-consciousness has a side of which it is necessarily not originally conscious, but of which it can become conscious. It is necessarily *not* conscious of this outer side at first, because that is the side that *others* see, the side of *Dasein*, the side of what is there to be seen. The "creative" Conscience *can* become conscious of this side (as "essential," not simply abstract and misleading) because it exists in a community of self-consciousness which it recognizes or, in other words, there are those whom we know to be as committed to the truth of the Heart (or of love) as we are.

When *they* tell us that we are following our own hearts, and that to follow one's own heart is to be in conflict with the universal law of the conscientious heart, what can we do but confess it? This is the absolute duty of Conscience, to say what it sees and knows.

Hegel does not refer here to the "law of the Heart," but the identity of the dialectic is clear when he says: "For were this law and conscience not the law of its singleness and caprice, then it would not be something inward of its own, but that which is universally acknowledged." We are actually dealing with just one aspect of the Heart's Law, so that to refer to it here directly would lead to a misunderstanding through over-generalization (just as the direct identification of law-guided Conscience with the *Sache selbst* would be an over-generalization of the same sort). The simply rational Heart took itself to be what everyone has equally; and it found that the "law" of most hearts was for the maintenance of the established socio-legal order, with which it was at war. The Beautiful Soul is not at war with anything, and certainly not with the socio-legal order. Even Julius and Lucinde are not violating the law; they could not publicly proclaim their ideal of life if they were.

The conflict of the truly conscientious Heart is only with other Hearts that are as pure and liberated (or as selfconsciously autonomous) as itself. It does not need to commit itself to the irrational, essentially contemptuous, hypothesis of a conspiracy theory of history, because it is not concerned with the heteronomous world at all. It may indeed be guilty of contempt for Reason (as Hegel indicated in the Preface when he said that both "genius" and "common sense" are "trampling underfoot the roots of humanity"); but its moral guilt is subtler, not deliberate, and not even properly voluntary. To put the point in a nutshell, we have now moved out of the sphere of the State, and into that of the Church. What has now to be forgiven is not "crime" but "sin." This was the sharp transition heralded by the guillotine. The pre-Revolutionary world of enlightened Reason (to which the Heart's Law and the *Sache selbst* belong) could not make the distinction between these two universal communities properly.

- 32./663. The universal consciousness is likewise one-sided. It is just *one* law against the other and the "general" law legitimates the "law of the Heart," as well as conceding itself not to be general after all.

The dialectic of the Heart continues; and the violence of the rhetoric that naturally belongs to an immediate conflict of feelings—the violence that produced the Frenzy of Self-Conceit—now becomes important. "Hypocrisy" is a fighting word. In the ordinary rhetoric or moral discourse it is used only when someone's feelings run away with her, or when all hope of an agreement or a compromise is gone. Thus Cromwell was certainly using the language of conscientious desperation, when he besought the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland "in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken." But he might have called them "a conventicle of canting hypocrites" (if I may presume to guess at the language of his thoughts, when the General Assembly did not do what he wanted). They were theologically obligated by their belief in divine predestination to keep the awful

possibility that they were “mistaken” in mind (as the Beautiful Soul is not). But the fact that their own eternal desert or destiny was hidden from them only made it more useless, and even perilous, to speak of “hypocrisy” here.

The fact that there is no curtain for the Beautiful Soul between its life here and its life “in God” is what changes the situation. Now the community that utters the awful judgment must show that it is indeed one that lives clearsightedly in God likewise; otherwise its judgment is not valid. One does not “fight,” even with words, in the presence of God. If I say that someone I care about is just following their own “heart,” I must also recognize the sincerity of the conscience to which I am appealing. There cannot be an “objective” judgment here. Both laws, that of the agent and that of the judging consciousness, are inward “laws of the Heart,” in exactly the same sense. Any pretence that I am in a better position to give the universally valid judgment would be a breach of the universality of essentially loving recognition. It is the *loving* universality that calls forth from me an equally ready confession of the particular (and hence “evil”) character of my condemning judgment. The zeal of “righteousness” is a rupture of love and beauty; and hence it is a violation of the true universality of creative freedom.

- 33./664. There is another aspect to this which is our way out. The general consciousness is not the active one. It observes and judges; it shows the active conscience that it is not “doing good.” But its law is that the good must be done, and it is itself doing nothing. So it can recognize itself, too, in the failure of the acting conscience; both sides are hypocrites *together*.

As soon as the judging consciousness moderates its zeal, and becomes less than totally committed to the act of “judging” the agent consciousness, the other aspect of its own activity becomes apparent to it. It is able to be the truly universal consciousness, the one that is conscious of both sides, precisely because it is “only” an observer. Everything is visible to it: it both hears the conscientious declaration of the creative soul expressing the self-conscious aspect, and sees the finite action that is there to see. Comparing these two, it is aware of the aspect of exclusive self-affirmation in the act (as Goethe’s Beautiful Soul is aware of being excluded from the education of the children). It points this out to the agent consciousness, and the weakness is instantly acknowledged.

“Uncle,” who has already stood in the observer’s position, and said then that “You, my dear Niece, have *perhaps* chosen the better part,” would now have to admit that his “perhaps” was the ironic cloak of a negative. At least, the choice of “we others” (“to become acquainted with the sensuous man in his whole range, and bring him actively into unity”) is the more comprehensive one, and must, in the nature of things, come first in the order of fulfilment. The possible validity of the “perhaps” can only be established later. With this explanation, the “vexation” of the Beautiful Soul ought to pass away, since the whole ambiguity of the situation is now plain, including the “hypocrisy” of her judgment that “When it comes to practice, no man is tolerant.” She wanted this judgment to be accepted in the place of an act, when it was precisely the full act of “tolerance” that was called for.⁶¹

Any other act—specifically the loving intervention in the education of the children, that she wants to make—would be subject to the very same judgment that she passes upon her uncle. But judgment, too, is an “act.” In order to be impartial (and hence “universal”) it logically must be the act of standing aloof and not doing anything; and this is the one active policy which necessarily and infallibly cannot be the doing of one’s duty. So as soon as the observer looks at her judgment on its active, self-conscious side, she must condemn it and confess to “hypocrisy” in turn.

(d) *The Hard Heart (the “Hermit in Greece”)*

- 34./665. *Judging* is an act too; if we look at it that way the mirroring is closer. The claim of the agent that he is doing his duty cannot be denied; every act has its dutiful aspect as well as its selfish side. The judgment chooses to look at the selfish side (which it imputes or adds to what is visible). An egoistic motive can always be found, since the agent does indeed realize *himself* in the act. This valet’s eye view betrays the valet’s presence.

That it is the act of “doing nothing” is not the whole truth about moral judgment as an action. It wants to do nothing, to be impartial, because that is what it conscientiously ought to do and be; but it does not succeed in fulfilling “pure” duty, any more than any other action does. In its attention to the unacknowledged self-interest of the agent consciousness it becomes envious. It is no more “impartial” than the agent consciousness (which attends only to the dutiful aspect of the act in its statements about it). There is no “impartial” judgment in the practical sphere. The impartial judgment would be an “infinite judgment”—one that combines contradictory assertions.

We can recognize here the necessary return of all the displacements of the Moral World-View into Conscience—and particularly the return of the Infinite Consciousness that comprehends all contradictions and must be gracious about them, because it knows that the agent’s “disposition” is good. But at the present juncture the Judge is not gracious, but Mephistophelean. She condemns everything, from an infinity of aspects.

The return of this abstract infinity of points of view is possible, because the judging consciousness has to retreat to the standpoint of “rational observation.” Once it does this, there is literally an endlessly indefinite number of ways in which the action that “is there” can be interpreted as the realization of a private or exclusive “self.” Any observed, or plausibly probable, consequence of the act that is under any aspect “desirable,” can be taken for the actual motive (or objective) of the action. The author of *Lucinde*, for example, achieved almost instant notoriety; and clearly he did want to be “famous.” The designation of oneself as a “genius” is (among other things) a prophecy of one’s eventual fame, and a claim to deserve it. So how can someone who describes herself in that way deny that she wants that?

Every action is capable of this sort of contemptuous evaluation. One can ascribe the delightful sense of having “chosen the better part” (or even the hope of heaven)

to Goethe's Beautiful Soul as her real motive; and no matter how gentle the critique may be—as in the Beautiful Soul's vexation with her Uncle for example—it falls into this one-sided attitude of the moral valet. The saying that “no man is a hero to his valet” belongs to the golden age of the ancien Régime.⁶² Hegel's comment about moral valets (which Goethe picked up from here) indicates clearly that the standpoint of active Conscience is ultimately to be preferred to that of the moral critic.

Paragraph 665 also shows how the aesthetic conception of the Beautiful Soul, in its absolutely creative *isolation*, actually becomes open to the whole world again, in a way in which “law-guided” conviction was not. This was why the standard of political actuality became relevant again in paragraph 658. Inside an actual community of “beautiful souls” the sublation of “judgment” is easy and spontaneous. The Concept abides unshaken, and does not “move” because it contains the “antithesis” *an sich*. But the loving (and readily forgiving) community is only able to form and maintain itself, because it has collectively “hardened its heart” against the rest of the world. The “hard Heart” is the heart of a social idealist, not that of a political cynic. It is good to remember this when we are reading the contemptuous remarks about “genius” in the Preface.

- 35./666. So the judging consciousness is contemptuous; and it is hypocritical because it sets up this other way of being evil as righteousness. The agent can see that it is as evil as he is; so he confesses and expects confession in return, for he is not now abasing himself, but acknowledging this likeness to the critic. This is the linguistic thereness of the Spirit; and he expects the other to contribute his share.

The judging attitude falls back into the world of the shattered consciousness. But it is a Mephistophelean inversion of the “honorable” consciousness, for while it sees only the dishonorable side of all actions, it takes itself still to be *honorable*. As Hegel says, it is “contemptuous”; but it is not self-consciously so (as the Young Rameau was) for it does not despise itself along with everything else. Young Rameau is not a hypocrite, but this “hard-hearted” attitude (being quite stable) is “hypocrisy” unmasked, but persisting as such. Instead of admitting that it is the other way of being evil, it takes itself to be “good.” This is the perfect likeness that the agent conscience recognizes. In recognizing the moral valet, so to speak, she recognizes herself as an ordinary human for whom someone must provide valet service.

This is a universal generalization of the strictly personal relation of Julius and Lucinde criticizing one another, or of Goethe's Beautiful Soul and her Uncle. But that is the point of paragraph 665. Once the acknowledgement of self-centredness occurs, the creative soul is as open as the convinced Conscience was closed in paragraph 650. All the criticisms offered in paragraph 649 can now be recognized as valid in their way; but we have moved up to a higher level of moral comprehension. We know that only subjective laws of the Heart can be in conflict; and we are now concerned with political and historical judgment. The Beautiful Soul is a *world-view*. In its own “world” it is soft-hearted and forgiving; but towards the “outside world” it is resolutely “hard-hearted.”

The newly open Heart of the lovingly creative agent assumes that those who have opened its eyes are as openeyed as it is. When it confesses, it is not subordinating itself to the judgment of another, like the Unhappy Consciousness. It is recognizing *for itself* and explicitly what the Unhappy Consciousness itself recognizes in its externally mediated and implicit way: that its self-assertion is a necessary part of God's plan, that the total pattern of sin and forgiveness is "absolute." So it can still say to the human judge what Luther said to his judges: "Here I stand. I can do no other"; and it expects the judge to say: "Yes, we must all take a stand, and it is wrong of me to pretend that I am standing on the sidelines, for no one can stand there."⁶³

Hegel describes the whole situation in terms of his doctrine that conscientious language is the *Dasein* of the Spirit. When the "reconciling *Yes*" does come, he will call it the "*Dasein* of the *Ego* that is extended to duality" (par. 671); and this is the "descent of the Spirit" (as well as being the only "Second Coming of Christ" that Hegel expects). But this "appearing of the Spirit" is delayed for the moment, still, because the judging consciousness does not yet make its "contribution." Just as the active Conscience was fixated in an apparently impregnable way as active Conviction, so the Beautiful Soul becomes fixated in its universal observer status as the "Hard Heart" (or as Hypocrisy pure and simple). This hardening is logically necessary for the community of Beautiful Souls in its relation to the "outside world." So every "loving Heart" is hard-hearted, because it can only be truly loving in its (particular) face to face relations, not in its universal attitude.

- 36./667. The judging consciousness is not aware of its own evil, however, and will not concede the equality between them. Its "hard heart" must be broken, its narcissistic illusion of beauty must be exposed. The hard heart is not priding itself on its possessions [cf. pars. 519–521] but on its thinking essence, its "knowledge of good and evil." This is the *extreme* rebellion, the sin against the Spirit, since it refuses to recognize *freedom*, and this hardness is all that now prevents the existence of absolute Spirit.

The confession of "evil-mindedness," which Hegel speaks of here, is not the private confession of Julius and Lucinde to one another, or that which Goethe's Beautiful Soul might make to her "Uncle." In the inner world of the Beautiful Soul as a harmoniously self-contained concept, there is no room for explicit hard-heartedness. In that world confession is met by confession, and mutual forgiveness completes the turning of the Concept upon its own axis. But now we are dealing with the Beautiful Soul that encounters the great external community of public life. Hegel has already said, in paragraph 658, that at this level it cannot succeed, that it hears only the sound of its own voice and volatilizes into nothing. The paradigm of that is *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*.

It is Hölderlin's *Hyperion* that shows what happens to a Beautiful Soul who is not content with a merely verbal echo, or with the creation of a magical world of mutual moral self-congratulation. Hyperion tries first the lonely path of Goethe's Beautiful Soul: he goes home to Tina. But he is drawn back into the political struggle, and in that struggle he gains a clear insight into the selfish motivation of those

who claim to be fighting for liberty, equality and fraternity. Then, after seeking death in a battle between two powers who make no pretence to be anything but old-fashioned despots, he becomes the “hermit in Greece.”

This hermit-persona has two sides. In the first place he has poetic dreams of the ideal life that he has lost. In this aspect he does not differ from Heinrich von Offterdingen, except for the fact that his ideal is *in the past*. But this difference is crucial because he must blame the present world for this loss; and so he becomes, in the second place, the “hard Heart.” Having incarnated the Beautiful Soul as an active Conscience in its full universal range, and suffered defeat in the public world, he passes beyond the dreaming and yearning activity of the Beautiful Soul as a harmonious Concept, to become its real antithesis, the contemplative Conscience of the absolutely universal Judge. He condemns everyone else as “selfish”—and here we must think especially of the Moral World generally, where everyone does their best and is deeply conscious of how imperfect it is, so that their “confession” can be taken for granted. This is what happens when Hyperion visits Germany as an observer. I will quote the climax of his attack:

“Everything on earth is imperfect,” is the Germans’ old refrain. If only someone would once tell these people whom God has forsaken that everything is so imperfect among them only because they leave nothing pure uncorrupted, nothing sacred untouched by their coarse hands, that nothing thrives among them because they do not respect the root of all thriving, divine Nature, that life with them is stale and burdened with cares and too-too full of cold, silent discord, because they scorn the Genius, which brings power and nobility into human endeavor, and serenity into suffering, and love and brotherhood to towns and houses.

And that too is why they are so afraid of death and, for the sake of their molluscan existence, bear every indignity, for they know nothing higher than the bungling job they have made of things.

O Bellarmin, where a people loves Beauty, where it honors the Genius in its own artists, there a common spirit is astir like the breath of life, there the shy mind opens, self-conceit melts away, and all hearts are reverent and great and enthusiasm brings forth heroes. The home of all men is with such a people and gladly can the stranger linger there. But where divine Nature and her artists are so insulted, ah! there life’s greatest joy is gone, and any other star is better than earth. There men grow ever more sterile, ever more empty, who yet were all born beautiful; servility increases and with its insolence, intoxication grows with troubles and, with luxury, hunger and dread of starvation; the blessing of each year becomes a curse, and all gods flee.”⁶⁴

Lovers who have withdrawn from the world can forgive one another; but the loving Conscience that has taken the woes of its whole world upon it, cannot forgive. This is the *Gestalt* of “Evil,” the direct inversion of the Beautiful Soul.

Hyperion takes his “Heart” to be “breaking” just when it is in fact *hardening*.⁶⁵ But in his “Empedocles” project, Hölderlin did go on to picture the Hard Heart that really breaks, and “throws itself away for another.” His “Empedocles” was not published yet; and it was destined never to be properly published in Hegel’s lifetime. But I think that Hegel has the suicide of Empedocles in mind, as well as the

Crucifixion of Jesus, the wasting death of Novalis and the mental breakdown of Hölderlin, when he speaks in the next paragraph of the Beautiful Soul surrendering its “being for self” and producing as a result only the “spiritless unity of [inorganic] being.” Jesus is certainly the final figure of the Beautiful Soul, the one who “hardens his heart” in many judgments about this “generation of vipers” and its fate, but is properly the Broken Heart, who prays for their forgiveness on the Cross. Thus Hegel’s own first portrait of the Beautiful Soul (the portrait of Jesus in “The Spirit of Christianity”)⁶⁶—unknown, like Hölderlin’s Empedocles, to his audience—slips into its place as the last of the series beside Hölderlin’s Greek sage.

When Hyperion refuses to forgive, he ceases to communicate. He makes poems of his dreams of “harmony with nature”; and he expresses himself for others in so doing. But the communication is all one way, for he curses those to whom he speaks; what becomes morally explicit in Hyperion’s diatribe against the Germans is the essential “hard-heartedness” of all Romantic genius. The geniuses do not want to communicate in the full sense, because they want to be listened to, but not to listen. They commit the supreme sin, the sin against the Spirit.⁶⁷ Most sinners cannot achieve this because they do not know what (or where) the Spirit is. Like Hyperion’s Germans, the ordinary philistines of Young Rameau’s world are in this situation. They must be forgiven, because they do not know what they are doing. For them it is all a simple matter of money and material goods, not of “the Spirit” at all. But the Romantic idealists, in their determination to keep their ideal unspotted by the world, contradict the fluid continuity of “pure knowing,” and try to reduce it to a personal possession, a *Ding* that belongs to their own élite circle. Their “morality” is at fault, because anyone can enter the spiritual world at any moment. From their own doctrine of creative genius they ought to be able to learn that no one can justly be condemned as a lost soul. Spirit is forgiveness. The self-consciously repentant spirit forgives itself, because it recognizes the necessity, the *absoluteness*, of its situation; and no repentance that contains the recognition of this common lot of humanity should be rejected. So it is precisely the “hardheartedness” of the judge who refuses to listen, and to explain, or the self-satisfaction of the art that preaches the subjective “fragmentariness” of genius, and the magical exclusiveness of artistic vision, that stands in the way of its own millennium.

37./668. This “beautiful soul” is now *stuck* in its negative certainty. It must be actual, but it cannot. It can only go mad, or pine away in spiritual consumption.

Novalis does have the positive knowledge of God and human destiny which he can only communicate to a few pure spirits like himself at the level of “genius.” He has repulsed the world, but he does not recognize that *he* has done it, because he thinks that his alienation from the ordinary masses is partly a simple fact of nature, and partly their own doing. His ideal world cannot be realized, because there is no possibility of “likeness” or “equality” (*Gleichheit*) between the moral genius and his ordinary readers.

In *Hyperion* the fact that the repulse (*zurückstossen*) is the action and judgment of the Beautiful Soul itself is recognized and made plain; Beauty shows its dark side,

and the identity of King Oberon with the Evil One is revealed. Artistic genius cannot create the new world of real life, because it cannot give itself up to the rational equality of ordinary discourse, or to the mutual understanding and forgiveness of subjective bias and self-preservation that is basic to the everyday life of Conscience.

Both of them, therefore, the genius who thinks she does not judge the ordinary world, and the one who knows clearly that she does so, can only give themselves up for the other in the ordinary course of nature. They are caught in the contradiction between dream and reality, because unlike the Beautiful Souls that withdraw into private happiness, they do “dream for the world.” A dream-world is a living contradiction for the actual self of Conscience. This is the immediate shape of the *Gegensatz* to which they hold fast. That is why (as Hyperion knows and feels) they are “unhappy.” Their dream of a universal spiritual brotherhood (and sisterhood, for both of them ascribe a more equal role to woman than Julius does to Lucinde, and they are at one with their mentors Goethe and Schiller about that) is in itself the immediate *Wechsel* (or alternation) of the Unhappy Consciousness (par. 658) raised to fully rational Self-Consciousness.

Hegel says that “immediacy alone is the middle and reconciliation of the antithesis . . . and it is pure being or empty nothing.” In effect, this is saying that the only “middle and reconciliation” is the collapsing together of “pure self” and “utterance [*Entäußerung*] into actuality.” As *pure being* this is the disappearance of the self in death; as “empty nothing” it is the self without a world. On the side of the “innocent” dreamer (Novalis), the resolution of the alternation is into a slow natural death in which the spirit wastes away; on the side of the “guilty” dreamer (Hölderlin) it is into the “empty Nothing” of madness.

Madness is the “death” of self-knowledge, so it is peculiarly appropriate for the “Hard Heart.” I do not think that we can, or should, close our eyes to the intended reference to Hölderlin here. The reference to Novalis was recognized and universally accepted long ago, in spite of the moral ugliness of the apparent suggestion that an early death from consumption was just the fate that he deserved. I hope that I am in tune with my time in speaking thus, for I believe that Hegel himself felt the ugliness of saying the same about Hölderlin’s mental breakdown. He had no personal ties with Novalis; but Hölderlin was for several years his closest friend. And because those years were so crucial in his development, it is correct to say that Hölderlin was the most important close friend that Hegel ever had.

Moreover it is certain that Hegel recognized this. Yet this is not the only place where he connects Hölderlin’s mental breakdown with his philosophical position. For when he comes to the Beautiful Soul in the *History of Philosophy* lectures, he mentions Novalis by name, but says nothing of his death. There cannot, after all, be a demonstrable connection between being a Beautiful Soul and dying of consumption; but there *can* be a logical connection between being a Beautiful Soul and going insane.⁶⁸ So when Hegel said in his lectures that “the extravagance of subjectivity often becomes madness (*Verrücktheit*),”⁶⁹ his listeners and readers who were well aware that Novalis did not go mad, were bound to ask themselves which “beautiful soul” did go mad.

Since Hegel himself clearly felt that it would be shameful to mention Hölderlin's name in the lecture hall, why did he think that he had to make these two unmistakable references in print? The nature of his project excused him from naming names here, but the collocation of the reference that is simply in bad taste with the one that is morally revolting⁷⁰ makes the identification of the latter as easy and as certain as that of the former. We cannot suppose that Hegel had a sick and angry desire to deny his own past, or his own spiritual debt. For the *Phenomenology* itself is directly continuous with that past, and with its political ideals; and we have unimpeachable testimony that Hegel at sixty, sadder and arguably wiser than he was at thirty, still remembered Hölderlin with a vividness that only an abiding love can explain. Princess Marianne of Prussia (whose older sister Auguste had been in love with Hölderlin) recorded in her diary the occasion when the great philosopher, being then Rector of the University of Berlin, had to be entertained at a Court dinner. The Princess—and no doubt the Professor too, though it is not the sort of thing he would have put on paper in a personal record—felt shy and uncertain what to talk about. But all constraints vanished when the royal lady mentioned Isaac von Sinclair, because she knew that he formed a link between them:

I began from him [Sinclair]—then he [Hegel] spoke of him . . . of his own rambles with him upon our mountains [at Homburg], naming each of them by name—then he began from Hölderlin, who is lost to the world—about his book *Hyperion*—everything that had made an *époque* for me in my childhood on account of my sister Auguste's connection with it—and there I felt once more at the sound of this name a true joy—a whole lost past arose through it, and the man as mere sound was to me in that moment truly dear. There was awakened a kind of living memory just as it is sometimes through an odour, a melody, or a single note. I saw once more the book *Hyperion*, as it lay in its green binding on the windowsill of my sister Auguste and the vine-tendrils so beautiful at the window, with the sunshine coming through them, the cool shades in the dark avenue of the chestnut trees, outside the window, I heard the birds—in short the whole lost past arose for me in the befriended name.⁷¹

Perhaps all the magic of this *recherche du temps perdu* was in the lost poet's name—but I think not. For the alarming Professor had the art of *Erinnerung* (as well as a remarkable memory in the ordinary “mechanical” sense); and when the Princess calls Hölderlin's name *befreundet*, she means to link herself and the professor in 1830, with Sinclair and her sister and the poet thirty years earlier.

If we grant that the old love was still there, then Hegel's judgment here must in some sense be an objective or “conscientious” one. In order to grasp its conscientious aspect, we have to remember two things. First, Hegel's Herderian-Spinozist conception of the harmony of Spirit with an order of nature that was rigorously determined; and secondly his admiration for Dante. Thus, on the one hand, Hegel believed *a priori* that the “spirit” of Novalis was in harmony with his naturally wasting body.⁷² If asked to explain how the same spirit could inhabit the healthy bodies of Friedrich Schlegel and Schleiermacher (fellow-contributors to the *Athe-naeum* “Fragments”) he would have said that it was not the same spirit, being in

Schlegel more self-centred (witness *Lucinde*) and less powerfully persistent (witness the conversion to Catholicism); and in Schleiermacher, not a properly “creative” genius at all. The death of Novalis, however rude one might have to be about his effectiveness in this life, was one of the signs that his place in Paradise—or in that “slow procession of spirits one after another” (par. 808), which was the only Paradise that Hegel recognized—was higher than theirs.

In Hölderlin’s case, because he had gone to *Hell* almost before Hegel’s very eyes, and was not yet in Paradise, we need secondly to remember the example set by Dante. Dante puts his old friend and mentor Brunetto Latini in Hell, and foresees the imminent arrival there of his closest friend, Guido Cavalcante. These were *God’s* judgments as he understood them; and Dante loved God, and believed implicitly in his justice. Hegel had no belief in a loving power that sees the fall of every sparrow; but he believed equally fervently in the rationality of the actual, and he believed in Hölderlin’s genius. The author of *Hyperion* was not a sparrow whose fall was of no rational significance. The ethics of actual rationality is not that we must “love fate” (or God) as the Stoics (and Christians) taught. For “Necessity” exists at many levels, and “love” is not appropriate to them all. But “the first principle of moral science is the *reverence* we must have towards fate”⁷³ (as Hegel laid down in 1801). The connection between Hölderlin’s poetic genius and his schizophrenia is as objectively recognizable as that between his revolutionary enthusiasm and his fear of political prosecution. Hölderlin’s fate expressed a harsh Sophoclean necessity, more reminiscent of Oedipus and Apollo than of the God who loves the sparrows. But we must regard it with reverence and be reconciled with it (as Dante was) no matter how closely it touches us.

(e) *The “Broken Heart” (Jesus)*

- 38./669. Recognition and forgiveness is the true resolution. The wounds of the Spirit heal, and the *freedom* of spirit becomes visible. The righteous judge recognizes that he too is only a moment, hypocritically setting up to be the whole. The agent recognized himself, and renounced his deed; the judge must recognize himself, and renounce his concept.

Hegel’s judgment upon the Beautiful Soul and the Hard Heart is itself bound to appear hard-hearted. But we should read it in the context of his doctrine that the Hard Heart can break, and “be raised to universality.” The Hard Heart is *itself* all that is excluded from the universality of its own judgment. So its rise to universality is only the inclusion of itself in the judgment, just as the confessing active Conscience expected (par. 666). Objectivity of practical judgment is reached, precisely when we recognize that all of us, both in acting and in judging, are biassed. We have our own personal concerns at heart, and we cannot help that; it is a necessary moment in the logic of practical concern. So it is possible for us to forgive each other, both for the action and for the judgment; and this freedom of absolute spirit creates the Kingdom whose coming Jesus preached, the Kingdom where “the

wounds of the Spirit heal and leave no scars." What Hölderlin's imagination could so readily do for the Greeks, it can also do for the Germans; not by dreaming of the "beautiful Hermann" of the future, but by seeing the poor, Godforsaken, bourgeois philistines *historically*, and letting the standpoint of strictly *moral* judgment go.

Universally speaking, it is the communal significance of the act that matters. Hegel's dictum that the healing "leaves no scars" sounds like the doctrine that "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner"; but he does not say that (just as, in fact, Madame de Staël did not).⁷⁴ He is not here concerned with the exercise of pardon (or with Madame de Staël's "indulgence," though that is closer to the position of the comprehensive historical consciousness); the transition that we have to make now, depends upon our seeing the complete *irrelevance* of the moral valet in historical judgment. The agent consciousness which confesses that it is evil must "break" the previously unrecognized "thereness" of its "particular being-for-self" in order to posit it as a moment of the free power of the Spirit over its actuality. That is still a "moral" act within the sphere of Conscience. But the Hard Heart must break its "determinate concept," its previously unrecognized claim to give a universal and objective judgment, in order to have its share in the same *free* self-concept of the Spirit. *This* is the "breaking" of the moral standpoint altogether.

Hyperion sees the "subsisting negativity and boundary" of German bourgeois life; and he imputes the motives of finite selfishness to those who live this life. But if one of the accused confesses that the selfish motive is there, she is breaking the boundary and restoring (in quite a new sense) the conscientiously universal aspect of what has been attacked. For she is (in principle) demonstrating the power of the Spirit to cast off the old life and live a new one. That new life, however, must include and comprehend all of those old (selfish) necessities; and the determinate judgment, its justice being thus acknowledged, must break itself in order to comprehend both the new situation, and its own illegitimate abstraction from the necessary bounds of finite agency. Morally speaking, it must find itself guilty of not acting to create the better life of which it was pretending to be the expression. Through the recognition of the other, it becomes the expression of the real possibility of a better life. Thus, for Princess Auguste, *Hyperion* became a sort of devotional book for a long life of personal piety. She was a kind of "hermit in Germany." But through Arnold Ruge the book became part of the heritage of German socialism.⁷⁵ This *communal* recognition is the "other" of which we are now speaking.

39./670. The judge can renounce his concept because he intuitively himself in the agent, when the agent condemns his own act. "Forgiveness" is the Heart's renunciation of its higher position, or its non-actual essence, and acknowledgement that that action is in itself good. The word of reconciliation is the *Dasein* of absolute Spirit intuiting the universal in the singular.

When the self-closure of the agent's "conviction" (par. 650) breaks open (par. 662), the "unrecognized judgment" receives recognition. The agent recognizes herself in the "action of judgment" (par. 666). This opens the way for the critic to rec-

ognize herself in the repentant agent; indeed, the recognition is much easier because the identity is closer. The agent joins in the judgment, and condemns herself; but the author of the first (enlightening) judgment must now see herself as the agent who failed to act, and gave judgment actively from the standpoint of that failure.

This identity is the standpoint of *Verzeihung*. "Forgiveness" must be reciprocal (as in the Lord's Prayer, where the forgiveness of our trespasses is linked with our own forgiving of "them that trespass against us"). But in the Broken Heart the "forgiveness" rests upon participation in the same sin (under two aspects) and the same redemption (under two aspects). Both parties return into a self that belongs to both (the concretely universal judgment to which they must both contribute before it can exist at all).

Unlike the mutual forgiveness of Julius and Lucinde in Schlegel's novel, the process of what Hegel calls *Verzeihung* is not that of ordinary "forgiveness" at all. In essence, we are dealing with a *logical* forgiveness, exchanged between the agent and the observer, for the inevitable one-sidedness of being agent and observer. Certainly the transformation of one's conscious point of view as it becomes logically "conceptual" (or rationally "comprehensive") has its moral application; and as I remarked earlier, it is more accurate to say, with Madame de Staël, that one becomes "very indulgent," than that one "pardons." For one knows that one is not in a position to pardon. "There, but for the grace of God, go I" is what one says at best; and often only, "I am glad it was not me who had to act." In these formulas one can see already that it is the need for moral judgment that is suspended.

This is the "essence" of the move to the level of a purely logical recognition that action and judgment are equally necessary moments of free self-conscious being; and that they are equally inadequate and partial taken in isolation. The "Heart" or the "Heart's Law," which Conscience recognized itself to be in its self-conscious possession of its absolute autonomy (as the Beautiful Soul), cannot be realized either in action or in judgment, but only in "comprehension." That is why the "word of forgiveness" is (in its logical sense) the foundation of absolute Spirit.

What emerges directly at this point, is not the logical community, the community of "pure" thought, but the religious community. Our religious community (and by that I mean Hegel's rationally enlightened "Lutheran" community which is now an invisible Church, deeply impregnated by hypocritical self-deception, but so widespread that its bounds are hard to find) is the community in which the ideal of "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" is almost universally preached, though more fitfully realized in actuality. The fact that our religious community is both intensely "moral," and that it does also resolve the problems of the Moral World-View, should not blind us to the important truth that the "forgiveness" of which Hegel speaks is not simply a moral category, and that the religious community is not primordially a moral community. Unless we grasp the fact that Religion is the phenomenally objective mode of the purely logical category of the Concept that comprehends both action and judgment universally, we shall never understand how Hegel can pass directly (as he does) from the appearance of the Holy Spirit, the moral comforter who is the Lutheran Savior visibly risen in his community, to the

worship of the Daylight in ancient Iran. Paragraph 671 closes the chapter properly by resolving the problems of the morally self-certain Spirit. But that is only a specific application of the logical reconciliation, the triumph of the ethico-historical point of view, and the elimination of all the attitudes of the moral valet. At the end of paragraph 670, the two sides of *one* self-consciousness (“pure knowledge as *universal* essence” and “pure knowledge as absolutely self-subsistent *singularity*”) recognize each other as the sides of one Self-Consciousness. The singular self who seeks (actively) to know the universal essence is the historian. We are establishing the standpoint of the philosophical historian: *Homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puto*.⁷⁶

- 40./671. Only at this extreme where its self-knowledge has these directly opposite alternating sides, does Spirit enter into being. The judging consciousness is the continuity of the (positive) universal; the agent is the exclusive singular unit. The uniting of the nonactual good and actual evil is in their *speech*. The two spirits are entirely self-concerned, but of course there is an absolute distinction between them, and they know it, for they are both self-conscious concepts. These two are the *species* of the self-concept, and each embraces the whole self. Their relationship is the ego in its self-identity. But this self-consciousness of their identity has still to come into being. At present only the continuum (of consciousness) exists. When the two say yes in reconciliation, God is manifested in his community of self-knowing beautiful souls.

In paragraph 671 the two “sides” of the Beautiful Soul are internalized and become moments of one self-consciousness. In order to do this they have to be purely conceptual moments. So the language is very abstract and difficult. It will be wisest to begin our commentary by examining the best paradigm of the “experience” that we can find. The ideal model is not hard to identify.

The conceptual reconciliation that is involved here will take us from the standpoint of moral judgment in its final shape to that of historical judgment proper.⁷⁷ But the “word of reconciliation” between the Beautiful Soul as moral action, and the Beautiful Soul as moral judgment, was the word spoken by the Beautiful Soul who experienced and overcame the antithesis (of action and judgment) universally (not just privately like Julius and Lucinde), and who never allowed the alternation of pure Being and Nothing (the state called “Yearning”) to arise.⁷⁸

Jesus of Nazareth went about proclaiming “Your sins *are* forgiven” quite impersonally, and as a simple statement of fact. It was the critics who brought God into it—“Who can forgive sins, save only God?” But we have watched “moral consciousness” discover that in fact “God” cannot forgive sins, unless either he ceases to be holy, or we cease to be autonomous (or both). So Jesus was in the right.⁷⁹

There was a paradox involved in the way Jesus spoke all the same. No one could understand him. Like the other geniuses, he was trampling the roots of humanity underfoot. This is the paradox that is now resolved. The Beautiful Soul has split into its two sides: the absolute knowledge of duty, which reduces to the Heart’s Law “that we must love one another”; and the absolute performance of my duty, of the act that is mine, which expresses my self-definition. Take, for instance, Peter’s decision that it would be foolhardy, having put his head into the lion’s mouth already, to

admit that he was a follower of this man Jesus (to call this a duty may seem strange but compare Hegel's example [par. 644] of the soldier who runs away).

The Hard Heart set itself up as the Universal Judge, condemning the whole world of conscientious agents. We must put it like that, because only properly conscientious agents can understand the Heart's judgment and join in it. But, of course, the range of the judgment once poor Peter is forgiven, and the aspect of singular self-will drops out, is much wider; Pontius Pilate, for example, must be "forgiven" for thinking that Roma is a goddess with positive authority over "consciences" like the one that faces him.

Only an active Conscience will acknowledge itself to be "evil" when it is so "known" and identified by the conscientious observer. Caiaphas, for instance, thinks it is Jesus who is "condemned out of his own mouth." That there is a standpoint from which the boot is on the other foot is quite beyond his horizon. But Jesus—like Socrates—stands beyond judgment. It is those who judge, who stand in danger of judgment. The community in which we are now operating is the one for which Luther spoke, not the one against which he took his stand. Jesus and Peter (and Socrates too) belong to this community.

The Beautiful Soul, with its direct knowledge of God as "its *pure* self," is the fully self-conscious *Gestalt* of this community of reconciliation. Jesus—the Johanne figure who said "I and the Father are One"—is the earliest clear case, and the most extreme case also. It is literally true, for him, that "the Father" is his "pure self" (not his "friend" to use the language of Goethe's model case); and it is "the Father" who forgives all those who "know not what they do."

In the Hard Heart, this identity with the Father is identity with the Judge—as Peter, the first to recognize the "identity with the Father," found to his cost when he took his sensibly self-preservative course among the spectators in the courtroom. This was not a moment like the little ceremony of confession and forgiveness before making love, which we are allowed to overhear in Schlegel's *Lucinde*. Here the two self-certain Spirits met head-on. But Jesus appears here as the Broken Heart, the *fixed* shape of the abstract "Good." We should notice that he is not now "evil," for he does not judge. He is only Peter's "pure knowledge." The moments have been inverted again by internalization. It is the agent self who is "evil." Peter condemns himself, and it is Peter who must gain the insight to forgive himself. It is important that Jesus does not speak. This is the moment of "pure knowledge posited through the antithesis as *consciousness*."

It is this internalized distinctness (*Verschiedenheit*) posited within self-consciousness (or "in the element of the pure Concept") that is now to be mediated. If we take Peter (who "went out and wept bitterly") as our model case, he is as clearly aware of the problem as we are. How is the "accuser within him" (to recall Kant's phrase) to be transformed into the "reconciling Yes," and the hand of fellowship?

The answer is through the exchange of roles. The Hard Heart judges its community. But when it "breaks" properly it must return to its membership in the community for its redemption; and Peter, who finds his accuser in the memory of a face, must turn likewise to the community who can remember that face. This is an

uttering of singular selfhood that generates the greater self (“the *continuity* and *equality* of the ‘I = I’”). The word of reconciliation exchanged between the singular sinner and the observing community who know that we are all sinners, is the “Holy Spirit”: it is not a remembered face, but speech, *logos*, the “thereness of Spirit.” And if we take the reconciliation in its logical sense, then the community generated is the “absolute” community of all human experience.

The crucial point, for the moral experience from which this “absolute” community takes its rise, is that one cannot (logically) “forgive oneself” in a rational sense. For Peter to cease weeping over his betrayal would only be a new betrayal. There must be another who says “Your sins are forgiven.” Thus the reconciling word is the “*being-there* of the Ego extended to the duality” of the singular agent conscience aware of God within it, and the observing community of other such selves. In the reconciling word, the God who is “within” all of them appears among them. His appearance is momentary. But in Hegel’s next chapter that momentary character will be developed into the perfect continuity of all human experience—from the dimly discernible Mother Goddess of the palaeolithic cave dwellers to Gandhi’s *Ahimsa* (which is the word of reconciliation itself raised into a religion) and beyond.

Hegel’s conception of the reconciled community resolves all the problems of the Moral World-View. It is the “harmony of duty and felicity”; it is the gracious power that recognizes the “good disposition”; and it is the “good infinite” in which the “infinite progress” is resolved. It is the reconciliation of “actual” and “imperfect” moral consciousness—the “evil” and the “good” which are the necessary moments of its “pure knowing.” It unites the concrete singularity of conscientious conviction with the abstract universality of moral observation in a truly concrete universality.⁸⁰

Let us now try to expound the paragraph as it is written: Absolute Spirit enters into *Dasein* at the peak-point where the “pure knowing” is the “antithesis and alternation” of knowing the universal essence as one’s own, and knowing oneself as the absolutely self-contained singularity. This *Dasein* has an *ideal* way of being” For instance, Peter *remembers* that moment and that face for many years. But the slave in Terence (vividly aware of his place at the bottom of the social heap) saying “I am a man; I count nothing *human alien*” is the perfect case. He knows that his “pure knowing” is the “abstract essence” and that “to count nothing human alien” is his *duty*. Yet as much as anyone (and more keenly than many socially sheltered folk) he knows “the *singularity* of the self to be the essence.” “Everything human” is the “pure continuity of the universal”; and that rational continuum knows the selfish singularity to be *evil*. But this strictly private self-consciousness (which must declare itself if it is there to be known at all) knows that the rational continuum is “not actual,” but is only *for another* (just as Peter knows that the face he remembers is long dead).

At this point Peter and the slave in Terence must become logicians. Their situation is the universal situation of human rationality. The encounter is between the two sides of their own selfhood. Peter sees his duty in that remembered face (and the Terentian slave must be aware of his own selfish frailty in his cheerfully universal utterance). These are the self-concepts that must unite in the speech of the

Absolute Spirit: the opposite “spirits” of pure self-assertion and pure altruism. The whole self—indeed, the whole range of selfhood and self-expression—is equally fulfilled by both of them. But “they are still diverse and the diversity is absolute” because the two sides are nothing but logically necessary moments. So they have only their conceptually determined roles. They are determinate in their opposite roles, but each is also “universal in itself.” Each side is the whole antithetic identity of pure knowing, so they know that in their opposite roles they constitute together the whole range of a single unified Self-Consciousness. Both sides are the same “pure self-knowing” and it is only the need of forgiveness that constitutes the one as the knowing of universal humanity, and the other as the knowing of “discrete singularity.” The self-identical ego which they aim to become, and know that they really are, is the “relationship and antithesis” of the universal and singular roles. When the two sides come together in the word of mutual recognition and agreement, humanity as the universal community and the singular self-assertive agent achieve the identity of absolute selfhood.⁸¹

If we consider the actual ego of the historian, we shall have a good *Vorstellung* of what the community of forgiveness both wants and is. But the emergence of the “perfectly inward” into *Dasein* as “consciousness” is exactly portrayed (as we already saw) by Peter’s experience when Jesus simply looks at him after the speech of betrayal. There is a perfect identity of “knowing,” but no “self-consciousness.” Self-consciousness is generated through the “motion of the antithesis.” Every self is *equally* the continuity of “everything human.” Each of us is the same contradiction between perfect continuity and radical discreteness. We must “pour out” (*enttäusern*) the contradictory knowledge. In being poured out, the secrecy of the discrete self is overcome, and the community of selfhood is positively established. The knowledge that is “split in two” in its immediate way of being (as sin and as forgiveness) “returns into the unity of the self” because it is not separate any more. The “yes” of reconciliation makes positive continuity and equality out of the negative equality of private secrecy. The self of the pure knowing now has *Dasein*. The two self-concepts are united in the self-knowledge of the finite self in God; and the reconciling “Word” is the Risen Christ to whose Body all who know him in themselves, and themselves in him, belong.

The worst difficulty in paragraph 671 is that posed by the internalization of the dialectic. The encounter between the *evil* awareness of singularity and the *good* consciousness of universality is purified into the recognized identity of two “pure Concepts” of the self. This makes the transition to Religion difficult because it takes us straight to the moment of transition between Religion and Absolute Knowing. The dialectic of the Religion chapter is all in *Vorstellungen*. But the *Vorstellungen* of Religion all refer to an absolutely “spiritual” experience (i.e. to one that is all in thought) above and beyond the finite world of sensible phenomena. We can recognize, if we will but try, that the “pure concepts” of Logic at the point of transition from Religion to Absolute Knowing are directly continuous with the absolute intuitions of God in religious *Vorstellungen* at the point where we have now arrived.

We have actually reached the positing of “pure knowledge” (i.e., Absolute Knowing) as *consciousness*. It is not yet the *self*-consciousness that it will become in Logic (even though there is no “selfless *Dasein*” in it). The connecting link is provided by the Beautiful Soul, with its aesthetic *Vorstellungen* for a spiritual world that is purely inward (except for its language). In the experience of forgiveness that inward experience becomes *real* (not imaginary). Peter stands between the memory of a real betrayal, and a real community that reconciles him in its spiritual unity with the Savior; the Terentian slave stands between the actual society that oppresses him, and the human community that he “recollects” imaginatively; and finally, the philosophical historian can “recollect” even the worship of the Daylight as a human phenomenon. But none of them are yet employing pure Concepts self-consciously.

The opposites (which are the actual poles of the self-aware human community) “know themselves as pure knowing”; and they are going to prove this in detail, by experiencing “everything human” in its absolute aspect. For the time being, the side of singular self-consciousness is drowned in the continuity of the universal self. This “absolute consciousness” is not yet singular self-consciousness. *We* shall now be its “historians.” What concerns Hegel (and us) at this moment is the fact that the founding of the self-forgiving community generates a new Concept. In place of Morality we now have Religion. As a “universal self” (the concretely reconciled consciousness of that enlightened, post-revolutionary community against which Hyperion turned his moral disappointment) the name of this concrete Concept is “the universal Church.” But if we are to uncover the full extension of the Concept, then the whole story of the “experience” of this universal self must be gone through. The human community has only become the concrete community of Conscience slowly, and over many stages. If we are to comprehend this new concept we must go through the whole “experience of consciousness” as the story of a universal human community whose object is not “the world” but “God.”⁸² The one thing to be thankful for is that since we have now reached Absolute Spirit (or the *Weltgeist*) as the observed subject of the experience, its interaction with its world can unfold in a straightforward historical order.⁸³

Notes

1. The letters U, P, S are used in the Analysis for the logical moments: Universal, Particular, Singular.

The evolution of Conscience in these three stages is illustrated by P. Muller (1988). M. N. Forster (forthcoming, Part III, Chapter 4) claims that the theme of the history of “Spirit” is distorted into a revision of “Reason.” I trust that my commentary will show that this thesis is quite mistaken. There is no repetition of Chapter V such as would make it really plausible; and I am certain that Forster’s underlying hypothesis that Chapter VI was added to the plan of the *Phenomenology* as a late afterthought is itself mistaken. For a good discussion of the place of Conscience in the *Philosophy of Right* (with helpful references to the literature in English and German) see D. O. Dahlstrom (1993).

2. We can see here how important it is that Sense-Certainty is the peasant-wife's knowledge of her own *Sachen*, not the awareness of such refined philosophical objects as "sense-data." D. J. Cook (1973, 93) rightly emphasizes that "Conscience" (*Gewissen*) is the union of Sense-Certainty with Self-Certainty.

3. See Nohl, 51 (Bern, 1794; Fuss and Dobbins, 82). Conscience is also a clear example of "rational action" as an immediate transition (pars. 401–404). But the first spirit to *realize* that was the Truth of Enlightenment.

4. See especially *System der Sittenlehre* (1798), sections 15–16, *Werke* IV, 163–205. (To the best of my knowledge it was E. Hirsch (1924) who first drew attention to Fichte as the *Gestalt* of "Conscience." His article is now reprinted in Fulda and Henrich [1973, 245–275]. But see also M. S. Gram [1978, 378–380] who repeats Hirsch's case with some embellishments. D. P. Jamros [1994, ch. III] discusses the whole of the Moral World-View as a critique of Kant. He sees the transition to Fichte as occurring only when we reach "Conscience." Compare also D. P. Jamros, 1990.)

5. *Werke* IV, 167; IV, 173–174.

6. *Social Contract*, Book II, Chapter 3. Rousseau is the connecting link between the negative certainty of the Terror and the positive certainty of "Conscience"—cf. also T. Pinkard (1994, 400, n. 158). It is clear that Fichte agrees that Conscience needs "enlightenment," for in the Second Part of the *System der Sittenlehre* (secs. 17–33) he gives us a "systematic overview of our duties" ending with the "duties of the lower classes." Hegel gives the immediate, unerring knowledge of Conscience, the solid social foundation that makes the superficial nature of this sort of review quite patent. But he does recognize that the established ethics can be conscientiously rejected. This is shown, for example, by F. Valentini (1971). For a detailed study of the relation between "ethical life" and "morality" as Hegel viewed them at this time—specifically in the "Philosophy of Spirit" of 1805/1806—see M. D'Abbiero (1975).

7. See *Bestimmung des Menschen* Book II, *Werke* II, 199–247, especially 202, 229–230, 241 (Chisholm, 35–82, especially 38, 65, 77); *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 402–405 (Cerf and Harris, 174–178).

8. *Tat* and *handeln* are such ordinary words that one of them, at least, was bound to occur here. The combination *Tathandlung* is distinctively Fichtean; but it does not actually occur here.

9. See especially *Werke* IV, 156: "I should never act against my conviction . . . Act always according to your best conviction of your duty; or: Act according to your conscience"—and IV, 163: "The formal law of ethics goes thus: Act strictly according to your conviction of your duty." See further, among many other passages, the one cited at note 5 above.

10. Jacobi, *Werke* III, 37–38. Hegel quoted this passage in *Faith and Knowledge*, calling it "beautiful and quite pure" (*G.W.* IV, 380–381; Cerf and Harris, 143–144). I have quoted it from there also; and we shall have to return to Hegel's discussion later. G. Falke (1987) has maintained that Jacobi is the *Gestalt* in Hegel's mind for the whole section studied in this chapter. This claim was anticipated by O. Pöggeler (1956, 54) in a more modest form. See also V. Rühle (1989). I regard the claim as slightly overstated because in Jacobi's interpretation of the principle the direct *inversion* of Conscience into the Beautiful Soul is made explicit; while in Fichte's doctrine of the primacy of conviction this "antithesis" remains submerged in the harmony of the "resting Concept." "The law is for the sake of the self" only acknowledges that I must myself determine what law applies to my actual situation. (But see further note 74 below.)

11. See *Faust* Part I, lines 1224–1237 (the scene is not in the Fragment of 1790, so it would not have been known to Hegel in 1806).

12. Findlay (1958, 112–113) used the “disinterestedly frightful Nazi” as an illustration at the level of the “honorable consciousness” that is devoted to the *Sache selbst*. But at that stage the opposition of “self-interested and disinterested” has just been theoretically reconciled in the concept of “general utility.” That is why the dialectic of “humbug” can arise. Eichmann’s defence belongs properly to the level of “Conscience” (cf. par. 644 below). It provides the most graphic paradigm case for Hegel’s critique of Kantian “formalism.” But it is also fully “conscientious” because Eichmann took his stand on the *Sittlichkeit* of military obedience.

13. This is perhaps the best place to comment on the view of many orthodox Marxists that Hegel confuses “action” with the “thought of action” (cf. H. Lefebvre, 1962, 31). The point is that “talking” is an action; and while it is a “humbug” sometimes, it is also the most seriously consequential form of action at others. It is also the mode of activity where the *identity* of thought and action is most evident. Hegel does not *confuse* different things; he seeks to comprehend the opposite moments of one thing.

14. We can see here why the Kantian view has to be the fundamental position of the Moral World-Intuition. The ultimate necessity for “grace” (pardon, forgiveness) rests upon the radical uncertainty of our own self-knowledge (which Fichte tried to ignore both in his theory and in his practical life).

15. See chapter 8, note 44 above for the distinction involved here.

16. See *Toward the Sunlight*, 260; and my review of *Jakob Zwillings Nachlass* in the *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain*, no. 13 (Spring-Summer, 1986).

17. I am simply assuming, for the sake of argument, that a respectable wine-merchant will be “moral” in a secular sense—and hence “conscientious,” rather than “religious” like the true denizens of the “Moral World-Order.”

18. Frau Gock certainly was a deeply religious woman; and perhaps she always thought of herself as seeking to do the will of God, rather than as acting upon her own conscience. But the account book which she kept of her administration of Hölderlin’s legacy is a model of conscientious responsibility.

19. His conversation with the Comte D’Argenson was recorded by Voltaire (in the “Discours préliminaire” to *Alzire*). See *Pilgrimage*, chapter 11, note 43.

20. The word *Betrug* sends us straight back to the world of the *Real Individuals*; and it is certainly no accident that Hegel has just told us that Conscience is the inversion of the “*Sache selbst*” from predicate into subject. (My own historical conscience obliges me to add that there is no evidence that Hegel actually regarded Johann Noé Gogel in this way; but there is good evidence that he viewed the patrician families of Bern in this light when he was house-tutor for one of them—see Letter 11, to Schelling, 16 April 1795, Hoffmeister I, 23; Butler and Seiler, 35).

21. Sartre was certainly mindful of Creon and Antigone, when he set up the case, in “Existentialism is a Humanism.” (M. Westphal [1978, 176–179] is right to call Conscience “anarchic.” Unity can only be restored, without regression, by moving on to the comprehending reconciliation of the *moral* religion.)

22. It is clear that some (Fichte?) polemic against the *Ermägung* and *Vergleichung* of duties is referred to here. But I have not managed to identify it. The other words italicized are “*Zufälligkeit der Einsicht*,” and “*Berechnen . . . abzuschneiden*.”

23. We must, of course, remember that only someone who claims “pure” insight (i.e. a rational insight that all can share) is asserting the right of “Conscience.” Thus Savonarola was a kind of proto-Lutheran in politics; but he was not a figure of “Conscience,” because he believed he was especially singled out by God, or that he had a *prophetic* “mission.” It is Romola who speaks for the rational conscience in the argument about her godfather; and Savonarola’s response is that of enlightened Utility, not that of moral rationality (*Romola*, chapter LIX; see above, Chapter 8, note 57). But Charlotte Corday can stand beside Timoleon in Jacobi’s list.

24. An insightful analysis of how Hegel shows that Conscience is inevitably convicted of evil is given by J. M. Bernstein (1994).

25. “The Battle of Blenheim,” last stanza.

26. This explains why most of us can belong to the community of forgiveness without any conscious passage through a “Beautiful Soul” stage. Also it explains why we do not (usually) arrive at the level of universal (historical) forgiveness. The “resting Concept” is sufficient unless life tries us unusually hard; or unless we become entangled in *philosophical* difficulties, because our theoretical interest is aroused.

27. See *Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 521–548.

28. In addition to the *Oedipus Coloneus* 521–548 see 960–1002; and *Antigone*, lines 921–980. Of course, Sophoclean Thebes is a long way from the Moral World-View. But the *objectifying* power of recognition is evident, for example, in the readiness of the sons to support the exiling of Oedipus against his will. Clearly, they felt that this would make recognition of their own claim to the kingship easier. Oedipus curses both of them (and especially Polyneices) for setting the world of public recognition above that of natural family obligations—see *Oedipus Coloneus*, lines 789–790, 1352–1392.

29. The reference to Luther at the Diet seems to be almost as plain as the reference to Fichte: selfhood is brought together with *Dasein*, by direct identification.

F. Schalow (1993, 173–180) has shown how this experience of communicative identity provides the occasion for a more sympathetic reading of Hegel in the perspective of Heidegger’s “question of being” than Heidegger himself offers.

30. Compare especially *Antigone*, lines 806–882; in the *Oedipus Coloneus* we begin with the Stranger commanding Oedipus to leave the grove of the Furies (36–37) and end with The-seus commanding Antigone and Ismene to go home without visiting their father’s burial place. “Lament” is, of course, the general content of this play.

31. See the passage cited at note 10 above.

32. F. Schlegel’s contributions, with all of his other fragments, and the novel *Lucinde*, have been translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, U. of Minnesota, 1971).

33. Compare *G.W.* IV, 385–386, with 316, line 33–318, line 3 (Cerf and Harris, 150–152, 57–58); see also *Difference*, *G.W.* IV, 8, lines 4–13 (Harris and Cerf, 83).

34. For the Beautiful Soul in earlier literature see Hans Schmeer (1926). He has shown how the contemporary *Gestalt* emerged in the work of Wieland (H. Schmeer, 1926, 43, 71–73). But it became topical through Book VI of *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* and Jacobi’s *Woldemar*. For Hegel’s study of Jacobi compare *Toward the Sunlight*, 89. I have myself seen only the third (revised) edition of *Woldemar* (1796). This is the version reprinted in Jacobi’s *Werke*, volume V. The auction catalogue of Hegel’s library lists only volume 2 of the second edition (1794); but Bonsiepen and Heede refer to the edition of 1796 without comment.

35. B.C. Sax (1983) has given us an interesting comparative study of the significance of the Beautiful Soul in *Wilhelm Meister* and in the *Phenomenology*; but the reader should be warned not to accept his view that the following chapters are “the opening sections of a speculative logic” (462).

36. The new heroine is called in this allegory *Impudence*. But that name is only proper to her for this “fragment” of Schlegel’s vision. Speaking generally *Lucinde* portrays a “religion of love.” The encounters of [Jacobi’s?] Beautiful Soul with “Morality” and with “Impudence” are described as follows:

“I *do* have more feeling (*Gemüt*) than you do, my dear Morality (*Sittlichkeit*)!” said one. “But then my name happens to be Soul—in fact, Beautiful Soul.” Morality grew rather pale at this and seemed ready to break into tears. “But I was so virtuous yesterday,” she said, “and I’m always making progress in my efforts to be more so. I get enough reproaches from myself. Why do I have to listen to more from you?” Another girl, Modesty, was jealous of the girl who called herself Beautiful Soul and said, “I’m mad at you; you just want to use me.” . . .

. . . Now Impudence seemed less harsh to me. I could look at her boldly, and with astonishment had to admit to myself that her figure was tall and noble. She went rapidly toward the Beautiful Soul and seized her by the face. “That’s only a mask,” she said; “you’re not the Beautiful Soul, but at best Daintiness, and sometimes Coquetry as well.” Then she turned to Wit with these words: “If you’re the maker of those who are now called Novels, then you might have spent your time more profitably. In the best of them I can hardly find any trace of the inspired poetry of fleeting life. But where has the daring Music of hearts maddened with Love fled to—she who moves everything along with her, so that even the rocks themselves dance? No one is so foolish and so prosaic that he doesn’t babble about Love; but whoever still knows her doesn’t have enough heart and faith to speak her name.” (Schlegel, *Werke* II, 22–23; Firchow, 55, 56).

37. Schiller, *Werke* (National Edition) 20, especially 287. The whole essay is relevant, but Hyppolite (1974, 513) rightly drew attention to one passage; and D. O. Dahlstrom (1991) has spoken up for Schiller.

38. Friedrich Schlegel’s logic is the logic of subjective *fragmentariness*, which means that it is subtle and dialectical. Properly understood, it often leads in quite the opposite direction from that in which someone who tries to make the “fragment” into a whole of its own kind will be inclined to go. Thus Firchow (whose introduction to *Lucinde* is outstandingly insightful) quite correctly interprets the “religion” of Julius and Lucinde as depending on the assumption that the male role is active and the female passive (and he remarks that this was generally taken for granted by Schlegel’s contemporaries). It would seem, therefore, that two women cannot have the relation that Schlegel calls “friendship.” But, on the one hand, Firchow himself notes (25) that the “Dithyrambic Fantasy” depends on the *reversal* of these supposedly normal sexual roles; and on the other hand, “activity” and “passivity” (including the active imaginative capacity to invert their normal shapes) clearly depend on which partner is the “genius.” Schlegel does not stupidly assume that there is any rule about that. He can only show us how things are for the *male* “genius”; but it is quite clear that his imagination is “fragmentary.” The same “religion of love” which becomes the ideal of “friendship” in the work of “great Plato” will have a different shape altogether in the vision of a female genius like “holy Sappho” (Firchow, 63).

39. Goethe's Beautiful Soul does not live in a group of friends who are forever congratulating one another on their "beauty." So her piety can only be brought under Hegel's strictures if we allow that her "modesty" can be regarded as a "mask" that deserves to be torn off. This is plainly not Goethe's own view, or that of the characters in *Wilhelm Meister* who read her story. But since Hegel can hardly expect us to ignore her, he must be held to agree with Friedrich Schlegel in some sense. (His whole view of the moral genius is ironic—compare Preface, paragraph and *Aesthetics* (*T.W.-A.* 13, 93–97; Knox I, 65–67.) Her story must be studied as a whole; but her "modest" picture of herself (which is what justifies Goethe's bestowing on her a title which *she* would not think of using) is brief enough to quote here:

That I am always advancing, never going backwards; that my actions are always becoming more like the idea which I have formed of perfection; that I feel every day more facility in doing what I hold to be right, in spite of the weakness of my body, which precludes me from many services. Can all this be explained from human nature, into the corruption of which I have seen so deeply? For me, now, not at all.

I scarcely remember a commandment; nothing appears to me under the aspect of law. It is an impulse (*Trieb*) that guides and leads me always aright; I follow my feelings (*Gesinnungen*) in freedom, and know as little of restraint as of repentance. Thank God, I know to whom I am indebted for this happiness, and that I can only think of these privileges with humility. For I shall never get into the danger of being proud of what I could and of my abilities, as I have so clearly learned what a monster can be produced and nurtured in every human bosom if a higher power does not watch over us. (Goethe, *Werke* X, 439–440; trans. R. O. Moon, London, Foulis, 1947, 359–360.)

40. It is almost certainly the last pages of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* that Hegel himself has in mind as the *Gestalt* of the Beautiful Soul "intuiting its own divinity." The transition to a new shape of "Conscience" (as Novalis himself calls it) is there very plain. But, for the relevance of the critique to the piety of Schleiermacher (which is outwardly more orthodox) see *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 385–386 (Cerf and Harris, 150–152).

41. The difference between the religious "moralism" of the Beautiful Soul and Schlegel's aesthetic "immoralism" can be focussed clearly by considering the relation between intellectual and carnal love. Jacobi claims in *Woldemar* that a man must not sleep with the woman whom he loves in the spirit—that "true" love is quite distinct from lust. *Lucinde* is a tract against this separation of "sacred" from "profane" love—that is why Impudence tries to tear the face off of Beautiful Soul in Schlegel's allegory. (Hegel agrees, I think, that the religious "moralists" are more deeply immoral than the aesthetic "immoralists." But Schlegel's conscious return to the Earthly Paradise in the age of "innocence" is just as much an evasion of the rational destiny of humanity as Schleiermacher's attempt to make the Heavenly Paradise into a present experience.)

42. *Verborgen* is emphasized—and then repeated twice later without emphasis. The echo is probably from Jacobi's *Woldemar* (cf. G. Falke, 1987, 138).

43. In this connection the interpretation of the Incarnation given in the "Confessions" of Goethe's Beautiful Soul is particularly interesting:

"If we are able to think it possible," he [the Uncle] once said, "that the Creator of the world Himself assumed the form of His creature, and in that manner lived for a time in the world, so must this Being appear to us of infinite perfection, because the

Creator was able to unite Himself so intimately with it. Therefore, in our idea of man there should be no contradiction with our idea of the godhead, and if we often feel a certain unlikeness and remoteness from it, it is all the more on that account our duty, not, like the *Advocatus Diaboli*, to keep our eyes on the nakedness and weakness of our nature, but rather to seek out all the perfections by which our claims to similarity with the godhead may be made good."

I smiled and replied: "Do not make me ashamed, dear Uncle, by your kindness in speaking after my language." (Goethe, *Werke* X, 423; Moon, 1947, 346).

Christ, we should notice, is a *model* not a *mediator*. When "Uncle" restates the doctrine in "his own peculiar language" he offers *two* ideals; Goethe's own *aesthetic* ideal of a harmony of *all* aspects of human nature, and the Christlike ideal of the Beautiful Soul which sacrifices the lower nature for the sake of the perfect harmony of the higher nature. Both of them are achieved by simple creative genius without the mediation of another self. The Beautiful Soul is just our own true "self" which we have to get in touch with so to speak; or as "Uncle" puts it: "this creative force which can create what ought to be, and does not let us rest until either outside us or in ourselves, one way or the other, we have set it forth" (Goethe, *Werke* X, 424; Moon, 347).

44. This is, of course, an extreme simplification of what made the Nazi gospel attractive; and it involves a very one-sided isolation of the "evil" involved. But I think it is an accurate characterization of the absolutely subjective side of the autarchic consciousness that sealed itself off. (See, for example, Modris Ecksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 314–315.)

45. *System der Sittenlehre*, section 3; *Werke* IV, 47.

46. Goethe, *Werke* X, 439; Moon, 359 (see note 40 above). This confidence is one aspect of the picture that throws doubt on the "modesty" of this soul. If she is conscious of moral *motion* at all, one feels that it ought to be both up *and* down. (The soul that is properly "beautiful" does not have this *progressive* consciousness. It is *at the goal*, and talks about the experience of the goal. If it talks about itself at all, it must say what John makes Jesus say: "I and the Father are one.")

47. Schlegel, *Werke* (Berlin, Aufbau Verlag, 1980), II, 81–82 (Firchow, 113).

48. This is as good an empirical model of a phenomenological "progress" as we could ask for. But it is a progress *in religion*, and certainly a regress as far as moral autonomy and rational individuality is concerned. If the conversion had taken place earlier than 1808 we should have found some reference to it either here or in the Preface. Hegel made sarcastic references to it in later years. See, for instance, the *History of Philosophy*, *T.W.-A.* XX, 418 (Haldane and Simson, III, 507–508); and *Philosophy of Right* (1822) section 141Z (Ilting, III, 475).

49. *Faith and Knowledge*, *G.W.* IV, 386; Cerf and Harris, 151.

50. E. Hirsch thought so (1924, in Fulda and Henrich, eds., 1973, 256). He refers us to the following passage:

I considered men, as I had felt them and known them from my early youth, men of the most various upbringing, and everywhere I found but false notes, muffled or strident; only in the simple confines of the child did I find pure melodies—"It is better," I said to myself, "To become as the bee and build one's house in innocence, than to rule with the masters of the world and howl with them as with wolves, than to dominate peoples and soil one's hands with that unclean material." I wanted to go back to Tina and live for my gardens and fields. (*G.S.A.* III, 37–38; Trask, Signet, 50).

It is interesting to note that Hegel himself may have been the one who first likened involvement in political action to “howling with the wolves”—see his letter 22 (to Nanette Endel) of 9 February 1797 (*Briefe* I, 49; Butler and Seiler, 57). But even if this echoes conversations with Nanette before Hegel went to Frankfurt (as I believe it does), it could still stem originally from Hölderlin’s “hard-hearted” attitude towards the active life (expressed either at Tübingen or in subsequent letters). Hölderlin liked to compare the uncultured philistines with “wolves”—see the quotation in note 53 below.

51. Again the first to identify him was Hirsch (and this time his bad habit of identifying the character with the author does no harm, because Novalis died before he got beyond Heinrich, and Hegel clearly identifies him in the *History of Philosophy* lectures as the soul (referred to here) that “flickers out within itself and vanishes consumed [*schwindet*, the first, covert, reference to the *Schwindtsucht* that killed Novalis] like a shapeless mist that dissolves into air.” (See *T.W.-A.* XX, 417; Haldane and Simson, III, 510.)

Hirsch is right in saying that here again Hegel’s language comes from *Hyperion*, and is meant to recall it. Hegel wants to associate Novalis, as the absolutely pure soul who disappears into nothing, with Hyperion as the absolutely hard heart who condemns everything. Even in the *History of Philosophy* lectures—where Hölderlin is not mentioned by name at all—“subjective extravagance” is coupled with “madness,” just as consumption is coupled with madness in paragraph 668 here.

52. In his *Confidential Letters about Lucinde* (1800). Hegel brought this up in his Berlin lectures twenty years later with the obvious intention of causing embarrassment. See *The Philosophy of Right* section 164Z.

53. See the climax of the portrait (which is quoted in note 38 above). Hölderlin may have Goethe’s “Beautiful Soul” in mind when he speaks of “becoming as the bee, and building one’s house in innocence.” Hyperion has, as yet, no Diotima with whom to recreate the family life of the Garden of Eden. He is like Adam before Eve arrived. His task—in the “hard-heartedness” that is foreshadowed here, though it comes to full fruition only after the *loss* of Diotima—is to *name* all the “animals” in his “spiritual kingdom.” Hirsch was again the one who recognized where Hegel’s “*geistige Tierreich*” comes from—see *G.S.A.* III, 22 (Trask, Signet, 35–36). But he did not grasp the significance that Hegel saw in the “hard-hearted” attitude that Hyperion evinces even on his first arrival in the “world of culture”:

As I went now here, now there among these cultured people, it seemed to me that human nature had resolved itself into the multifarious species of the animal kingdom. As everywhere, so here, too, the men were especially demoralized and corrupted.

Some animals howl when they hear music. But my more mannerly humans laughed when the conversation turned to beauty of spirit and virtue of heart. Wolves run away when you strike a light. When these men saw a spark of reason, they turned their backs like thieves.

If ever I happened to say a warm word for ancient Greece, they yawned and let it be known that after all a man had to live in this day and age; and—someone else added sententiously—good taste had not perished from the earth.

54. Hegel is not interested in “Hell.” But he signalizes the return of the “singular self” to the Underworld of natural death when he speaks of the “still flowing together of the pithless essentialities of the evaporated life” (par. 659). The Beautiful Soul flies away to Heaven (the Air). But it is identical with the “pithless shade” of Polyneices (par. 474).

55. I am not sure whether this appeared in time for Hegel to have it in mind also. But Fichte's exposition of "love" is another clear example of a religious "happiness" that is really an unsatisfied *Sehnsucht*—i.e. it is really "unhappiness." (Hegel certainly got hold of this book quickly; there seems to be a definite reference to it in the Preface—cf. the commentary on paragraph 23 in *The Pilgrimage of Reason*).

56. Even Julius says "Only in *Sehnsucht* do we find peace" (Schlegel, *Werke* II, 94–95; Firchow, 126).

57. The dialectical pattern is exactly that of the *Sache selbst* (pars. 404–418). But it is used twice. The first time my *Sache selbst* (being in fact my *Selbst*) was quite unaffected. This time the dialectic works. The reason for that is what we have to comprehend. Why does the fact that I now *know* that my *Sache selbst* is literally my *Selbst* make such a difference? (The repetition is analogous with the unfolding of the positions of "moral consciousness" before its actual "shifting" begins; but there is no comparable repetition of a cycle of movement.)

58. Goethe, *Werke* X, 438–439; Moon, 358–359.

59. See above, chapter 8, 456 at note 52.

60. Completely unintellectual as she is, Mrs. Bulstrode would certainly accept every self-justifying rationalization that Bulstrode is able to offer to himself. She forgives his very silence, and she does so silently. Bulstrode cannot bring himself to admit that forgiveness is necessary. He accepts only her sympathy with his suffering (compare the discussion in the commentary on par. 624 above).

61. Goethe, *Werke* X, 424, 439; Moon, 347, 359. Hirsch was wrong to take *Lucinde* as the *Gestalt* of the Beautiful Conscience that confesses itself to be *evil*. For *Lucinde* pictures the complete concept of the Beautiful Soul (which already contains implicitly the "antithesis" of Evil and its resolution in "forgiveness"). Compare the section "Fidelity and Playfulness" (*Werke* II, 36–43; Firchow, 68–76) which is the only place that the word *böse* occurs. The proper *Gestalt* of "*das Böse*" as the *developed* (explicit, *für sich*) antithesis is the "Hard Heart"—i.e. Hyperion as the "Hermit in Greece."

62. The *Oxford Book of Quotations* traces it to Mme Cornuel (1605–1694), quoted in the *Lettres de Mlle Aissé*, Paris, 1787, xiii (13.viii.1728). It was Voltaire who edited and published Mlle Aissé's letters. This helps to explain how the aphorism achieved such a wide currency. J. D'Hondt (1985) has provided us with a lot more of the background of this "proverb." Hegel himself would have found it most easily in Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* Book IV, Letter X. (A. W. Wood gives some other relevant references in his note 3 to sec. 124 of the *Philosophy of Right*.)

63. The crucial point is that because both parties are asserting "Laws of the Heart," both are "particular" and must confess it. The "forgiveness of evil" is in no sense a legal matter. This is well brought out by A. Wildt (1982, 365–370). M. Westphal's claim that Hegel has "two ideas of Freedom" which are not the same probably stems from confusion about this. It goes back (at least) to his essay of 1972, and remains significant in his book (1979). He misunderstands the transition in this part of the *Phenomenology*, and does not grasp the relation of State (or politics) and Church (or morality) correctly.

64. *G.S.A.* III, 156 (Trask, Signet, 166–167). The fact that Hyperion's letters are addressed to Bellarmine, the "beautiful Hermann" of some future Germany, shows the sublated presence of the yearning hope of the Beautiful Soul in its "harmonious" form.

65. See for instance the passage quoted in note 53 above.

66. See *T.W.-A.* I, 346–355; Knox, 232–240 (and *Toward the Sunlight*, 352–356, 366–375). The difference between Hegel’s discussion at Frankfurt and the discussion here is well brought out by L. Lugarini (1986, 187–212). D. P. Jamros (1990) has surveyed several views (Hirsch, Kojève, Solomon) of the figure of forgiveness. He does not attend to the problem of Hegel’s audience, but he draws the right philosophical conclusion.

67. It is also a sin against the Categorical Imperative (cf. O. O’Neill, 1975, 76–79).

68. Just as there is (but in a different way) between being a Beautiful Soul and becoming a Catholic convert (in the case of F. Schlegel).

69. *T.W.-A.* XX, 418 (Haldane and Simson, III, 510. Miss Simson translated Hegel’s deceitful *häufig* as “constantly”; so the deceit has hidden the true meaning completely).

70. I put it as strongly as this because I am sure that Hegel believed (as I do) that it was actually the fear of prosecution for treason that destroyed the last vestiges of Hölderlin’s hold on reality. Like Hyperion, though with much less Romantic *éclat*, Hölderlin *lived* his ideal as well as he could.

71. Hölderlin, *Lebensdokument* 520a, 6 March 1830—*G.S.A.* VII, 3, 119. This is from the private diary of the Princess, but she also wrote to her brother and two sisters about the experience. Anyone who thinks that the stiff and clumsy Rector Magnificus may have been only an external stimulus for this obviously unexpected and impressive experience should study further how Hegel’s merely *mechanical* memory worked to aid Lieutenant Diest in 1821 (*L.D.* 416, *G.S.A.* VII, 2, 471); also his obviously better than mechanical memories of the Empedocles project, and his critical opinion about the Sophocles translation (*L.D.* 451, *G.S.A.* VII, 2, 544).

72. He believed, similarly, that there was a connection between *Spinoza’s* life and character as a “beautiful soul” and his death from consumption.

73. Thesis X, *Erste Druckschriften* (ed. Lasson), 405; Waszek (in D. Lamb, ed. 1987), 254.

74. I learned the saying as a sort of moral proverb. But it is, apparently, a misquotation of Mme de Staël’s *Corinne* (1807), Book IV, chapter 2: “Tout comprendre rend très indulgent.”

The essay of G. di Giovanni (1994) made me see that Jacobi is the *complete* figure of “Conscience.” Compare the following passages from Jacobi’s *Woldemar*:

“Dear Henriette,” [Woldemar] said, “no word can say how I feel! Loudly could I and *would* I confess before the whole world that I am the guiltiest among all men . . .” (461, *Werke* edition).

. . . “I will learn humility,” he said. “You bring me back to myself! What in me now [lies] so dead against my own self . . . That too is pride! always the same hard, unbending, pride . . . I was not good, Henriette! But I shall *become* it. I will learn *humility*; I will be *yours* . . . Oh, do *accept me*! (476).

But I do not regret my efforts to distribute the different moments to other writers and their works—not only because Hegel himself makes some other references, but because it is important for us to understand that the “experiences” to which he refers were culturally widespread.

75. See Hölderlin, *Lebensdokument* 616 (Ruge to Marx, March 1843). The reception is of course marred (from Hegel’s point of view and Hölderlin’s) by the carrying-over of the *divisive* aspect of the judgment. Ruge (and the proletariat) could adopt Hyperion’s attitude to the bourgeoisie, and see themselves directly as Bellarmin (the Germany of the future). But

Hyperion did not want to be the prophet of the class-war; he knew already where *that* vocation leads.

Both P. Laska (1974) and H.E.M. Hoffmeister (1974) complain that Hegel's theory of "situated freedom" does not guarantee reconciliation with the economic (or the political) structure of one's society. But it is not the task of philosophy to solve the world's real problems. We can only observe how things are, and why we must be "reconciled" to the situation, if our actions are to be morally effective. (Hoffmeister is right in claiming that any innovative moral act involves "faith." But the *Hegelian* "beyond" is only that of the historical future, and of the "cunning of Reason." The conceptual problem is clarified by G. Planty-Bonjour [1983, 24–28].)

76. "I am a man, I count nothing human alien to me" (Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos*, 77). W. Desmond (1992, 161–162) says that Hegel inverts the proverb and reads "To forgive all is to understand all." This is too simple. One must suspend moral judgment in order to achieve understanding; and sometimes (but surely not always?) understanding results in actual forgiveness. Hegelian forgiveness is self-recognition in the other. Desmond's problem about the ambiguous identity or duality of the Spirit is a verbal confusion only. It is a matter of definition that Spirit is identical; and a matter of logic that it must dualize itself in order to exist as the identity of communication that it is. For the rest, there cannot even be two *things* that are "radically *other*"; even the thing-world is a community. (W. Desmond [1992] is a shortened version of [1992a, chapter 4]).

I agree with M. A. Bertman's comments that "Hegel's claim to wisdom . . . is grounded by emancipation of the divine from Platonic dualism" and "the question of personal corruption is an intellectually retrograde illusion" (1988, 179). But I do not understand his attitude to Hegel's historical dialectic.

77. Even P. Fuss and J. Dobbins (1981, 150) do not express Hegel's doctrine quite as clearly as the Terentian slave. Henry Adams offered what we may call Young Rameau's view of this transition. He says that "past history is only a value in relation to the future, and this value is wholly one of convenience" (1973, 488). He makes Hegel (who believes that true history is possible) into the quintessential Beautiful Soul: "a Hegelian is one who agrees that everybody is right, and who acts as if everybody but himself were wrong" (1938, 246). See further J. G. Kronick (1986).

Marcuse (1954, 115) says "The *Phenomenology* unfolds the structure of reason as the structure of domination—and as the overcoming of domination." He gives full value to the moment of healing and reconciliation at this point in Hegel's text, but he regards the transition to Absolute Knowing as the achievement of classical noetic "freedom" only. But Hegel thought of his philosophy as the exposition of modern individual freedom; and when we come to see that the reconciliatory task of "absolute knowing" vis à vis religious ideologies (to use Marcuse's own preferred terminology) is in principle a "bad infinite" (or endless) one, we can grasp the crucially important fact that Hegel's "absolute knowing" is as much practical as it is theoretical. So it is right to claim that the *Phenomenology* unfolds the structure of *liberation* rather than of domination. (It does, of course, also show us why we can never have a world without domination.)

78. C. Hamlin (1985, 160–162) is logically correct in reading paragraph 671 as the climax of a modern "tragedy," because it is the "return" of the harmony of "True Spirit." But it is Dante's *Comedy* brought to earth.

R. Bernasconi (1986, 335–344) has shown how these final paragraphs answer many of the criticisms that E. Levinas makes against Hegel. (He points out the importance of the moment of forgiveness as the transition to Absolute Knowing [par. 796].)

79. H. M. Ravven (1986, 57) is right to distinguish between “reconciliation” and “sin-cleansing.” Since “nothing in Fate is changed,” we cannot be “cleansed.” We “purify our hearts” (even in the Unhappy Consciousness) by putting the past behind us and making a new beginning. *Philosophical* purification—the topic of the whole “Science”—is a matter of adopting a new Concept that is more comprehensive. Thus the practical experience of “forgiveness” enables us to comprehend theoretically the whole range of ways in which the community is reconciled with itself and its members. “Sin-cleansing” (in many shapes) is an important ritual in this process. It falls into place at Eleusis. But more than a ritual it can never be. It is logically absurd (i.e. superstitious) to pretend that “God can change the past”; and it is morally wrong to pretend that I cannot always begin again, when I am ready to try. How the community can help me to do that is a contingent empirical problem—though we may find ways of improving our communal capacity, by maintaining our speculative observer’s attitude towards the many rituals that experience presents.

J. H. Shklar (1976, 199–202) understands the social reconciliation of agent and observer very well, but she does not recognize its religious foundation; and when she says (203) that “the *Phenomenology* might well have ended here” she shows that she does not care just how the social substance became a subject. That is just what Hegel cares most about.

80. Donald Stoll (1989, 106) complains that Hegel’s science is not adequate for existential crises. But “Science” does not deal with “crises.” It only tells us what (if anything) is adequate to deal with them; and if it is a logical “Science,” it will only be telling us what we must know already if we are intelligent enough to be students of it. At a more mundane level R. J. Eldridge (1989, 177–180) applies the doctrine of this paragraph to the reconciliation of Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy (in *Pride and Prejudice*). This should probably be regarded as a case of the “Concept at rest” because the forgiveness comes at once when the situation is clarified. (A. Cutrofello [1995, 3–12] has brought out the logical evolution of the concept of *confession* very well from the reconciliation of the Unhappy Consciousness to this point.)

J. Heinrichs (see 1974, 399) is one interpreter who has understood the “community of forgiveness” rightly. But S. Rosen’s way of expounding it (1974, 232–233) is quite misguided because “the transcendental or absolute significance of our individuality” is to be *more* than individual, not to be logically “windowless,” but to be members of the absolute human community; and that is what becomes possible through the forward move into Religion.

81. The necessity for forgiveness, arises from the recognition that all active freedom is finite. Forgiving is the only absolutely (i.e., philosophically) free act that we can perform; and forgiveness is metaphysically necessary for every action except that of being a philosopher in the Hegelian way (cf. *The Pilgrimage of Reason*, chapter 2, note 84). On any other interpretation of Hegel’s argument difficulties like those raised by S. Rosen (1980) will arise.

82. G. Lukács (1976, 504–505) calls the transition to Religion “wholly Utopian.” But since what happens is the *forgiving of imperfection*, it is the other catchword about “the opium of the people” that is properly in place. Some strange interpretations have been offered by students who took note of the parallel movement of Hegel’s “Religion” chapter. Thus J. van der Meulen (1958, 291) sees it as an “antithesis” to the preceding evolution of “Spirit.” That is certainly not the appropriate logical relation to invoke here. W. van Dooren (1969) understands the parallel correctly; and he argues rightly that the topic is not “God,” but “Religion.” But he goes too far, I think, when he claims to find here “not just the death of God but the end of Religion” (1969, 101). P. Kobben (1984/1985) examines Chapter VII from a Marxist point of view as the development of Hegel’s “ideology.” He sets up a pattern of interesting (though not always convincing) parallels between Chapter VII and Chapters I–V.

83. If we think of the process we have observed as the dialectic of the “subjective” or “formal” Conscience we can see how the transition from Conscience to (modern) *Sittlichkeit* has to be interpreted in the *Philosophy of Right*. The right line of interpretation can be found in L. Siep (1982), K. Bal (1987) and D. O. Dahlstrom (1993).

Chapter 10

The Divine Substance

VII: Religion

At the beginning of Hegel's seventh chapter our standpoint undergoes the most radical of all the transformations that occur in the Phenomenology. Already in the introduction to his sixth chapter Hegel has told us that the Gestalten of Spirit proper are "not just shapes of consciousness, but shapes of a world" (par. 441). When we reached the Moral World-View, the world of Spirit became an "inner" world—a transcendental realm, for which the actual world of Culture and Enlightenment exists only as an instrumental moment. But in Conscience that world is narrowed down to the subjective certainty of the agent's own decision; and the ordinary world becomes merely phenomenal. Only the absolute selfhood of a socially situated but "universal" (i.e., noumenal) subject remains as our object. For the Beautiful Soul, the universality of this absolute selfhood is the "God Within." The spiritual world is just a verbal creation—the magical echo of the poet's own voice in Novalis, and the dream-memory of a lost paradise in Hölderlin's Hyperion. The ordinary world is rejected by the "Hard Heart" as a hypocritical façade.

What happens when the Hard Heart breaks, and we make the transition to Religion proper is that the God within is projected outwards. God becomes recognizable as the spirit of the actual community in which we live and move. We give up the moral standpoint altogether, because we recognize the onesided inadequacy of moral judgment, and the universal necessity of forgiveness for our finitude. Forgiveness is recognized as the only moral duty that can be absolutely fulfilled. Whether as moral agents, or as moral critics we need forgiveness; and we can receive it only if we give it, for that is the only way to deserve it and so to be able to forgive ourselves. The soul that flies from the world to the God within, is guilty for that flight, and doubly guilty when it pretends to condemn the world in the name of the God within. This inner God must appear; he must become "manifest." That was already the fundamental imperative of the Moral World-View. But God can only be manifest as the spirit of universal forgiveness, the spirit that transcends the whole moral standpoint.

This transcending of the moral standpoint does not constitute a "moral holiday," as William James thought.¹ On the contrary, it is the climax of moral judgment, the Last Judgment that resolves all the problems of the Moral World-View. Not even God—so this Last Judgment says—can judge the world "justly," or be gracious to us "according to our deserts." He must have mercy equally upon us all.² But this "mercy" of forgiveness

is something with which (even for the religious consciousness that sees it as coming from a transcendent source) we must collaborate. God cannot forgive us, unless we can forgive ourselves; and to be able to do that we must both forgive others, and have the conscientious consciousness of commitment to the doing of our duty as best we can. For the absolute Self that is now manifest to us as an Absolute Subject "proceeding between" the finite and imperfect moral self and its universal community is that same being that first appeared to Antigone as the ineluctable "unwritten law" of family piety which has no known origin (par. 437).

The Spirit does not cease to be an "object" just because it has now appeared as a subject. For it is Substance just as much as it is Subject. The moral authority of Conscience is not affected by the recognition that the deliverance of Conscience is always one-sided, and hence in conflict with others. But the last law of Conscience, the one through which all consciences are reconciled, is: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." William James can with good right be committed to making the world better; and he can properly condemn those who are not (in his eyes) committed to that. But as a philosopher he must not presume to condemn anyone; for when he does that he falls short of his scientific goal, which is to comprehend them.

For us now the practical dimension of the transition from morality to religion is not what is important. As scientific observers of the experience of consciousness we have seen that the transition to "Religion" is the establishment of a universal world-historical observational standpoint that is very close to our own. It makes the theoretical (or "scientific") standpoint truly possible for the first time. It is only when we abandon the stance of moral judgment, only when we do not seek to be moral valets, that we can be scientific observers at all. Even William James, the dedicated, and justly celebrated, master of introspective psychology, would readily grant that the scientific observer of "bad" behavior must overlook its moral "badness" while he is seeking to understand its psychological genesis. A criminal already condemned, may be referred to the Jamesian psychologist for a report before sentencing; but it belongs to the very concept of an objective report upon her state, that she is not "judged" by the psychologist. The reporter must "forgive" everything in the effort to understand the truth objectively.

Thus we can now see that "the Absolute" has indeed been "with us from the start" (par. 73). For it is only in this spirit of universal forgiveness, universal "absolution," that we can be scientific observers at all. Hegel is about to demand from his readers an extension of that spirit of absolution, which some of them must have found conscientiously difficult in 1807. He will ask them to regard the obliteration of selfhood in the worship of the daylight, and still worse, the aggressive behavior of the Philistines who worshipped the great fish Dagon—together with the dog, ape and cat gods of the Egyptian "house of bondage"—as moments in the truth of "Religion."

We find this much easier, of course, than some of Hegel's contemporaries. That is partly because it is easy to be tolerant of what is dead and gone; but it is mainly because we have very little living religion left. Religion has become for us a matter of formal professions and ceremonial actions; and even in that aspect it was far more important (and more universally practiced) in Hegel's time. But that is only the "abstract" moment of what Hegel is talking about. Burial is a religious ceremony, and one that is

*still important in the eyes of many of us. But no one in our society would die to see it done; and a political authority that forbade it upon pain of death, would seem to most of us crazy rather than tyrannically oppressive.*³

It is wise to linger over the Hegelian Concept of Religion until the spirit of academic "absolution" does not come quite so easily. Kierkegaard chose for this purpose, to meditate upon the sacrifice of Isaac. But that is still a cheat, because in the end "the ethical" is reinstated, and the story concludes in reconciliation with God. Hegel would have us meditate upon a different case, more extreme in its violation of all reason, and without any final triumph of mercy. He makes this demand plain when he says that "truth is the Bacchantic revel in which there is no member who is not drunk" (par. 47). For as soon as we ask what Hegel knew about the "bacchantische Taumel," and what it meant to him, there is one source, and one source only, that forces itself upon our attention: the Bacchae of Euripides. What happens in that play is that after Agave, his own mother, the most sober and respectable dowager in the community, has given herself up to the new cult, King Pentheus endeavours to put a stop to it; and Agave comes out of her trance of Bacchic enthusiasm to find herself holding the severed head of her own son. Pentheus is no Creon; he is not a political fool, opposed to all innovation, especially on the part of the womenfolk. He is a good king, a true son of Apollo, a rational man who knows that mortals must respect the ethical boundaries of their existence. But when Hegel comments that "every member, as soon as it is sundered [from the revel] is just as immediately dissolved" it is this member, the ethical voice of "true spirit," who is pointed at by his literary source. The tragedy of "Religion" in Euripides goes as far beyond the tragedy of "True Spirit" in Sophocles, as the Sophoclean tragedy in its turn went beyond the Cartesian and Kantian comedy of Reason.

When we move from the standpoint of Morality to that of Religion, the consciousness that we are observing moves from the awareness of itself as finite to the awareness of the "other" self that is infinite. As Conscience (whether agent or critic) the finite self was striving to be infinite. The chapter on "Spirit" began with the immediate identification of the finite consciousness, with an absolute Law that it does not create, generate or legislate for itself, but which is, on the contrary, given to it in the natural bonds of its organic mortality. The giver of that Law of "True Spirit" is Zeus, the seemingly almighty Lord of life and death. But his infinite power is an illusion, and his finite community passes away.

In the truly infinite community of Reason which eventually takes the place of that finite community, the Lawgiver is recognized as the immanent might of Reason itself. But finally the contradiction between the finiteness of the actual spirit and the infinity of the Absolute Spirit, becomes explicit in the conscious experience of the rational agent and the rational judge. That contradiction is only overcome when we recognize that the adequate embodiment of Reason is in an actually infinite community of finite spirits. The rational spirit of forgiveness is "actually infinite," precisely in virtue of having surrendered its office of legislation. It is not legislative, but comprehensive; and its theoretical comprehension is also still practical, because it is reconciliatory. As an "experience of consciousness" Religion is more truly practical than theoretical, because the reconciliation of practical disagreements in the spirit of fraternity, and the absolution of the necessary consciousness of finitude as "sinful," is its logical goal.

When I speak of the "reconciliation of practical disagreements in the spirit of fraternity" it must be remembered that from the standpoint of common sense this "reconciliation" has a very Pickwickian meaning. The reconciled community continues to disagree; and its disagreements must at times be as absolute as Luther's defiance of the Council of Worms, or must reach the pitch of incomprehensibility symbolized in the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. Religious reconciliation changes nothing in the realm of "fate," and does not absolve us from the reverence that is the foundation of moral science.⁴ It is only our attitude towards these disagreements that is affected by the transition from morality to religion.

The essential function of Religion is the loving absolution of sin and guilt consciousness; that was why the logical inevitability of sin-consciousness in all practical experience, the logical impossibility of being dutifully conscientious, had to be brought home to the rational consciousness before the transition to Religion could be made "scientifically." The "hard heart" must break, the stance of direct identification with God's judgment, must be seen to be just as undutiful as the action condemned, before the true spirit of reciprocal forgiveness can be revealed. We shall see that that spirit of forgiveness is not just the final Gestalt of the moral Spirit, but the final Gestalt of religious experience as well. Hence, in order for Religion to be born in full self-consciousness, it is obvious that some of its shapes must have been experienced as "modes of consciousness" already.

Hegel begins his survey of Religion by reviewing these earlier modes of consciousness. What must be grasped before this review can even be understood, is that Religion proper is a mode of Self-Consciousness; in other words, we are the "self" of the absolute unity that we are now going to observe. The observed consciousness speaks of this actual infinity as "God," and it regularly adopts attitudes of "awe" and "reverence" towards God. God is a power who is "absolutely other" than itself in its sinful and mortal finitude. But at the same time, it recognizes itself, it comprehends its own spiritual infinity or "immortality," its own rational absoluteness, in this "absolute otherness." We shall be able to observe the exact parallel between the worshipping community and its God. For we already know that God is Spirit, and that this Absolute Spirit is precisely what constitutes the community of rational self-consciousness; and because of the "circularity" of Science, the end of the finite development (where we stand now) is identical with the beginning of the "biography of God in his community" which we shall now be observing.

*The divine power has a "categorical" status. It is what is recognized as common to, or identical in, all members of the worshipping community. It is only because this community is real, because the identity is "substantial," because our common human Reason is real and substantial, that we are "immortal souls." We have already seen that the final Gestalt of our eternal life is the "resurrection" of Christ in every worshipper. But that Faith is only a *Vorstellung*, the objective presentation of a pure Concept in the mode of Consciousness. The actuality of the infinite is the "Body of Christ" as a universal community of the spirit that embraces every mode, and every moment, of human rational awareness. The religious language is still a *Vorstellung*, but the actuality to which it refers can only be conceived. Dante can portray the Eternal Rose as a vision of Paradise, but the actuality of the infinite community is in our own present philosophical comprehension (and the subphilosophical but present experience of all its other members).*

As full self-consciousness, the religious consciousness that we have now reached was probably confined to a few intellectual romantics in Hegel's own time. This religious self-consciousness knows that the human spirit is the actual infinite (in the sense that I have explicated). But even in its most critically self-conscious representatives (identified for us by Hegel as Novalis and Hölderlin), the Beautiful Soul does not fully realize what the "infinity" of the Spirit means. The educated religious consciousness is ordinarily concerned with "reconciliation" as a practical problem. That is to say it is concerned with the actual community in its actuality, leaving its "infinity" to the obscurity and otherness symbolized by the name of "God."

The object of Hegel's chapter on Religion is to make the actual infinity of the human community appear in its visible concreteness. The "reconciling Yes" must not be referred to an ideal community of the future, or to a dream-community of the past—both of which owe their "beauty" to the implicit moral ideal of what ought to be. The "Yes" of Absolute Spirit must reconcile us with what is and with what will be, because it has been, and we have comprehended it in its necessity. So the ideal of community that we comprehended when we recognized the universal necessity of forgiveness, must now realize itself through the recollection of how our actual, far from holy, community has come to be. Only the recollection by the community of itself as an evolving self-consciousness—a "self-consciousness" which it quite correctly calls "divine" because the Self here is actually infinite—only this is its actual Dasein as free (or absolute) Spirit.

(a) *The Finite Phenomenology of the Concept of Religion*

1./672. We have encountered religion already, but only as the *object* of consciousness.

Just as the formal concept of Consciousness provided an abstract framework for the real career of the singular self-consciousness, so the forms in which we have encountered Religion as the *Gestalt* of "Necessity" on our journey through the shapes of finite Spirit will provide us with an abstract logical framework for the evolution of the "free" (or communally subjective) mode of being that we arrived at in the "Broken Heart." Until we arrived in the Moral World, we could encounter God only as an objective aspect of the conscious world of those "shapes of consciousness" that we were directly observing. In the earlier stages "God" was the "absolute essence" (*Wesen*). Thus "the divine" appeared, first, as the "Infinite" of the Understanding; and at the beginning of Self-Consciousness we were told that we were now in the "homeland of truth." This truth was characterized as the Absolute Spirit, "the I that is We, and the We that is I" (par. 177). The Absolute Spirit is the "subject" of our experience now. But in the world of the natural Self-Consciousness, we actually encountered God only as the absolutely Other Self, the Unchangeable He who is "Lord." In Reason God was absent altogether, because Reason was the kingdom of the finite selves. In "Spirit" He (or She) finally became "the We that is I, and the I that is We." But the finite spirit had to discover and know its own identity with the Absolute Spirit, before there could be any "scientific knowledge" of those earlier appearances. What we know at this moment, is that

God is simply the “I” of the contrite Beautiful Soul on one side, and the “We” of the absolutely comprehensive human community on the other. The name “God” cannot mean *more* than that, for if it could, there would be no Science of Experience. But it can mean much *less* than that. We shall now begin by surveying the “lesser” meanings that we have already met. Lingering with the “lesser” meanings, is the best (and indeed the only) way of deepening our comprehension of God as the Spirit that is both “I” and “We.”

- 2./673. First, Understanding was conscious of the Supersensible, but only as selfless. Then Self-Consciousness was aware of itself as the passion of Unhappy Consciousness straining unsuccessfully for objectivity. The unity of singular self-consciousness with its essence remained a Beyond. Reason has no religion, being occupied with the immediate present.

I anticipated paragraph 673 in commenting on paragraph 672; but now we must go into more detail. When the concept of the True Infinite was first formulated by the pre-Socratic philosophers, it was typically endowed not only with life, but with self-awareness. I shall not venture any guesses about the Boundless of Anaximander, but the Air of Anaximenes, the One God of Xenophanes, and the Nous of Anaxagoras are plainly supposed to have some kind of self-knowledge. Hegel here says, equally plainly, that the “divine life” of *his* Understanding is “selfless.” The system of Nature, as conceived in the Identity Philosophy, is “alive” (in the logical sense that it is not “mechanical,” but self-determining and “free” in the way that Spinoza’s God is free). But it is not a self, because it has no “other” in which it can recognize itself. To speak more plainly, we who are its “other,” cannot know ourselves in it, we can only know it as what is “absolutely other.” This is the general situation in what Hegel calls the “natural religions.” The divine is spoken of as a “self,” because the divine life is infinite, and it *comprehends* our lives (including our consciousness). But this comprehension is not, and cannot be, a “self-comprehension” (in any sense that *we* comprehend) until we can recognize ourselves in it. What we shall say at that point, is that the Infinite Life “recognizes us” (as its “children”). In the conceptual framework of the pre-Socratics nothing like that can happen. It cannot happen at all, in *any* pure monotheism. We simply cannot comprehend the selfhood of the One God in a conceptual way. For us (as thinkers) this absolutely infinite Being is “selfless.” The divine Life of the pre-Socratics is a “selfless” Infinite of the Understanding; and when Plato distinguished between the absolute status of the Ideas, and such theological myths as we find in the *Timaeus* and *Phaedrus*, he was clarifying the great achievement of his Ionian and Italian predecessors. In this world of Understanding, all talk of God as a self-conscious agent is sub-philosophical. It belongs to the level of the mythical imagination which the pre-Socratic thinkers successfully (but still imperfectly and incompletely) sublated. There is no “divine Self” in Nature (or, for that matter, in pure thought). There is only an absolute Substance. That is why Spinoza was justly condemned as an “atheist.”⁵⁵

The trinity of names that the Infinite is given in paragraph 162—“the simple essence of Life, the soul of the World, the universal blood”—had a vaguely pre-

Socratic, and a more definitely Platonic, ring to them. The new names that are introduced here ("the supersensible, the eternal") direct our attention to Kant and Fichte (neither of whom would have qualified the world-system as "alive" in any sense). For Kant "the starry heavens" are an object of religious *awe*.⁶ But that is only because they are "sublime" (i.e., they are "infinite" in the bad mathematical, or Newtonian, sense).

Hegel does not deny that this sense of "sublimity" *is* religious; for we shall see that he identifies it as the most abstract form of religious consciousness. But he agreed with Thales (and with Aristotle), that the lowliest form of *life* is more worthy of religious reverence than what is mechanical. So although he treats the awe occasioned by the Sublime—i.e., by what cannot be comprehended—as the first appearance of the Divine, he is emphasizing here how far removed it is from the truth of God as Spirit.

It is the Unhappy Consciousness, at the climax of the evolution of self-consciousness in opposition to nature, that marks the real birth of the concept of Absolute Spirit. That is why it was appropriate for Hegel to give the formal definition of his concept of Spirit—"I that is We, and We that is I" (par. 177)—at the beginning of his fourth chapter. The Unhappy Consciousness is the immediate experience of "universal sinfulness." That was where the two "pure knowing Concepts" (of par. 671) first appeared; and the absolution of sin by the human mediator was the first appearance of the Absolute Spirit as an object of "consciousness." But since that appearance is not self-consciously comprehended until the end of chapter VI, it is quite proper for Hegel to underline at this point, how the reconciliation achieved by Unhappy Consciousness fails to satisfy his formal definition of Spirit.

The reconciled Unhappy Consciousness does actually satisfy the definition of Spirit to which Hegel gave pride of place. The absolution of sin is a perfect paradigm of "self-cognition in absolute otherness" (par. 26). But at that stage the "otherness" remains almost *absolute*. The Unhappy Consciousness is saved in hope only; its union with God, its membership in the Body of Christ, is Beyond. It speaks of this world as belonging to God, and as sanctified everywhere by the footsteps of his saints. But anyone in its world who takes this talk seriously, and openly says that this Earth itself is the true "body of God" is a heretic whose body will itself be consumed by fire.⁷ "Objectivity" has not yet been attained. The experience of the world of desire and labor continues to be a merely "sinful" one.

The imperative of Absolute Spirit, in its most primitive form, is that, being infinite, it must *not* appear in the realm of finitude. Its evolution must take place first in the inner realm of the supersensible, the realm of pure thought. For this reason, the inward evolution of Absolute Spirit begins with its disappearance into "the Void"; Reason "has *no* religion" in any of its "peculiar shapes." It loses the sense of "the Beyond," or of "absolute otherness" altogether; it knows and seeks itself only in the immediately present world. In other words, Reason is the logical complement of the Unhappy Consciousness; and when this complementarity is recognized, the Unhappy Consciousness becomes "Faith." It achieves an estranged form of objectivity in its own inner world of Thought. As we saw in our

sixth chapter, in Reason's actual world, Faith and Reason go hand in hand. Reason is happy in the objective possession of this world, but it has no absolute aspect, no "true" infinity; and its criticism gradually drives Faith back into the self-conscious shape of "unhappiness."

For Reason as an "immediate *Dasein*," there is no "absolute other," in which it can recognize itself. Absolute otherness is just what is not rational—it is matter, the skull bone in which the rational observer tries, absurdly, to find the "necessary" record of the freedom of Spirit. When it is rationalized, this Other becomes the *Sache selbst* in which the common good is identical with our own rational self-interest, or the rational test that can justify either private property or communism indifferently. This discovery of "the Category" is a tremendous advance. But there is no "otherness" in it, just as there was no "sameness" (or Identity) in the "Other" of the Unhappy Consciousness.

In the historical perspective that we have now achieved, it must seem artificial to separate Reason from the Enlightenment both French and German. Each phase of the Enlightenment has a mode of religious experience that belongs to it (and Hegel will consider both of them in his review). But the historically artificial distinction between "Reason" and "Enlightenment" (like that between "Unhappy Consciousness" and "Faith") is imposed by the logical structure of Hegel's Science. He overcomes it for us through the connections that he clearly establishes between chapters V and VI. The discussion of Real Individuality is connected (through *Rameau's Nephew*) with the world of "Culture"; and the connection of Reason (both as Law-giver and as Test of Laws) with the Moral World-View is transparently obvious. The logical reason for the separation is supplied by the relation of complementary opposition which Hegel establishes here between the Unhappy Consciousness as essentially "otherworldly" and Reason as essentially "this-worldly."⁸

- 3./674. The ethical world had the religion of the *Underworld*: this was the cult of death, both universal (Fate) and singular (the Furies). As singular the essence is the self (and is present): but it is not properly universal. Universal fate is unconscious.

When we come to the forms of religious experience encountered in the chapter on "Spirit," the crucial point to remember is that "Religion proper" has been defined as "the *self-consciousness* of the spirit." Thus as long as the absolute truth appears to the finite spirit as an "object"—an "other" in which it does *not* recognize itself—it is not yet Religion proper that we have before us. This has the paradoxical consequence that classical Greek religious experience divides into two parts, one of which enters into the experience of finite spirit, and the other into that of Absolute Spirit. It was through the inversion of these two aspects of True Spirit, that the opposite sides of "estranged Spirit" emerged: the finite presence of the departed spirit in the family cult, became the infinite absence of the absolute Spirit for the Unhappy Consciousness; and the immediate identity with the Gods in the City cult, became the finite alienation of the actual cultural world for Reason.⁹

But for the moment, what matters is that Antigone's Divine Law is as objective, as positive, for her as the civil edict of Creon. She does not recognize herself in it;

and indeed, she is obliged to sacrifice the destiny of wife and mother, in which she wanted to recognize herself, for the sake of it. She actually recognizes herself in her *dead*. This is what makes the “religion of the Underworld” a proper religion. As we shall see in due course, Antigone’s religion is the sublated shape of “Natural Religion” in Greek experience. We shall meet it again (before its sublation) as the Egyptian religion of the Master Craftsman. It is the presence of “the negative” in the Art-Religion’s immediate affirmation of human life. That is why it both can and must come before us as the breaking point of “True Spirit” in its finite aspect.

The Egyptian cult focusses attention on the “other world”; whereas the function of Antigone’s cult is to maintain the presence of the departed spirit in this world, to save it from the “fearful unknown Night of Destiny.” In the finite conflict of the Furies with the self-conscious Law of the daylight, it is the universal negative might of the Night, the universal “Destiny” of death for the *Polis*, that is brought into presence. Antigone herself is sent to the dark realm of Hades for the “crime” of reverence to her brother’s memory. He is only a “shade,” a mortal like herself. But it is the “universality” of selfhood (as something that survives the darkness of natural death), that is maintained through the continuum of the dead with the living established by the family-cult. So Antigone’s own death in defence of that tribal piety, symbolically foreshadows both the mortality of the finite living community, and the immortality of the community of Reason.

When the City itself falls before the might of a military conqueror, it becomes evident that the negativity of the self in this bad infinite chain of the dead and the living, has not been successfully “turned over” into the positive form of spiritual immortality. The religion of Art perishes through its own dependence upon Nature; what remains as its heritage for the truly universal religion of Thought, is just the art that immortally portrays this tragedy (cf. par. 753). Destiny emerges, the power against which even Zeus is helpless; but it is “without the Self,” it is only that same “Supreme Being,” which the Understanding conceptualized as Force, and which we shall meet finally in the religion of Enlightenment. As the revelation of this absolute Object, this banishment of the self, Antigone’s religion, like the religion of Voltaire, figures very properly among the “world-shapes” of Objective Spirit.

We should notice that the evolution of Absolute Spirit begins with the survival of the “singular self.” The Greek religion of the Underworld is the sublated shape of natural religion; both the moments of the community of forgiveness—the “I” and the “We”—appear visibly, but as negated. On the one side there is the “pithless shade” in the darkness of the Underworld; on the other side, the universal community appears as the “Night” of human Destiny, in which the sunlight of Apollo will be engulfed. This universal side remains completely hidden in the darkness, but the moment of singular selfhood is present. Without Antigone’s immediate awareness of Polyneices—or the peasant-wife’s certainty about her dead uncle and brother—the Absolute Spirit could never come to be at all.

4./675. The faith in the nothingness of Fate, and in the Underworld, becomes [Christian] Faith in the “kingdom of Heaven,” because the self must have its proper universal

significance. But Faith thinks imaginatively, not conceptually; so it perishes in the Deist Eudaemonism of Enlightenment. Here the Infinite of Understanding is reinstated, in such a way that Reason can be happy. The Beyond is empty and not fearful.

Historically, the religion of the Underworld as part of this present world—the dark underside of this Earth, the hidden natural aspect of free spiritual existence—precedes the Unhappy Consciousness (compare pars. 704 and 750–754). It is preserved by the Unhappy Consciousness in the inverted shape of the Hell that awaits all who cleave to the things of this world, and seek their happiness here. The “true” Beyond is the intellectual Paradise of Dante’s Rose. Only through transformation by a complex (or “double”) inversion does Antigone’s faith in the presence of her dead become the Christian faith in the world beyond. Antigone’s faith is that even in the darkness, the nothingness of necessity, the community of the dead is really here (just as the daylight world is still really with us in the night time). The “Faith in heaven” is the opposite belief that this world is the world of darkness, and that death is the portal of true being, eternal life in the daylight of God’s presence. The departed soul is united with God in the positive infinity of the universal self.

It is the “universal” moment (the “We”) that is blacked out by the darkness of “fate” in the Greek experience. This moment becomes the community of “Hope” (the Church Triumphant) when the Christians preach that “Fate” is really Divine Providence.¹⁰ But as soon as the Unhappy Consciousness is overcome, and the rational self begins to take possession of its intellectual world, in the clear consciousness of Faith that “the Kingdom of God is within,” the critical conversion of Faith into rational insight begins. The destiny of the “Faith in Heaven” is to be transported to Earth, and recognized by enlightened Reason in the world of here and now. The terrible, all-conquering might of Destiny becomes, in the Enlightenment, just the empty concept of objective being. “Matter” is not an inscrutable and absolute Lord; and the “Supreme Being” is not a Supreme Lawgiver or Judge. The *Ding an sich* is a bogeyman only for dogmatic philosophers.

This “religion of Enlightenment” is what we could, with some justification, call the “religion of Reason,” since many of the Enlighteners called it so themselves. It does not postulate any Beyond except the “supersensible world” of the Understanding, which is just this world seen from its intellectual side. It is “without the *Begriff*” because it does not comprehend the relation of thought (the universal, the eternal, the infinite) to being (the singular, the temporal, the finite) as an “infinity” that concretely comprehends and is comprehended by (i.e. self-consciously embodied in) the finite. In order for Reason to make the transition to the Concept of itself as a spiritual process, it must “criticize” itself as Understanding, and “make room for faith” once more. That is to say it must become the moral Reason that “postulates” a supersensible world in which it can be “practical.” This is the phase of the Moral World-View which Hegel’s recapitulation now goes on to embrace.

5./676. The moral religion unites this negativity with the recognition that the absolute essence is a positive content. Its God is this self-displacing contradiction; and its Fate is, at last, the self.

The Kantian “religion of Reason” is the revenge of Faith upon Pure Insight. It is really the second act of the Enlightenment. But the Revolution and the Terror come between them. The *Critique of Practical Reason* was published just before the Bastille fell. But it was Robespierre who made it a “necessary world-shape.” The moralist of the Revolution itself was Rousseau with his “Law of the Heart.”

The guillotine forces us (as a rational community) to recognize that God is really there, and his Kingdom really means something (“the absolute essence is a positive content” as Hegel puts it). But the new dialectic of practical Reason only moves the older dialectic of Faith and Insight up, from the level of immediate conceptual identity (which corresponds to Sense Certainty) to the level of rational Judgment (which corresponds to Perception). We saw how the moral consciousness shifted from one position to another in its search for a harmony of duty and happiness, the supersensible and the sensible, just as the perceptual consciousness shifts from side to side with the “thing” and its “properties.” But now it is not the might of the Understanding that engulfs the whole cycle of shifting (as the law of natural necessity engulfed both the “divine” and the “human” law of Antigone’s ethical order). Instead it is the might of Reason that swallows up the bad infinite of the moral struggle towards holiness—the might of practical Reason as Conscience, the self that is certain of itself.¹¹

- 6./677. Thus we arrive at self-knowing Spirit as the pure *self-consciousness* of Religion. So far we have dealt only with spirit as consciousness. But in Conscience it became self-conscious (and dominance-hungry). It has still no free actuality (for itself) and no natural order over against it. It has a shape, but being only a subject, that shape is transparent; and all of its actuality is in thought only.

It is interesting that Hegel does not here recapitulate the dialectic of the Beautiful Soul as particular agent and universal Judge, which we have just gone through. Obviously there is a practical sense in which that was not necessary. Hegel had just written it, we have just read it, and we have only to turn back a few pages if we want to read it again. But the deeper reason for the omission, is that whatever happens to it, Conscience remains self-enclosed and autonomous. Even when the Hard Heart breaks, and exchanges its reconciling Yes with the community, this is the birth of a new spiritual community that exists only in and through the free mutual recognition of consciences. Thus Conscience is “the element” (as Hegel likes to say) of Religion as such.¹² The ordinary world, with all of its differentiated institutional structures maintained by law and custom, is now left behind.

Antigone set the world of custom in motion towards disaster by emerging from the dark privacy of family life into the public world. The motion ended when we saw the universal order of natural law come to grief by seeking to transform itself directly into the universal human family. Now, through the universalization of forgiveness and reconciliation in the sphere of Conscience, we have discovered how the universal family of humanity can exist. The community that is founded upon conscientious recognition is the Church. The world of nature, and of natural

necessity and happiness, has been sublated. When Hegel says that “in conscience the self-knowing spirit is now self-consciousness at home with itself (*bey sich seiendes*)” we have to understand that this is only properly true of the *broken-hearted* Beautiful Soul. It is the new community of forgiveness that “has brought *itself*, like its objective world generally, as also its *Vorstellung* and its determinate concepts, into subjection.” This is not something that is achieved dream-fashion, by writing a book. It is what we actually do when we come together to worship God in the spirit.

But, like the devotedly silent Unhappy Consciousness, we have left the world of natural enjoyment and work outside the Church door. “The universal spirit that contains all essence and all actuality within it” is here present with us and in us. But the presence is only a spiritual one. It is an abstraction of pure thought, like the concept signified by the expression “all reality.” Hegel does not want to use the word “spirit” in the alienated sense in which it is opposed to “body” or “flesh.” So the “Absolute Spirit” must now reach back and comprehend everything in our mundane life. This gives us the proper key for the understanding of chapter VII. The “Religion” chapter should not be read as the logical biography of the “Absolute Spirit” in its *otherness*. It is the community’s recollection and repossession of its “experience.” For we have already been shown that “Spirit” cannot subsist at all in its simple “otherness.”¹³

What, then, is the “*shape* or the form of being” that this Absolute Spirit has for us at the moment? When Hegel insists that the *Gestalt* of the spirit is “perfectly transparent to itself” he wants us to remember the fundamental thesis that “language is the *Dasein* of spirit.” The “reconciling Yes” is the logical minimum of “shape,” the word that must be “transparent” if there is to be a community at all. But it would be a mistake to suppose that words spoken or read, are the only “transparent” shape of spirit; on the contrary, it is clearly part of Hegel’s doctrine that anything utilizable as a symbol can be part of the “language” of spirit. His doctrine accounts for the iconoclasm of the Puritan reformers; but it certainly does not require it. We have only to recollect Hegel’s defence of Faith’s symbols against the charge of “superstition” (par. 553) to realize that the Calvinists were as much at fault on this point as the enlightened rationalists.

Putting all the other symbols in brackets, it is the congregation (Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist indifferently) saying the prayer, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us,” and proceeding to the Doxology (“For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory”) that is our initial *Gestalt* of Absolute Spirit. In paragraph 677 Hegel is setting up a logical extreme. We are going to make a great turn at this point, and begin to take possession once more of the world outside the Church door—the whole world of our actual experience. But as we now enter “the kingdom of God” we come with nothing; we have “subjugated” it all, and put it behind us. It is all left outside. Like the Unhappy Consciousness, our philosophically religious consciousness is a communally spoken prayer. But we are saying it in our own language, and not in the Latin of the world-conquering lawgivers.

(b) *The Shaping of the Concept of Religion*

- 7./678. So in religion, the world of consciousness is not given its independent recognition. Spirit has these *two* worlds, its secular and its sacred existence. *We* know it is the same spirit in both; and the perfection of religion comes when *it* knows this too. But in religion spirit images itself, and its actual world is only the outward shape and garment of this pictured inner essence. So actuality does not get justice yet as a free existence; and it is not spiritual yet, being a definite shape. Absolute Spirit must have its actual world as its object. Only when it is recognized as spirit itself, does the world have free actuality.

The *Dasein* of the Absolute Spirit is the whole actual world; the utterance of the Divine Word is the order of Nature. If we remember this theological doctrine, then we can interpret Hegel's statement that in Religion the *Dasein* of the Spirit is distinct from its *Selbstbewusstsein* without abandoning his thesis that "language is the authentic *Dasein* of spirit." Religion, as an experience of the community, is necessarily a cult, a set of practices mediated by words and symbols. It can be an everyday affair, not distinguished in a temporal way, as the Sabbath is from the six days of labor. But as the conscientious self-consciousness of Absolute Spirit, it must have an identifiable linguistic shape as an act of self-definition; and this linguistic form has to be distinguishable from the whole world of finite speech and action (as well as from the world of natural events). For what is present in this communal experience is the Absolute Spirit.

What we say in order to express this absoluteness, is that the "speech" of this Spirit was the very *Creation* of the world. This is paradoxical, because in the ordinary way our speech appears to separate us from our actual world, instead of "creating" it; so the absolute Spirit gets the look of an alien "Lord" who speaks in quite a different way than we do. But this Spirit is a community; and what it creates by speaking is what can (and must) be "created" by speech: the conceptual framework of shared communal interpretation.

If our experience in Religion is to become "absolute knowledge," then the alienation of the Absolute Spirit in religious devotion must now be overcome. "The kingdom, the power, and the glory" are not just to be spoken of in Church; they are to be experienced. When Hegel pitches us straight back out of our purely intellectual devotion, into a religious consciousness that makes *no* distinction between God and Nature, but recognizes God's Word directly in the light of the sunrise, he is claiming that this is what the first verse of Genesis and the first verse of John really mean. If we are willing to follow him on this road, then by the time we reach his "manifest religion," we shall be obliged to confess that it is *not* identifiable with any traditional form of Christianity at all.¹⁴ Hegel knows this perfectly well.

The language of religion reduces the actual world to a *garment*; but the actual world of Nature and finite spirit cannot properly be reduced to a merely phenomenal cloak. It is to become "independent free *Dasein*." We shall begin by experiencing God in his own "Word" (i.e. in the sensible order of Nature); and by the time we come back to the consciousness of God as Spirit, it will be manifest to us that

the perfect shape of God is not a “determinate” one at all (not, for instance, the one that calls itself the “Christian Church”) but the shape that is truly “catholic”: the World-Spirit. Hegel can properly be called a follower of the man, whom his first followers called “the Christ,” because the “self-conscious spirit” of both of them is the spirit of reconciliation with human experience universally. But Hegel is not a “Christian” (any more than the man called “the Christ” was) because the Christ-symbol is only a verbal “garment” for his speculative truth—and one that must in the end be cast off in favor of the actual order of nature as the independent “living garment” of the Spirit. Goethe’s Earth-Spirit can speak of Nature as God’s “garment” because he is himself its “independence.” This salvation of the “independence” of nature is necessarily involved in what Hegel himself calls the “seeming demand for the opposite” (i.e., for absolute spiritualization).¹⁵

Nature and Spirit are to be reconciled. The actual world which is the object of consciousness in chapter VI must regain the form of free living actuality that it had in the manmade Paradise of True Spirit. Within the political realm it cannot do this—that was one aspect of the lesson of the Terror. But it can and should “come alive” in Religion. The alienation of the spirit from the flesh (which was essential to the very genesis of spirit as “absolute”) is to be absolved in its achievement of absolute self-consciousness. To put it another way, religious experience is not something that can happen in Church; only the awareness of what is *meant* can be generated there. The experience itself must be generated in life (and in every aspect of life). For there is no other life than this present one; and the experience that is conceived in church refers to it—even though that experience does in a crucial way involve the part played in this life by those whom we call “the dead.”

- 8./679. What we have completed so far is the phenomenology of Spirit as actuality. All of the moments (Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Spirit) are contained in the religious Spirit (or Spirit’s self-consciousness). Only the whole spirit (as Religion) is properly in time. But the singular phases of Spirit’s moments [e.g. Sense-Certainty, etc. for Consciousness] do have their own religious expression in time. These *phases* are in time, while Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, etc. are the middle terms for the actualization of the historically singular totalities. The process of development is cumulative so that the later phases still contain the earlier ones.

The *Dasein* of Absolute Spirit is the total experience of the *Weltgeist* all spread out in space and time. In this sense, Absolute Spirit is the “Word, by which all things were made”; and this is the ultimate sense in which the *Dasein* of Spirit is language. We have to grasp that this is not just a theological metaphor. It expresses the logical truth that all modes of consciousness are modes of human *self-interpretation*. Our “science of experience” has now organized all of the finite modes in which we interpret the world into the series: Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit. In this series of finite shapes “Self-Consciousness” does not mean the self-consciousness of Spirit; and Hegel himself makes this point by remarking that (within this series) “Spirit” itself means only the actual finite communal spirit

that is conscious of an external world. It is *human religious* experience that is the “self-consciousness” of the Absolute Spirit.

Spirit does not have its properly absolute Self, until we become its self-consciousness as philosophical historians. We have to forgive and forget the moral struggle of singular agents, and observe how the social substance expresses itself as a subject in *all* of the active singular consciousnesses who are themselves preoccupied by their moral struggles.

Of course, being well schooled in the *academic* ethic of forgiveness (at least), we have been observing “experience” from this “absolute” standpoint all the time. We could see that Antigone’s law of Zeus was *one* side of Spirit as Substance (and that Creon spoke for the other side); we could see that Culture’s doubled world of actuality and thought was really one world doubled by thought; and we could see the shifting of moral self-consciousness as it moved step by step towards the hypocrisy of identifying with God as the Last Judge. This is the sense in which (because we are speculative observers) the “Absolute has been with us from the first” (as Hegel implied in par. 73).

The whole story of our Science began (in the Introduction) with the “sceptical” (or theoretical) version of this absolute observation—the Kantian “last judgment” which knows absolutely that because of the structure of consciousness we cannot know anything “absolutely.” There too, the key to our undertaking was to have faith in our own cognitive certainty that “the Absolute is with us.” But now that we have made the journey we can see why critical scepticism is so natural. “Finding out where we are” when we adopt the stance of the critical observer is a long and complex task. We have to begin by trusting the instinct of our natural consciousness, and letting it criticize itself progressively. Then, in the end, we discover that our speculative observing standpoint is properly just the “compassionate” attitude that our religion ascribes to God. We have only been able to do what we have done, because of the attitude that our religion prescribes as the proper one in respect of critical judgment.

We are now going to observe how this model came to be the absolute standard prescribed by our cultural world. Until we had consciously appropriated the model, and appreciated its significance, we could not even formulate this project. The “phenomenology of finite spirit” we could complete by making an act of faith in our own critical capacity as a positive criterion of truth. We only had to recognize the “absoluteness” of our critical power of self-examination and self-condemnation. From the circle of its “infinity,” a new shape of positive experience was continually born. But the phenomenology of Absolute Spirit cannot become manifest for us, unless we consciously know at the beginning just where it terminates, just where the “biography of God” comes to an end, and “God dies.”¹⁶

When we embarked on the “finite” journey we had the natural beginning of the pilgrimage plainly before our eyes; the guiding thread of natural certainty was at hand, as soon as we were ready to abandon our intellectual doubt and pick it up. Now, as we set out on the “infinite” journey, we already have the knowledge of where it ends. Our observing consciousness stands at the climax of the evolution of

Religion, and we have the experience of the “Manifest Religion” already as a simple result. We must now apply the pattern of our finite journey to the history of our religion; and that is no easy task because Religion is the self-consciousness of human culture as a totality.

“Der ganze Geist nur ist in der Zeit”—“Only the *whole* Spirit *is* in time.” Religion is “the whole Spirit”; so it is the religious consciousness that is properly *historical*; only the religious consciousness of our culture exhibits itself as a temporal sequence of fully concrete and independent *Gestalten*. The moments of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Objective Spirit do not properly form a temporal sequence. As we have seen, it is not impossible to recollect the evolution of the singular consciousness in a historical sequence. But “Spirit” is the “shape” from which all of the strictly singular *Gestalten* of these moments emerge, and into which they return (par. 440). “Spirit” has a history (which is essentially the evolution of our religious consciousness of ourselves as a community in God); and we have already found in that story some of the crucial moments at which the paradigms of singular *Gestalten* are most easily recognized; but these finite paradigms do not come in a temporal sequence.¹⁷

Hegel claims here that the *phases* of Consciousness, the phases of Self-Consciousness, and the phases of Reason form a temporal sequence in the evolution of Religion, even though every cultural whole must involve Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason together. Hence, as we shall soon see, there is an *absolute* shape of Sense-Certainty, Perception and Understanding. In these absolute shapes of simple Consciousness, both Self-Consciousness (specifically Lordship); and “Reason” (e.g. Wisdom, Creative Power, Justice) will be attributes of the Absolute Spirit in the mode appropriate to the phase of Consciousness that the culture as a whole has reached.¹⁸

Hegel’s plan is to look for each specific “phase” or *Gestalt* in the cultural world in which it is dominant. The individuated *Gestalten* of consciousness—in an associated mode-cluster of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Spirit—with their differentiated standards of truth (or “the essence”) will be identified one by one as complex “shapes” of community; and these complexes will constitute an evolutionary sequence in our actual cultural history; for every succeeding *Gestalt* “retains the preceding ones in it [or upon it].” We shall find that the historical mapping of “Religion” onto the logical sequence of conscious shapes is quite difficult. But this programmatic promise should always be in our minds.

It is the *historical* character of all consciousness that logically determines the phenomenology of Religion. The evolution of singular consciousness had to begin “here and now,” because it starts from the logical fact that only the thinker who *exists* can know the truth. But the primary fact of consciousness for that thinker is not that she thinks, but that the world was already there to think about before she came into it. Thus for any thinker, the evolution of “substance” as natural and social is primary, and the shapes of Consciousness (Sense-Certainty, Perception, Understanding) must come first.

Hegel has still to tell us just how the conceptual moments (Consciousness, Self-

Consciousness, Reason) which cannot be culturally individuated serve as the “determination to singularity.”¹⁹ But it is noteworthy that he already says here that “the shapes of these moments *make up* [*ausmachen*] the singularity.” So it is clear that the “moments” will “determine the shapes” in sets (since every culture is a living unity of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Objective Spirit). Just how the singular “shapes” of Consciousness are combined into determinate shapes of Absolute Consciousness Hegel will now try to explain.

- 9./680. *Together* the moments [Consciousness, etc.] make up the subsistent actuality of Spirit as a whole. But their movement through their phases contains the evolution of absolute Spirit. Thus these phases [Sense-Certainty, etc., Desire, etc.] provide us with the species and sequence of Religion itself. Spirit as a whole must go through these phases until its shape for its own self-consciousness is the shape of self-conscious knowledge. Every shape of Religion has its actual world too; and the moments [Consciousness, etc.] are developed together at an appropriately parallel level in that actual world. Every aspect is stamped by the same seal.

Hegel has already said long ago that Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason are abstract moments that emerge from and return into Spirit (par. 440). And it is clear that, with respect to Consciousness and Reason at least, he was interested in the way they emerged from and returned into the “Spirit” of his own world. His discussion of Self-Consciousness, on the other hand, seemed more oriented toward the emergence of his World-Spirit from an earlier world; for serfdom, Stoicism, Scepticism, and the defeat of the Crusaders, all belong to “Spirit in self-estrangement” rather than to the “Self-Certain Spirit” of Germany after the Revolution.

The discovery that what we dealt with as “Spirit” in chapter VI is only our World-Spirit’s simple consciousness of its own objective world unfolding in a temporal order as the phenomenology of its own “Self-Consciousness”; and that *all four* of the conceptual moments (Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Spirit) “return into Religion as their ground” (just as the first three were already said to return into “Spirit”) helps us to understand the ambiguities of temporal reference in the first three moments. Sense-Certainty, Perception and Understanding belong to Greek intellectual development as much as they do to Europe since Francis Bacon; Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness belong to the Renaissance, the Reform and the Enlightenment almost as much as they do to the Universal Empire and its Universal Church; Observing Reason (including Physiognomy) is as much Aristotelian as it is Shakespearean; and Hegel himself points out the intended *contrast* between classical and modern Virtue and Lawgiving (pars. 390, 355, 420–422).

The explanation is now clear. The Absolute Spirit is the religious self-consciousness that recollects the whole evolution of “Christian German” culture from its classical origins to the present in order to become truly “absolute” by comprehending human experience as such. It is logical therefore that “Understanding” comes to a Platonic (rather than a Laplacean) climax; and that “Real Individuality”

arrives at a Kantian (rather than a Socratic) paradox; and it is logical that the whole movement of "Self-Consciousness" (as the middle) belongs more to the Middle Ages than to the pagan, or the nationally-Christian, world.

As we could see in chapter VI all three moments (Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason) belong to all three of these time-worlds. But their function in our Science is to mediate the three worlds of chapter VI into the Unified Self-Consciousness of our fully individuated World-Spirit. That World-Spirit (as absolute Self-Consciousness) is a religious consciousness of the universal human community that has come to birth only *now* (in the "birth-time" mentioned in par. 11).

It could not come to birth earlier. The "Religion" whose "absolute" phenomenology we are now about to trace is no older than Hölderlin's *Hyperion* (and Hegel's unpublished manuscripts). Indeed, it is no older than Hegel's inverted reading of "the hermit in Greece." It was not born with Peter's recognition of Jesus, the sin-absolver, as "the Christ"; nor was it born with the conversion of Paul, Constantine or Luther. It is a Church in which Antigone is one of the saints; and we shall soon see that Zarathustra is one of the founders. It is only when we read chapter VII this way, that we can make sense of the assertion that "Religion" is "the *Vollendung* of the Spirit into which its singular moments . . . Reason and Spirit *return* and *have returned* as into their ground." The "have returned," in particular, makes no sense unless the whole record is conceived as eternally conserved. This is the "mind of God"; and it is *we*, the scientists of experience, who have given it that eternal status.

But now Hegel calls Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Spirit, the "attributes" of Absolute Spirit (as Substance). "Attributes" are what "God" has, both in the theological tradition of Faith, and in the Spinozist tradition of Insight. But it is paradoxical for Hegel to call "Spirit" an *attribute* of God; for in the Preface (which is the only place where the word "God" is allowed to appear before par. 671) Hegel reminds us that the "*Vorstellung* of the Absolute as Spirit" is "the most sublime *Begriff* and the one that belongs to the modern age and its religion" (par. 25). The finite spirit of chapter VI can only be an "attribute" of the divinity that has not yet achieved its conceptual maturity—i.e. of the Substance that becomes a Subject in Religion. So when Hegel speaks of Spirit as an "attribute" of the absolute Substance in its process of becoming, he is giving the *substantial* "We" (or humanity as *Nature's* consciousness) the primacy. We can call even spiritual self-consciousness an "attribute" of our philosophical community, because "the Absolute is just as much Substance as Subject." But when we speak of the absolute community with its religious self-consciousness—i.e., when we speak of the Absolute Subject—the "attribute" terminology becomes inappropriate, and we shall speak rather of the "predicates" of the Absolute Spirit. (Hegel makes this point in the next paragraph, par. 681).

The religion of a community that has not arrived at absolute "self-consciousness" will not be fully "spiritual." But as a concrete whole in which the first three moments are comprehended it will *have* a Spirit (both "absolute" and "finite") of its own. Thus, the Greeks have, in their Olympian cult, a religion of Reason, in

which the distinction of the free (the Greeks) and the naturally-dependent (the barbarians) is understood as a “law of nature.” In other words, the “Self-Consciousness” of this communal spirit (its “subjectivity”) is a “natural” one. Human Freedom is conceived as a second nature that is self-made. Zeus gives the Greeks their “natural” law; but this is only the universal foundation upon which every Hellenic community self-consciously builds its own way of life.

Thus the Olympian religion is the religion of Reason as the defining “attribute” of human *nature* at its full development. Because of their collaborative relation with the community, the Greek lawgivers are quite different from Moses—and still more different from Hammurabi. It is because they exhibit *natural Reason* in its fullest development, that the Greeks (as a nation of warring *poleis*) are the community of True Spirit. The Hellenes are the universal spirit of humanity; but they do not yet know what “Spirit” is. That is a paradox, because Spirit eventually *is* what it knows itself to be. The concrete resolution of this paradox in existence is the spontaneous synthesis of necessity and freedom in Art. The Greek community creates its own nature, by “following” nature. In Consciousness the Greek community is at the level of Perception; in Self-Consciousness they are at the level of Dependence/Independence; they have reached Virtue at the climax of Active Reason; and they are the True Spirit. (This is probably the simplest and most obvious example of a mediated set of “determinations.”)

We had to experience the “attributes” of actual Spirit (Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason) and the attribute-phases of Absolute Spirit (“Truth” or Identity, Self-Alienation or Judgment, and Syllogistic Self-Certainty) in order to discover what the absolute Selfhood of the communal Substance is: the community that substantiates its own identity in the spirit of forgiveness. We saw on our journey that each of the moments has its own “infinity.” Each of them is “eternal” and self-maintaining. Even the Sense-Certain Consciousness is an immediate objective certainty of “absolute being,” although it is a subjective experience of absolute nullification. This objective certainty of sense-consciousness was validated in the intellectual Infinity comprehended by the Understanding. Similarly we saw the natural self-consciousness move from the experience of death to the absolute consciousness of penitent reconciliation; and then Reason moved for us through the absurdity of natural necessity to the empty, or “bad,” infinity of pure freedom: but this turned over directly into the infinity of “True Spirit” (which Hegel was careful to introduce at the beginning of Active Reason [pars. 349–354], and to remind us of in Lawgiving Reason [pars. 420–421]).

It is “those complete cycles of the singular sides” which “contain the determinacies (*Bestimmtheiten*) of religion itself.” The motion of the concept of Religion through these “cycles” corresponds to the motion of actual Spirit. It is a motion away from immediate “Truth” (or identity with God) into self-alienation, and towards the achievement of self-recognition. What is finally recognized or known is the Self-identity that was there “in-itself” from the first. But the difference between the way Antigone and Creon are conscious of Zeus (and the City) and the way in which the acting and the judging conscience are conscious of the Risen

Christ gives us some idea of the contrast we shall find between the “in itself” and the “in and for itself.” But in the full evolution of Religion the contrast will be much more extreme, because the process must reach right back to Sense-Certainty.

The motion has three moments: Identity, Self-Alienation, Reconciliation. These three moments must each go through the “determinacies” (i.e., the subordinate phases) of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, and Reason in different patterns. All three of these “attributes” belong to every actual Spirit, i.e. to every cultural world. The absolute Self-Consciousness of each world will therefore exhibit (as universal traits, or “predicates”) differentiated patterns of the *Gestalten* of consciousness; and the perfect “infinity” of that “phase” of the particular moment which mediates the development, will determine the particular *Gestalt* that is realized in each of the other moments.

Hegel says that “the *determinate* shape of the religion grabs up (*herausgreift*) for its actual spirit, the shape of each moment that corresponds to it.” It is vital to realize that no transcendent subjectivity is involved in this “grabbing up” of a particular *Gestalt* of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, and Reason.²⁰ There is only the human community building its own way of life in the natural environment. This is the “actual Spirit.” By its conscious (but only very inadequately self-conscious) self-definition within the context of its grasp of natural necessity, the community creates a “destiny” for itself, to which it gives religious names. But there is nothing “beyond or above” it, except the natural necessity which it has not yet comprehended, and the rational freedom which it has not yet achieved. The community speaks of the power that it supposes to be in charge of its “Fate” as “God.” But its “God” is only the objective portrayal (*Vorstellung*) for itself of the stage that its self-definition has reached. That is what we—who know the ultimate “shape” of God as “absolute Spirit”—can see clearly from the first.

It is a mark of the “natural rationality” of the Greeks, that they realized that their “God” was *not* in charge of Fate; “Self-Consciousness” is actively emergent in Greek religion, because their Divine Family images the Greeks themselves as a community. “Fate” is a better name than “God” for the divine Lord of natural religion, because that “Lord” is not a proper “self”; and the Greek “Fate” is the *understandable* shape in which *absolute* Spirit finally emerges. Hegel speaks of “God appearing,” only when the community understands its own function of forgiveness. Until then, “God” (as a subject-name) identifies only a necessary “transcendental illusion.” Fate we must always reverence; but rational beings do not worship the Big Bang. But when we arrive at the consciousness that “God is Love,” we are recognizing a divinity whose very being is constituted by our recognition. Nature forgives nothing. There is no “spirit of forgiveness” anywhere except in human self-consciousness. That is what God’s necessary “Incarnation” conceptually signifies; and “nothing in fate is changed by it”²¹—any more than Fate could be changed by Zeus.

10./681. So the shapes of the moments will emerge in a different ordering than they did in the evolution of self-conscious Reason. Each moment shaped itself into a whole then; and cognition was the spirit in which they had substance. This substance has now

emerged as the self-certain spirit that assembles its moments and stamps its character on all of them. Previously, Consciousness, etc., formed for us a series of circles knotted onto one another (the knots marking the return of each “shape” into that spirit). Now, each religion will be a circle bonded by its distinctive character, in which these unknotted circles become radial lines. We shall see how the religion comprehends all the distinctions, not as separable parts, but only as moments or aspects of the circular whole—attributes of its social Substance, predicates of its religious Subject. But the spirit of each circle knows itself under just one of the distinct shapes.

Since the “shapes of consciousness” will now appear in patterns determined by the determinate phase within which the religious community knows itself, it is a truth of formal logic that they cannot appear in a simple sequence like the natural numbers. Each of the series, Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit, went through its cycle of development until it reached its “infinite” shape; and in every case the “infinity” was quite the opposite of the finite *Gestalten*: the supersensible took the place of sense, consciousness of the infinite self took the place of self-consciousness, the Ethical Substance took the place of discursive reasoning, the One Law and the Many Atoms replaced that Substance, Terror replaced the Order of Faith, and finally union in forgiveness took the place of dutiful autonomy. In this way each of the moments “deepened itself” and became eternally substantial as a necessary attribute of philosophical cognition. The finite shapes appear and disappear; but when we grasp the “ground” of each cycle, we *know* that the “spirit” into which they disappear is always there (just as sense-certainty knows primitively that “the firmament” is there, and that the cycle of night and day will not fail).

When the “True Spirit” of the finite rational community goes through its total cycle, and finds *its* ground in the infinite spirit that “forgives” the whole tragic record of our culture, then “the substance [of cognition] has come forth.” The self-certain Spirit is no longer hidden in the noumenal darkness of the Moral World. It is out on the stage before our eyes. Like Dionysus in the *Bacchae* (or like Mephistopheles) it will let no finite shape assert its independence, its self-sufficiency. But like Christ on the Cross it freely gives what cannot be claimed as a right. The absolute Spirit is the spirit that gives “life” to all of the finite shapes of consciousness.

In the advance of the finite natural consciousness to its infinite self-consciousness, the cycles of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Actual Spirit, are all necessarily bound together in sequence. In our science, we have seen each of them become a circle; and the “knot” that closed the circle at each moment of completion, was the starting point of the next circle. So all of the circles form at the same time a single string.²² But now the genesis of the infinite self-consciousness requires that the circles (of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, and Actual Spirit) must be separated from one another. The *joining* knots must be severed, and the one string must become four strings. Every historical phase of religion is a circle in which the shapes of Consciousness form not a *series* (*Reihe*) but a *bonded group* (*Bund*). Each *Bund* is bounded by its distinctive character (*Unterschied*). There must therefore be at least four radial lines in each religion-circle, determined by the parallel development of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness,

Reason and Actual Spirit. These four “middle” terms must be present in some logically determinate shape at every stage; and the *absolute* Religion (whose defining characteristic we already know) must comprehend within itself *all* of the necessary “determinacies” thus generated.²³

Hegel hastens to add that it does not comprehend them positively—or as *parts* of its extension. His metaphor of the “directions” (the many strings defining a series of circles) is not meant that way. In our science of actual Spirit, Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason were “attributes” of Spirit as their “substance.” But in religion they are “predicates” of the communal subjectivity; and the scientific observer of the “phenomenology of Religion,” must focus her attention upon the defining predicate of the *Bund* at each stage. *All* of the forms of consciousness—not just the one that determines the actual radius of the religious circle that we are observing—are present in the religious spirit at every stage of its appearing. But it is the shape under which the community knows its “absolute self” or its essence that matters. For example, “death” and “resurrection” are “predicates” of the Absolute Spirit long before the Gospel is proclaimed; but these predicates of God are not the *essence* of the religious community before the conversion of St. Paul. Just how the earlier distinctions survive as “predicates” in the absolutely self-conscious Spirit we must study when we reach it.

(c) *The Bare Concept of Religion*

- 11./682. At the end of the development the distinction between actual life and religious consciousness is overcome. But to begin with, Religion is an unmediated self-concept not yet opposed to actuality. Spirit in the form of immediacy is simple Being, but the being is spiritual. It is the absolute unity of Spirit, so its falling into abstract objectivity disappears. Experience happens within this unity, and so God as the self-concept is not yet “the Creator.” He produces only his “shapes.” The movement of these shapes is the Spirit’s movement to its full actuality.

The last distinction to go will be the distinction between the actual world as organized by the community, and the God-consciousness of the community. That distinction was what the last two “sides” of the self-certain spirit of moral Conscience—the social world and the Hard Heart—represented. The sublation of that distinction in the evolution of Actual Spirit, gives us one of the two extremes that must coincide in the immediacy of the “Being” that is “Spirit.” It is only a “pure Concept” that is posited when the “reconciling Yes” is spoken, because the religion of Conscience is absolutely *inward*. This Concept is the logical key by which the whole range of human religious experience is to be unlocked; but we have only to remember the helpless impotence of Faith in the grip of the Enlightenment, to see that the key is worse than useless unless we know what lock to put it into first. In that respect it is like the Kantian critical certainty with which our finite journey began. Just as the critical spirit can turn readily into scepticism and formalism, so the spirit of reconciliation can turn into despair or quietism. The proper destiny of

religious *self-certainty* (which is what we have achieved so far) is to be transformed into “truth” (like the certainty of “Reason” and “Spirit” before it); but that destiny must be achieved *methodically*.

The congregation in our Christian church is *certain* that God has appeared.²⁴ God has appeared to this community “immediately” in his *absolutely* distinctive character. But outside the church door there is still the world, which—according to his concept and their faith—God created and sustains. This faith is the “certainty” that fills their objective concept as its substance. They have inherited it from the Unhappy Consciousness. They are certain that in being one with God and in God, or in their properly conceptual overcoming of the Unhappy Consciousness, they are substantially united with the Spirit that is “all in all.” But they need to know how this is so, and what it concretely signifies. The world is not now alien for them in principle, because it is “God’s world,” his abiding shape, the embodiment of his Word. This acceptance of embodiment is the first step in that “self-recognition in otherness” which distinguishes the self-consciousness of spirit from natural self-consciousness. So this Concept of God is the “pure consciousness” within which their awareness of the division between the infinite and the finite, religion and life, Church and State, is situated.

Because the Concept of Spirit is founded upon this recognition of the concrete *identity* of thought and being, self-consciousness and consciousness, mind and body, Hegel’s “Christian” religion is unorthodox in its interpretation of the Creation. In the Biblical tradition God created by “speaking.” What speech “creates” is its own embodiment. Thus God’s creative activity as Spirit has to be conceived as the *progressive* creation, not of the eternal order of Nature grasped by the Understanding, but of the embodied community of Reason (in which self-consciousness and consciousness are known to be substantially identical from the first). Thus, for this philosophical congregation of reconciled beautiful souls, the “creation of the world” signifies God’s creation of Himself as Spirit. Only by creating Himself, can God exist as Spirit at all, for it is the essence of spirit to make itself. Nature (and the Understanding that is conscious of it) is simply a necessary moment in this more comprehensive concept of what “truly is.”

There is no “self” involved in the process, except the one that comes to be through it; and the deepest truth about that “One” is that it is necessarily the infinite unity of the many finite selves who are members of its community. This is the final movement of self-recognition that the community will pass through. But there is a major problem at the very first step, because our self-consciously enlightened community must conciliate its awareness of the “reconciling Yes” with the first article of its “faith”: that “God the Father is the maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.”

In the “self-creation of God,” which we as the self-conscious *concept* of God are now about to observe, the “creation of the World” can be characterized more accurately as the progressive appearing of God as the World-Spirit. The world is interpreted by the naïvely religious finite consciousness as the manifestation of a spiritual power which takes different “shapes” as it evolves. The religious

consciousness does not begin with a theory of Nature as something *other* than Spirit (still less with a theory of sensation, matter, motion, mass, force, laws etc.). God (or the divine power) is immediately present everywhere. The “riches” of Sense-Certainty are now fully restored, because every experience of the world is a “theophany.”

The end and the beginning of the story will indeed coincide, because every moment of experience will be “full of God” again, when we have “fulfilled the Concept” completely. But the distinction between God and the actual world has not yet “returned into” this naïve Spirit, because that distinction has not yet been made at all. This constitutes the difference between “us” as the fully self-conscious Concept of Religion, and the newborn objective Concept that we shall now observe. It is the most *absolute* difference possible—the difference between the being and the nothingness of *cognition*. But it is a difference that can only be “meant” (not pointed to) because our Concept has intentionally *returned* to the immediacy in which the *naïve* Concept is born. Even in the newborn Concept, a distinction between “essence” and “appearance” necessarily comes to consciousness. The “essence” is a Beyond. God “appears” as a sequence of shapes, which are the first stages in the actualization of our own perfectly rational Self-Consciousness. The history of religion is the complete actualization of this self-concept, through the actualization of its “singular sides” in a logical sequence. “God” can only stop evolving when his “essence” coincides with our present actual consciousness of him.

- 12./683. The first shape of the divine spirit’s actuality is the immediate concept. Here the absolute spirit knows itself as *Nature*. The second shape is that of the self as a sublated nature. This is the *artistic* religion. The shape assumes the form of self, because it is produced by a consciousness that beholds itself in its work. The third shape reconciles these first two in the unity of consciousness with self-consciousness: the *manifest* religion. This is the true shape of Spirit. But now “shape” (and the imaging of shapes) must pass over to conceptual form. Then spirit will know itself as spirit.²⁵

The *immediate* consciousness of God must begin naïvely, where Consciousness itself begins. What is immediately certain in thought, is also immediately certain in being. Hence the beginning of the absolute phenomenology of religion is a comprehensive inversion of the immediate certainty (reached in par. 671) that God is self-conscious spirit in us. If he is indeed the living spirit in us, it is first because he is the spirit of the world out there upon which our mortal bodies depend. The spiritual certainty of God’s presence is identical with the sensible certainty of his power. Hence the absolute Spirit is (necessarily) the sustaining power of the world that appears to us finite spirits. The sensible world is God’s expression. That “the heavens declare the glory of God” is the primitive certainty of Spirit. But the Psalmist’s further claim that “the firmament showeth his *handiwork*” involves an act of the Understanding; it is no longer an “immediate” certainty (in the sense that there are simpler and more naïve ways of expressing an *immediate* identity).

This very simple and familiar quotation from those Scriptures that our ideal

congregation regards as holy, teaches us that we must go elsewhere for the *immediate* certainty of identity. We must certainly go back beyond the world of True Spirit, because that is the world in which the absolute Self is first conceived “spiritually” (i.e., as self-made by the human community). We have to distinguish three religious worlds: that in which the absolute Spirit is known as the sustaining Force of the world of Consciousness; that in which it sustains the natural Self-Consciousness, and is Lord and Master of the world of Consciousness; and that in which Spirit is revealed to be the Reason that is certain of the identity of Self-Consciousness and Consciousness.

It is interesting to see that, after insisting that Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason are *not* individual *Gestalten*, and can serve only as “middle terms” for individuation, Hegel nevertheless uses this sequence for the periodization of the “biography of God.” As we go through “Natural Religion,” we shall realize that it was “Consciousness” that made it necessary for Hegel to insist that these three “moments” are not themselves *Gestalten* of Absolute Spirit. “Consciousness” cannot be individuated in a single absolute *Gestalt*. Each of the *phases* of Consciousness on its road to the Infinite of Understanding has a distinct religious shape of its own.

After that, however, Self-Consciousness and Reason will each of them mediate a single *Gestalt* through three phases; and Hegel has a surprise (and a small puzzle) for us in each case. It turns out that the absolute *Gestalt* of Self-Consciousness is Art; and the absolute *Gestalt* of Reason is Revelation. These two “shapes” were barely visible on our finite journey—and they come in the reverse order: the Unhappy Consciousness is saved by “revelation,” while the Beautiful Soul has a created artistic vision. But let us look beneath the surface.

Finite self-consciousness begins and ends with the concept of Lordship (absolute self-assertion and absolute subjection respectively). In Religion this sort of “mastery” belongs to the Understanding, not to Art. But what the experience of natural mastery mediates for the finite self is the discovery of the “freedom of thought”; and that freedom is realized not in thought—where it leads only to the consciousness of a transcendent thinker—but in life. The serf enjoys the freedom of an artist, because his fear of the lord obliges him to respect the nature of what he labors on; and in the society of the natural masters, this freedom is enjoyed absolutely by the creative genius who mediates the general consciousness of the immortal community which all mortals “serve.” The freedom of the artist is the infinite complement of the natural servitude that the Stoic thinker recognizes to be universal. Aesthetic freedom is also the comprehensive concept that explains and justifies social servitude. Anyone familiar with Plato and Aristotle knows that their theoretical justification for servitude was the argument that the full development of the essentially human capacity of “reason” requires “leisure” (which involves a release from the bondage of natural needs). Plato reformulated this aristocratic ideal rationally—i.e. he freed it from the naturally given, but accidental, aspect of personal dependence and showed how in a free society the leisure needed for self-making could be universally accessible. It is in his work that the aristocratic ideal receives

the perfect *aesthetic* formulation that Hegel employs; for Plato said that we should think of our lives as “play” not as “work.” But we must “play for the Gods.”²⁶

Hegel avoids the word “Reason” in this paragraph. But he knows that logically we are bound to identify “the unity of consciousness with self-consciousness” as “Reason”; and the oddity of his characterization of “Reason” as “the certainty of being all reality” (pars. 232, 233) is readily accounted for by the recognition that “Reason” in the *Phenomenology* does signify the conceptual unification of “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness” (i.e., their reconciliation by double inversion within a more comprehensive Concept).

Just how Hegel’s odd formula for Reason coheres with the tradition of “rationalism,” was already a puzzle for us in our first approach to chapter V. The discovery that the religious correlate of “Reason” is “Revelation” is actually helpful. For God is “revealed” only to the “eye of the mind”; and the “Reason” of the rational tradition is “intellectual vision.” This is the identity that is now, at last, going to be made effective. The “experience of Reason” in chapter V was an experience of defeat. Reason did not recognize itself anywhere in the world of its “certainty.” Even in the *spiritual* encounter of “Faith” with “Insight” (which we have already recognized as the identity of Revelation with Reason), the triumph of the latter was immediately negative. Since “Reason” is the immediate identity of humanity with God, of finite with infinite spirit, of self-consciousness with consciousness, this absolute negativity (of the *finite* self-consciousness) had to be experienced first. Reason has no religion, because it does not know, it cannot know, it logically cannot admit, that it needs one. Only after the bad infinity of the certainty that Reason *is* God has been experienced in every possible way, can the adequate concept of Religion itself be born; for the missing “religion of Reason” is absolute Religion *simpliciter*.

But in this “absolute Religion,” self-conscious Reason and the world of consciousness in which it failed to recognize itself are united in a self-consciousness that is still an object of consciousness, and only a *Vorstellung* of Reason. Absolute religion must pass over into absolute knowledge. The “revelation” of God in the world must turn over into the self-knowing of God in the Spirit. The final self-recognition of Reason, the coincidence of Reason’s certainty with its “truth,” comes when the religious consciousness of the absolute “I” in the “We” passes over into *our* knowledge of the whole world of experience as “Science.” When *our* knowledge becomes logically “absolute,” then at last I, the finite rational self who could find only a hopeless bad infinite quest in the world, can say what Descartes wanted to say: that my certainty of existence (as the thinker who is, alas, always necessarily in doubt) is *God’s* knowledge of himself in the world. Thus there is no “religion of Spirit.” There is only God as Spirit knowing himself in us (as the eternal or logical side of our knowing ourselves in Him).

There is only *one* being in the world who can say “I.” Not even the Absolute revealed in Religion can say it. But the one being who can say it, can say it for God, because that one is a many, a community knowing itself as Reason in its own world. The “personification” of God is the last dialectical illusion of Religion. In reality, there is “I” and there is “We” (all who can, or have, or will, say “I”); and there is

the Spirit that makes the unified science of our communicative interchange possible. The primitive self-certainty of each of us becomes rational (or true and substantial) in the community of the Spirit. Objectively, the Spirit simply is the scientific knowledge of the whole continuum of experience in which that certainty is expressed. Anything “beyond” this, is only beyond it by being an abstraction from it, and hence something “less” than it is.

VII A: Natural Religion

The Absolute Spirit at its first appearance is the absolute “Being,” the “It is,” of which Sense-Certainty was immediately aware. This Spirit is not directly identical with the sensible world (in its transient aspect) because the divine is precisely the unchanging absolute Being that we are intuitively aware of as “behind” that—or as “transcendent.” We know negatively that we do not, and we cannot comprehend this Being. We are aware of it as “Spirit,” precisely because we cannot comprehend our world as a sensible or material whole. We ourselves are comprehended within it, and we recognize that. We cannot yet comprehend it positively, because we do not have the concept of Spirit at all. But we think of our divinity (i.e. we imagine it) as the spiritual Being; and we are not conscious that we are not yet conceiving it as Spirit. Our only actual concept of it, is as an “object”; this is the only way in which we can grasp it as the whole that comprehends us. We do not intend any “degradation” of it, because it is higher than we are, not lower. But logically this degradation of it to pure objectivity, to the negative of self-consciousness, is what has to happen. This pure concept of the absolute Spirit as Being now has to go through the whole evolution of “Consciousness.” Before it can become the creative Logos, the “Word by whom all things were made,” it must generate its own imperfect shapes. The best name for it during this first “substantial” stage (Natural Religion) is the “Divine Life” or Natura naturans.

(d) Religion as Consciousness generally

- 1./684. God is and his community knows him. He is both Spirit and Nature, both self-consciousness and object. From this opposition the determinate shape in which the Spirit appears and is known arises. Our concern is only with that determinacy, since we already know the unshaped Concept [forgiveness]. Religion is neither Nature simply nor Logic simply. Its first determinate shape is spiritually interpreted Being, a thought that is there. Every religion is a self-knowing whole, but also its determining moment belongs to the perfect religion, and *all* moments belong to each religion. God is always thought of as self-conscious, but his being so “thought of” does not make him a “self.” Self-consciousness can only produce its absolute selfhood, and sublate the lower determinations by degrees. Thus what is first thought of as essential, retreats to the sidelines as the comprehension improves. Until that happens it is the higher aspects of the Concept that are present only as images without truth. Thus God’s incarnation is only a myth in the Osiris cult. The Truth of the lower religions is their correspondence with (or “truth *to*”) the actual life of spirit in their culture. We shall only be concerned with what is comprehended properly at each stage.

The long paragraph with which Hegel begins the actual dialectic of Religion opens with a sentence that is deliberately ambiguous: "The spirit that knows Spirit is consciousness of its own self." This is true whether we take it as a Spinozist-logical proposition about what "Spirit" means (a proposition about God), or as a Cartesian-existential proposition about ourselves. It is quite clear that this ambiguity is intentional. It refers us back to the community that knows God as its Spirit. Whichever way we take it (as the "We" or as the "I"), that Spirit is "present to itself in the form of what is objective."²⁷ The first certainty is that "It is"; and it is for itself; it is a self-consciousness. But the self-consciousness that it is, is ours. Only in its own community does it become self-conscious properly. In less developed communities, it is "Spirit," only because it is the absolute consciousness in thought of what the world is known to be.²⁸

At this point a new ambiguity arises. The Beautiful Soul, like Descartes, knows God as the present ground of its own selfhood. When it is reconciled with the other self in forgiveness, it knows this absolute Self as the unifying ground of its community. This is the absolute Spirit that has *appeared*, because we are all aware of it. Its being as self-consciousness is indubitable; but we only have an immediate certainty that it *is*, and that our whole world depends upon it. We still do not know what this means. The "experience" of Religion consists of letting this certainty mean whatever it will—just as we began by letting our finite cognition be whatever it spontaneously took itself to be. Once more, we are beginning with the simplest, most immediately available, interpretation of its "meaning."

Speaking for "us," I say that we (the rational observers) do not yet know what "the being of the self-knowing Spirit in the form of the objective" means. But the religious consciousness of the Broken Hearts is not in this state. It *knows* perfectly well that God is there, and that He is the "Spirit" of their own self-consciousness. Thus, for them, there is a problem built into the claim that "God is," because "being" and "being-self-conscious" are not the same thing. *We* know about this, because we are approaching Religion, with a fully developed "pure Concept" of Religion, and we know that the primitive division in that pure concept is between religious Self-Consciousness, and the Actual Spirit, or the everyday world of Consciousness interpreted in our concept of "Spirit." We can go back to the simplest meaning of "Being" quite easily; but the consciousness of the religious community that we are observing will find in this return, the most severe test of its "forgiveness" that could be imagined.

In large measure, this paragraph repeats in summary the argument about how "Religion" is specified which Hegel has already given (in pars. 677–682). But now he can restate it simply and formally, because all the difficult logic has been done. "Religions" differ in virtue of the phase of consciousness that differentiates each of them. The absolute Spirit is present in all of them, and therefore all of its moments are to be found in each of them. But we can identify each determinate Religion as a singular *Gestalt* in terms of the singular phase of our science of experience that is dominant in it, the phase that determines how all the other moments are present.

This gives rise to a problem of communication. For since every religion expresses

the whole spirit, it is obvious (first) that any outside observer's view of what is dominant or definitive in it, can be challenged by other outsiders; and (further) that any such reductive view is bound to be challenged by insiders, precisely because the experience of consciousness contains many finite standpoints. Insiders are logically bound to disagree with one another (that is one aspect of the reason why the "absolute religion" has to be defined by "forgiveness"). It is fortunate, therefore, that Hegel's concern is really with the exposition of the one religion that fulfils the "science of experience" in its scientific order; it is also fortunate that only one of the non-Christian religions in his survey is still alive (i.e. still has living adherents).²⁹

Hegel's aim is "scientific"; and that means that he is not seeking to "judge" any concrete religion at all. We must take seriously his claim that "the series of distinct religions that will emerge displays . . . only the distinct sides of a single religion, and indeed of *every single* religion." He certainly wants to transform his own religious tradition by displaying all sides of religious experience as moments of it; and by emphasizing the words "*every single*" he is underlining the fact that what he is doing to Lutheran Christianity *can* be done to every religious confession. If any such attempt meets resistance, that will indicate that the resisting party adheres to some specific moment in the series. Among those who are acknowledged to be "Christians" this sort of resistance is bound to come from many "sides" (including the "Lutherans"). Both Hegel's "Religion" and his "Science" are denominationally *neutral*, or *ecumenical* (whichever adjective one's own religious or scientific commitments may lead one to prefer).

"Only, at the same time the diversity must be treated as a diversity of religion," says Hegel. This is where it is fortunate that, except for Christianity, the religions in the series are historic, not alive. For whatever disputes there may be about the adequacy of his characterization of this or that cult, the disputes will remain on the theoretical plane where he wants to insist on the diversity; and for that reason the logical point he wants to make will probably survive the dispute. Thus, we can certainly insist that his image of Greek religion is idealized; and it is surely the case that his image of Zarathustra's religion is oversimplified. But, as far as I can see, these inadequacies do not matter. The moments whose actual diversity he insists on, are needed precisely for the reintegration of our present consciousness. We need to see that they *have* been asserted (by Zarathustra, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Pericles, Plato, to name only some obvious sources) because our poets are asserting them now, and our theologians have traditionally denied some of them.

The "recollection" is Platonic, because the eternal coincidence of past and present is necessarily Platonic. We can only comprehend *our own* time, it is only *now* that we can remember eternity. So if we can demonstrably succeed in remembering the actual past better than Hegel did, it will always be because he showed us how to do it in the first place. He also showed us that it is folly to suppose that we can ever remember the past in the one best possible way. There is *no* "one best possible way." The best possible way is the communally discordant concord of ways in which we do, and we must, actually remember it (as soon as we know what we are doing).

We need to remember the shapes of Religion in their diversity, precisely because their serial ordering brings us finally to this consciousness of the nature of recollection, and to the reconciled knowledge of what our humanity really is. At the beginning, for example, it is important to realize that although “the self” must be there (as it is there, quite certainly, in Sense-Certainty) it is not what is determinative. The most primitive mode of consciousness that recognizes a universal God at all must, by definition, be recognizing a “self.” But if the recognition of the Absolute Self makes the worshipper’s own self unimportant, then the selfhood of the Absolute is unimportant likewise. The divine “Being” is never simply objective, until we arrive at the sophisticated form of Understanding called “materialism.” But primitively, “Being” is an *indifferent* concept.³⁰

“Religion” is neither “Spirit’s way of being as Nature free from thought” (i.e. neither Materialism nor the topic of the Philosophy of Nature), “nor the way in which it is thought free from being-there” (i.e. neither Deism nor the topic of Logic). It is “the being-there that is maintained in thinking, or a thought that is there to itself.” In other words it is the thoughtful awareness of *what absolutely is* or the consciousness of eternal truth as *existing*. If we worship God as “the Light” then we are not worshipping the natural phenomenon which comes and goes (for we know very well that our God maintains us and the earth we walk on); but we recognize the universal spirit as manifest to us in the light, whereas It is obscured in our mortal selves, or in the dark night and the changeable earth. We ought not to say “He,” because we are not referring to a spirit that is like ourselves.³¹ The Spirit of the Light is a power, whose selfhood we cannot conceive at all. What we are (our “self-consciousness”) and what it is (our absolute “consciousness”) differ *toto coelo*. The evolution of “absolute Spirit” is the gradual development of a “Concept” in which these two sides—the finite and the infinite selfhood—coincide in an experience of mutual recognition. As that happens, the concepts which we used earlier to express how God is higher than we are, will “disappear” (or at least retire into a subordinate function comparable to that which they have in the finite world of experience from which we borrowed them). Thus the significance of the Light, for example, will change and deepen; and the gift of our *life* will be recognized as only the outer shell of the more important gift of “Reason.” We shall come to comprehend that Reason is not a “gift” at all; and so on. The important point is that the whole evolution could occur without our ceasing to be “Light-Worshippers.”

As we shall see, when Hegel himself works out the “concentric circle” theory of the Natural Religions, he has to introduce moments on the “lines” of Reason and Spirit that are not found within the “circles” of those moments in the theory of finite experience. The more minimal and general criterion that he states here, represents what he found to be true about the “positive” phases of the Science of Experience (i.e. those that *are* found in the finite “circles”):

If the diverse representations within a single religion do indeed display the whole movement of its forms, then the character of each religion is determined by the particular unity of consciousness and self-consciousness, and that is because the self-

consciousness has grasped the determination of the object in consciousness; it has completely appropriated it through its activity, and knows it as the essential one in contrast to the others.

What this indicates is that the natural determinism of life and its needs is much stronger in the “natural religions.” We find at this level a simple parallelism between Consciousness and Self-Consciousness; and we shall not find in the natural religions the creative scope that is essential for the positive unfolding of Reason, and Spirit. The natural religions are the religions of “substantial” cultures. The worshipping community is not yet aware of itself as a free *Volk*. So the “lines” of Reason and Spirit are only negatively present. The community is on the *minus side* of their axis. It is clear enough that these “barbarian” cultures were not even on the way to the *polis*. So although we can use the stages of Self-Actualizing Reason to articulate their pre-political Spirit, everything will be backwards: God’s “pleasure” will be *primitively* our “necessity” (and so on).³²

In any case, the worshipping self must “produce its own self”—it must *be* Spirit—before it can possibly know what selfhood means in its God. This was the Greek achievement: to know the immortals as a community of selves. Primitively, the certainty of consciousness is just that “It (the Absolute) *is*.” The concept of simple immediate Being is the fundamental determinant. And a community that sees God in this way must see itself in this way. Hegel’s concrete principle for religious interpretation is: “As your self-in-the-world is, so must your God be.” He himself offers here the instance of “death and resurrection” that I gave earlier. The figure of Osiris only represents the recognition that “Death, too, is an absolute *being*,” together with Life; so rebirth (or “Becoming”) is the truth of experience (and of “Being”).

VII A(a): The Light-Essence

The first natural “shape” of God is the universal Daylight. Clearly this identification is influenced by the Mosaic tradition, and by John’s “Light shining in the Darkness.” But the determining factor is the long philosophical tradition in which “light” symbolized the impersonal universality and intuitive immediacy of “rational certainty.” Our interpretation of human cultural history is and must be a comprehension of how we have come to have the Concept of “what is” that we actually do now have. So our interpretation of naïve religion must be guided by the simplest and most immediate image of Reason as we experience it in our present world.

(e) *The Sense-Certainty of the Absolute*

- 2./685. As the “essence” of Self-Consciousness, Spirit is initially a concept without actuality. This is the Night from which all is born; the night of the pure self that penetrates all thought and actuality.

God is implicitly what *we* know Him to be: “the self-conscious Essence that is all truth, and knows all actuality as Himself” (cf. par. 684, first sentence). This is the Concept that begins as a dark blank to be filled in. Consciousness comes, Hegel wants to suggest, out of the thoughtfully active darkness of the still unconscious self. Thus, it is selfhood that is primitive, and consciousness is not to be conceived as a passive reception of external stimuli, or as a causally determined reaction to physical stimuli. Hence the account of the Creation ascribed by tradition to Moses is metaphorically correct. The first of the Mosaic God’s “sayings” was “let there be *light*”; but “in the beginning . . . darkness was upon the face of the waters.”³³

I do not think that this primacy of darkness—or “the night of the self” is acknowledged in the Zend-Avesta, for there the darkness is the kingdom of evil. But it is essential to Hegel’s conception of spirit as self-making; and in this respect he follows and interprets the Judaic tradition.³⁴ His account of Nature-Religion as the first moment of “a single religion,” depends on the presupposition of Yahweh as the “invisible Spirit” that is coming to self-consciousness in the whole story. But he rejects the view that Yahweh is already an independent self-consciousness (because in our experience we can give no meaning to that belief). He cleaves to the Mosaic language of “God speaking,” and insists that God’s speaking is his *being*. The creation of the world is God’s creation of himself, and the *identity* of these opposites is the true essence of God as spirit.

The Judaic tradition would agree readily enough that God (in Himself) is “eternal light.” What the Zend-Avesta adds is that this light is necessarily also external, or “manifest.” The “creative secret . . . has its revelation within itself.” By comprehending light and darkness together within the being of God-in-Himself, the Judaic tradition establishes the concept of Self-Consciousness as Freedom. None of Hegel’s later accounts of the religion of the Zend-Avesta (in the Berlin lectures)³⁵ suggest that he found this unity there. But the Hegelian Concept is an Aristotelian “form”; it *is* the logical drive to manifest itself. This insight is corrupted in the Judaic tradition; it has to be restored from a more naïve source. Yahweh cannot properly come into the *Phenomenology* because he is the invisible Spirit who cannot (by definition) become visible. This is exactly the conception of “Spirit” that Hegel rejects.

- 3./686. As sense-certainty this is a *beholding* of simple being (without contingent accidents). Also, as certainty of self, it is an *absolute mastery*. This “shape of shapelessness” is the light dawning in the darkness (which is its opposite self). Its creative life is like fountains of fire (in which everything is also consumed). Nothing intelligible or beautiful abides; the Absolute is *measureless*, sublime.

Even as the “universal Object,” the absolute Essence is the Ego. That is why it has the subject/object “split” in it. What Hegel has against Yahweh is precisely that (as Fichte’s Absolute Ego) he is not, and he cannot become, a proper self. Whereas, if “consciousness” starts from its sensible “object,” the “self” is logically implicit. The Zend-Avesta offers us the first *dichotomy*, the primitive splitting

of this still unconscious concept of Self-Consciousness. This is the Self-Consciousness that “has itself as pure Ego for object” (par. 173). Hegel is kind enough to tell us directly, that this is the point at which the “lines” of Sense-Certainty and Lordship are first established in the Absolute Spirit. Supposing that there were, already, an actual split between the object and the self, then we, the finite consciousness, would be the serfs of this “Lord,” his property to dispose of at whim. But this Lord is not a Self who owns “things.” The Absolute is just the “shapeless” medium of Light which makes the transient moments of Sense-Certainty visible. Under the aspect of “Reason” it is negative; it is simply the “bad Infinite,” the Boundless or the Sublime.

Also, of course, it is the negative power of Darkness; for as the absolute Lord it is Death. Everything it creates, it also annihilates. In the Lectures of his Berlin years Hegel acknowledges the “ethical” aspect of the religion of Zoroaster, the insistence on a “kingdom of darkness” and an eternal warfare between the two kingdoms. But it seems that in the phenomenological perspective, he regards this as a subordinate moment of the whole, and one which cannot be properly developed without contradicting the defining characteristic of Absolute Being as Sense-Certainty. Logically, the Sunlight needs its “otherness”—and that is acknowledged. It is not equally clear that the Lord needs an “enemy.” That is part of the dialectic of Self-Consciousness; it is not an evident truth of Sense-Certainty. The ethical aspect of the Zend-Avesta—the warfare of Light and Darkness—belongs to its “bad infinite” side. There is no rational resolution or reconciliation for it. So it is drowned in the “splendor” of the Absolute. Ethical “beauty” is “dissolved in sublimity.”

This religion is the “sensible certainty” of the Being of Absolute Spirit (as opposed to ordinary “sense-certainty” which is directed precisely at what is not “spiritual”). Thus the phases picked out on the four “lines” are as follows:

Sense-Certainty (which is the “determining” moment).

Life (see par. 688) as Lordship (or Self-Assertion).

The Bad Infinity of Reason (or the “Measureless”—the “ineffability” of what is absolutely singular and hence “unknowable”).

Glory and Sublimity (Spirit as immediate “certainty,” i.e., “Pleasure and Necessity” raised to infinity).

Notice that at the level of Self-Consciousness only one side of the first concrete “shape” is picked out (Lordship). There is *no* proper Self-Consciousness in this religion, but only the substantial “infinity” of Life, because there is no recognition-relation (not even an unequal one). Under Reason we have to name the opposite poles of the “bad Infinite”; and Hegel himself does not specify the extreme that belongs to finite actuality (the ineffability of what is absolutely “singular”) until the next paragraph. Finally, at the level of Spirit we return simply to the logical character of Sense-Certainty (absolute immediacy).

- 4./687. The content is all a byplay of “examples” for a perception that has nothing to grasp. The infinite attributes of this substance are mere *names* for the One. Nature is its robe, men and spirits are expressions of its glory (without independence).

The “splendor” is a splendor of the heights, without any depths. Thus there is no selfhood in it. We should notice that this strikes at Yahweh, just as much (or more) than it does at Ormuzd. For Yahweh is a “Highest” who does not even need his “height.” There is an even more radical criticism of Yahweh in the point that the “names” of God are infinite. The one “absolute religion” whose eternal validity we are experiencing does not attach any importance to such shibboleths as the *name* of God.

But, of course, there is also a more immediate negative aspect to this sublime indifference. Sense-Certainty is “poor” precisely because language is helpless to express it. God must “speak” not just the infinite wealth of colors in the sunrise, but the nameable colors of the rainbow. We shall eventually return to the infinite naming of God; but God must be named unambiguously, before we can do that in good conscience. For the moment, all finite experience is reduced to meaninglessness by the bad infinity of a “show” without a perceptible (nameable) *essence*. In the loss of all other “selves” the selfhood of God is lost also. He is the “ineffable Substance,” just as we are the (ineffably brief and momentary) “voices of his praise.”

The fact that Hegel is willing to speak of the “perceiving” of this community (and its God), shows that he is quite ready to have *all* of the “circles” of the *Phenomenology* opened out into radial lines—except for the “phase” that is the defining closure of the particular “religious circle” which we are observing at each stage. He does not need to look beyond “Perception” in this instance, because the defining line—the one that is still “circular” because it *contains* everything—is that of “Sense-Certainty.” Under this restriction we cannot transcend the immediate; so at the level of Perception we are already faced with the “bad Infinite.” Even the “names” that are essential for ordinary perceptual language have no determinate sense.

I hope that the meaning of this claim is clear enough. This community of worshippers can, of course, use its perceptual world-view quite efficiently at the finite level. It can identify all the “things” that it needs to. But if someone begins to do “observational *science*” in this community she will be going against the religious spirit of the general consciousness. At what point this will cause a negative reaction is unpredictable; but if it did not eventually cause one, then Rameau’s dream of a peaceful revolution might eventually be realized—and that does seem to be empirically unlikely.³⁶

- 5./688. This revelry of life must determine itself to singular being-for-self and stability. It is in truth the [still unconscious] self, and it must come to know itself. It disperses its unity into an infinity of permanently single forms.

Having just insisted that this God has no proper name, Hegel now gives it the scientific identity that properly belongs to it. As an unconscious Self this Absolute

is “Life.” But inasmuch as Life is essentially embodied, and self-reproductively permanent, this is the inversion, the comprehension of the “result” that we have reached. So it forms the transition to the next phase. We must not suppose that the circle of Life is actually established in the Light-Religion. “Life” properly belongs to the next phase. The adjective “taumelnde” (“revelling”) is significant, however, because it points both backwards to the most elementary definition of “Truth” (par. 47) and forward to the “Bacchic revel” which is the expanded shape in Greek religion of the circle that is just now opening out into a line for us. The “Bacchic revel” is Hegel’s most primitive image of “truth.” In the image, we have the triumph of measure over the “boundlessness” of the Absolute as Light. But we have not come to that revel as a ring-dance yet. Life will present itself first as a simple “struggle for existence.” We are certainly not meant to think of the “measured” aspect of the image at this stage. Hegel is concerned only with the unconscious presence of the “Self,” in that darkness which is the suppressed antithesis of all the “splendor” of the Light-Essence. *Death* is a necessary aspect of this infinite negativity; and it is a fate that the Absolute suffers as well as exacting it. Every manifestation is a “sacrifice” of its boundlessness. The concrete independence of finite existence must be recognized. Natural selfhood must emerge.

VII A(b): Plant and Animal

These names taken from the “kingdoms” of “natural history” are symbolic of two different shapes of human life and culture within the natural environment. It is a mistake to read them as having a “totemic” significance.³⁷ (As we shall see there is nothing in the text to suggest that.) It does look as though Hegel is guilty of arm-chair “speculation” here (i.e., the substitution of theory for observation). But since we know that he wanted to avoid that, we should read what he says in terms of the “experience” which we know that he had.

(f) *The Perception of the Absolute*

- 6./689. The Absolute achieves self-conscious self-perception as the order of tribal societies. Now there are many communities, each with its own God. This is *pantheism*, the One in All. But its unity and peace gives way to conflict, and the warrior-religions must win. From the death of abstraction [in the consuming Light-Essence] life passes to death in action. War and blood-guilt *envelop* [*übergreifen*] innocence and peace. Humanity is divided into separate *species*.

The specificity of natural life is the “absolute shape” of the standpoint of perception. In the absolute flux of Sense-Certainty every nameable thing is swept away. But there are abiding “types” in the flux; and the *living* types secure and guarantee their own constant recurrence. The religious consciousness that recognizes the absoluteness of this perceptibly self-maintaining structure is “pantheism.” But this religion of Perception (at the level of Consciousness) necessarily takes two (*particular* or specific) “shapes” at the level of Self-Consciousness. The

worshipper who identifies with Life universally, and reverences it in all its forms, has a Mother Goddess, and what Hegel calls a “plant-religion.” To understand this we need to know that in Hegel’s natural philosophy the plant-world, or vegetable kingdom, was not completely “specified.” Ideally, any shoot could derive its life from any root; and a single plant (say a plum-tree) could become in this way immortal, without any absolute need for seed-fertilization and reproduction from the seed. Thus anyone who reverences Life as an absolute continuum, and avoids hostility or damage to life as a whole, is a pantheist of the pacifist type. She holds to the “plant-religion.” Such a one will quite appropriately be a vegetarian—as Pythagoras and his school probably were, to name one group with which Hegel was certainly acquainted. All life must feed upon other life; and the Absolute as Life is consciously “self-sacrificing” as Hegel remarked in paragraph 688. But the consumption of plants involves no violation of individuality, precisely because in the vegetable kingdom it is the continuity of life that is dominant. This is the “female type” or the “(self-)intuiting individuality.”³⁸ The adherents of this religion will usually worship the Great Mother; but they *comprehend* “her” as the Tree of Life (or something similar).

In the other particular shape of Self-Consciousness (blind self-assertion) we find the religion of universal hostility to all life except that of one’s own face to face community. This is the religion of Heraclitus in which “War is the father and king of all.” It is the “male type” or the “destroying individuality.”³⁹ Hegel calls this kind of militant tribalism “the animal religion,” not because he is thinking of totemic animals—totemism and aggression do not go together, and many species of animal are non-aggressive—but because the communal consciousness of the tribe is focussed simply upon the maintenance of the tribe as a natural organism. The tribal identity is all that counts, and everything else in the world is merely an instrument for it—or an impediment to be got out of the way.

In this perspective, primitive Judaism is an “animal-religion”; and Yahweh is bound to be a warrior-God precisely because he has chosen just this one “people” for Himself. Yahweh, of course, must not be called a “lion”; but that is the appropriate name for the human leader whom He chooses. The dedication of His people to Him, and his Covenant with them, is the perfect “infinite” or absolute expression for that first moment of natural Self-Consciousness in which the Self has only its empty “independence” for its object; and the promise that Abraham’s seed will “multiply” and “continue forever” is the appropriate “animal” form of self-identity. Hegel no doubt knew of North American Indian tribes whose way of life was founded upon plundering and raiding; but since he is concerned with the historical evolution of the Christian consciousness, it is the warfare between the Jews and their various rivals for the possession of the Promised Land, of which we ought to think first.

The *Gestalt* of the “plant Religion” achieved its fully-developed expression in classical Hinduism as codified in the laws of Manu. But this is *not* what Hegel has in mind here.⁴⁰ In the caste-system the peace and harmony of the “flower-religion” is imposed even on naturally aggressive tribes by the lordship of the Understanding.

This is beyond the level that we have presently reached; and it represents the stabilization of Life's "boundless" revel in a permanently "natural" shape; in other words, it is essentially reactionary.

Hegel is not thinking of the Pythagoreans and Heracleitus either. Not only are they Greeks, but they are philosophical Greeks. Even the "religion of Art" is already, in principle, behind them.⁴¹ Hegel's more primitive vegetarians existed; we behold them idealized in the "noble savage" of much arm-chair anthropology in the eighteenth century. But in the immediate historical context of ancient Palestine they are only a logical postulate. Any peaceable agriculturalists who may have been living in Canaan when the aggressive tribes that Israel fought with arrived on the scene, were necessarily wiped out (at least as a culturally independent community). Hegel needs to postulate the "flower-religion" because that is the "shape" of the Absolute as Perception that must be "recollected" in the "absolute Religion" which we are constructing. If I am right about what Hegel is doing with the "historical experience" of this chapter, then the peaceable agriculturalists of Palestine are the "missing shade of blue" which even a Humean sceptic will allow us to postulate. For the overrunning of unwarlike agriculturalists by more nomadic warrior tribes is a commonplace of early history (and Hegel certainly knew that it had happened in Greece).

There is only this one paragraph about the Religion(s)—universal and specific—of Perception. In paragraph 690 the transition to Understanding occurs. So we must take stock of the lines in this "circle" at once (as well as we can). The pattern seems to be as follows:

Perception (the determining moment)

Life and Struggle to the Death

Observation of Organic Nature

The Law of the Heart and the Frenzy of Self-Conceit

It seems appropriate to find the logical moment of "Observation of Organic Nature" here, because the "self" that we are observing is "animal" rather than rational; these tribes are conscious of "us" and "them," but not of "our common humanity." They are not *actively* rational. And once again it is Self-Actualizing Reason that supplies the place of "Spirit" proper. My interpretation depends on the fact that natural religions can only *symbolize* Spirit. I have allowed myself to be guided by the evident universalism (and intuitive character) of the "Plant-Religion." If we start from "plant-life" as a *symbol* of the universal continuity of Reason, then "animal" must mean "*spiritual* animal"—i.e. a community with its own specialized skills for dealing with a specific natural environment.⁴²

- 7./690. This animal religion of enmity must produce an empire and a religion of subjection to training. Men accept the task of *working* for their God. They express themselves (and Him) in shaping the objective world. This is not yet "self-expression," but the molding of the environment.

The “spiritual animals” (in their *wild*, undomesticated “state of nature”) accept, and adapt themselves to the natural environment. They fight one another about the simple “mastery” of it. The transition to Understanding that Hegel makes in paragraph 690 is a transition to Egypt, the “house of bondage” in our religious tradition. Here, agriculture—the deliberate control and transformation of the environment—began. The Nile Valley was a place where peace was fairly obviously essential for agricultural reasons. But tribal warfare was more or less endemic until the First Kingdom was established; and the Egypt of the Pharaohs still had a pantheon of animal (or half-animal) gods. Since Hegel does believe that the primitive warrior tribes identified themselves with a specific divine animal, his theory of the “animal-religion” is (very probably) an interpretation of the Egyptian evidence that was available to him (mainly in Herodotus and Plutarch).⁴³

The “animal religion” is the absolute *Gestalt* of the “struggle for recognition.” Like the warriors who will not surrender, the spiritual animals are logically bound to wipe each other out. But socially, as well as individually, the lesson of accepting subjection is quickly learned. For the experience of *our* World-Spirit, the paradigm of this was Ancient Egypt.

(g) *The Absolute as Understanding*

In the history of cultural imperialism, what Aristotle claims is true. The Master is the one who knows, and the Slave is simply a tool, an animate thing. The transition from the Life and Death Struggle to Lordship and Bondage takes place in the council chamber, rather than on the battlefield. There is a fascinating example of “double inversion” behind Hegel’s claim that it is “die Arbeitende” (the laboring consciousness) that “holds the upper hand over the merely rending animal spirits.” For in the world of Plant and Animal it is certainly the plant-religionists who are “laborers”; and they must inevitably be the underdogs.⁴⁴ But when an Egyptian “lord” manages a great estate, he identifies not with the fighting but with the laboring consciousness (though he neither fights nor labors but only controls those who do both). In *this* way, the “laboring consciousness” comes to have the “upper hand.”

What happens when the imperial right of the Understanding is established, is that the warring tribes are persuaded to labor (with the example of some recalcitrant groups who were exterminated to the last man before their eyes). I call this radical fear of the social lords “persuasion,” because the certainty that the disobedient will die, is reinforced by the religious belief that they deserve to. What produces obedient behavior is the general conviction that “the Gods” do not want us to fight our ancestral foes during every moment when we are not planting and harvesting; *the Gods* (not just Pharaoh) want us to build the Pyramids instead. This ideological manipulation is what Hegel calls the “not merely negative [i.e. life-threatening] but tranquillized and positive action” of the new controller.

When God first appeared as “Lord” (in the “Light-Essence”) his worshippers were simply transient ministers. That was not really Lordship and Serfdom, but only Universal Lordship, or the first relation of the Changeable to the Unchangeable

in the Unhappy Consciousness. In logical terms it is the simple self-assertion of the Ego (par. 173). The full realization of Lordship and Bondage requires the development of the relationship of unequal recognition in society. There must be a Master Class in the community (not just an absolute despot both in the Sunrise and in Susa); and the ruling class must be distinguished by the possession of understanding (not just military honor).

There was a caste-system in Ancient Egypt; and since his Greek sources knew this, Hegel knew it too. The imposition of social castes upon human “nature” is the “reduction of the *Ansich* to a determinateness.” The *Ansich* is the primitive self-assertion of the Ego; the determinateness is the “spiritual animal shape” in which the tribe recognizes itself when it accepts its caste-status as defined by the priests. The Egyptian pantheon included *craft*-gods. For example Thoth, the god of the scribes, was an ape.⁴⁵ Hegel regards the mingling of the human with the animal shape in the God, as the sign of the transition from aggressive Lordship to the intellectual mastery of the Understanding. We must remember that the Understanding was not primitively identified as exclusively human. The social insects, especially, have been seen as paradigms of it. We find Hegel himself appealing to them in paragraph 691.⁴⁶

The caste-system is the primitive (or natural) shape of what will become Culture in the self-making of free Spirit. But in the Christian context of human recognition Culture is the *voluntary* remaking of the self in the service of God. In the “natural” shape of Culture the sublated self of the warrior tribes is brought into subjection and disciplined into a “made thing” (the craft-skill). The primitively assertive selfhood is “worn down” and a “common actuality” is left (instead of the immediate identity of self and world that will go to the death in resistance). The (intellectually) “laboring self”—as the concrete or commanding “being-for-self” to which this “determinately reduced in-itself” is made subject in the new “antithesis” of Lordship and Servitude—is now Lord over the “worn down” self.

But the discipline and training of the subject self is not all that the lordly Understanding produces. “It also produces its own *Vorstellung*, its being-for-self spelled out [*herausgesetzte*] into the form of an object.” Agriculture, and made homes of some sort, can belong to the naturally given human tribal group; but now the human community has Pyramids, temples and planned towns. The human Spirit is beginning to create its own environment, instead of simply adapting to Nature as given (like the lower animals).

VII A(c): The Master-Craftsman

Hegel delays the heading that marks the transition to the Religion of Understanding Consciousness until after he has actually made the transition in his discussion. So there is no need for a preparatory survey here. We already know that the World-Spirit is in Ancient Egypt. Our textual commentary can continue without a break.

The image of the *Werkmeister* comes, most obviously, from Plato's *Timaeus*.⁴⁷ By insisting on the trained, repetitive, conditioned reflex character of craftsmanship (the ape-god of the scribe is a very apt symbol here) Hegel is driving home the fact that the craftsman is not "creative" like an artist. When we begin to create ideal images of ourselves, and for ourselves, then we are artists. But the Understanding accepts its problems, as well as its material, from nature. It thinks in its own mathematically abstractive way, but it has not grasped the thought of what this free activity is. It is Reason in the service of Life as Instinct. We can call it the "instinct of Reason" because it meets natural needs and satisfies natural desires; and it adds its own concerns onto that. In that perspective its theoretical activities are like the geometrical work of the bees.

The metaphor of the bees is a mythical *Vorstellung*. We must read it spiritually. It is important to grasp the implication that "In the beginning was the Deed." Reason must begin "instinctively" because Spirit can only *know* what it has already made or done.

- 9./692. Craftsmanship uses the abstractions of Understanding to create geometric forms. These forms receive only the departed spirit, and are related to Spirit only as the Light Essence that is the fount of Nature.

The Understanding is essentially the power of abstraction from Life. Only the geometry of cell-construction provides a bridge between it and the instinctive behavior of the social insects. The love of Geometry which Plato ascribed to God is the "instinctive" form of Reason, because the most primitive impulse of Reason is a reaction against the free "revel" of life, a reaction back towards the reliable predictability of the inorganic order. The Understanding arranges even living forms in a "logical" order; and it deals with them only as abstract universal "essences." It is not surprising, therefore, that the Religion of Understanding is a religion of the grave and of death, a religion of the darkness of the inorganic world to which the finite spirit returns. The recognition and acceptance of *mortality* as a logical moment of Life, is the "beginning of Wisdom."

We have already seen how the sublation of the spirit of aggressive self-assertion and independence in this new culture takes place. The religion of the Craftsman is the Absolute expression of Lordship and Bondage. The Spirit is present, but it has to labor on "Lord Nature's" property. It is now "making itself" but only in an unreflective way—the very way in which the artisan-serf "makes himself." Reflectively the serf sees human freedom in the Lord; but he is unreflectively bringing the more truly human freedom of the artist into being.

There is a similar pattern in the relation of the human community to its God. The society of the imperialist Understanding still worships the "absolute freedom" of the Light-Essence—identified now as the actual Sun. But in its conscious subjection to this Divine Lord, this society is creating a distinctively human form of freedom. The cult of night, darkness and death is a simple inversion of the "daylight" of the intuitive intellect. Darkness and death were already essential and

universal moments of the Light-Essence (just as Non-being is equal with Being in Sense-Certainty). But the Absolute Spirit is now alienated from the manifestation of its “glory.” The physical world is Spirit’s “handiwork”; and the Creator is beyond it. God is no longer in the world at all. The world is a system of symbols that point towards Him. This society puts all of its disposable energy into building the King’s tomb, because the dead King is its representative—its mediator—in the world beyond. The Sun-God, Ra, is its supreme God; and we have a permanently instituted Kingship that speaks to God and for him, instead of the momentary theophany of the messenger, Zarathustra. In this way Natural Religion is brought round into its own perfect circle, bounded by the human understanding. But what the “external connection” between the House of the Dead and the Sunrise is, we have still to be told.

- 10./693. The laboring spirit has objectified the difference between raw material and self-conscious work. Now it must reconcile body and soul in a unity. In the first step the laborer begins to know himself in his work. But Spirit itself has not yet appeared. The laboring spirit is its bondsman; thus only the alienated image of the soul molding the body is present.

The ruling class of this society constitute the “(intellectually) laboring spirit.” They know that human life is to be organized as “laboring for the Gods”; and they have so organized it. The *Trennung* involved in craft-labor between the forming activity of the craftsman, and the raw material that becomes the formed craft-object, is objectively present in their consciousness, because they themselves have labored to form human society as a system of craft-guilds. That formed society is now in full operation producing the “goods” that life needs. “Soul” and “body” are now visible, in their “understandable” relation: the body is the *instrument* of the soul. This relation is *absolute*, since the soul will still need its body in the afterlife.

But this relation of external utility is not the fully rational relation of soul and body. “External teleology” is not the “truth” of Reason or even of self-conscious Life. It is only the relationship established by the rational intuition that *instinctively* recognizes itself as a living system of instincts which is the means to its own end. Spirit has to “come closer to itself,” in the sense of adopting an “internal” standpoint. We know this already, but the Spirit we are observing simply learns by experience that the relation of Self-Consciousness to Life is not this relation of “utility.” At the finite level, the serf discovers a new sort of freedom in his “self-culture”; and this is what happens to the “serving society” in its relation to the Gods. But for the explicit consciousness of this community, the Gods as Immortals are “beyond”; only their bodies are here in the Temples (made by us humans). Human life is just a “husk” for the “represented” spirit in the Beyond. We are on our way to the realm of Light, and we can go to the Beyond.

The next stage of consciousness is implicit in the fact that only beings with bodies like ours can do what we do. Our bodies are what we work with; and socially speaking, the great order of Nature is only the body that we work on. The Gods must come to our world therefore, and be with us. It is our shape that they must

have (at least partly), because as we work to utilize the universal forces of Nature we recognize that our own intelligence is the most important of these forces.

This seems to be how Hegel conceives the social experience of the “sides of singularity and universality coming closer in the work” even as “the work comes closer to the self.” The laboring society does not think of the Gods in their universal essence as being “like itself.” But as it makes their singular bodies they come closer to it because the “sides of thought and being” come closer to one another in the work. When we make bodies for the Gods, they must be at least enough like us to be able to make things too, since they made the world. This shows up “instinctively” in our making of them.

In commenting on paragraph 691 I said that we can call this phase “the instinct of Reason” and spoke of its “mathematically abstractive thinking.” But this language must be interpreted with great caution. At this stage “the instinct of Reason” is properly “practical Reason operating instinctively as Understanding” in and upon the natural world; there is all the difference in the world between the engineering mathematics of the Master-Craftsman and the truly abstract mathematical thinking of Descartes. The Egyptian society is properly the world of “instinctive *Understanding*.” It does only “applied mathematics”; its “geometry” really is “land-measurement.” It cannot divorce the “soul” of the mathematics from the body that is measured and molded. Before these Egyptian mathematicians could do “pure mathematics” they would have to come to a clear *intuitive* awareness of their own “thinking” capacity. That is what they are still stumbling towards. It is in the religious experience of making images of the Gods that they begin to discover what it means to call man “the rational animal”; and they make that discovery only by observing what they have done.

We can now identify the moments determined by this Religion as follows:

Understanding (natural or unselfconscious)

Lordship and Bondage (as alienated worlds of Spirit and Nature or soul and body)

Physiognomy and Phrenology (external relation of soul and body)

(The immediate identity of) Virtue and the Way of the World

As far as its manifest side is concerned, the Egyptian Religion repeats the experience of labor as “formative activity” exactly. The principle of intellectual alienation is maintained. What the religious craftsman makes is only a *symbol* of the Infinite: a statue in its own temple. The intuitive assumption is that soul and body are as separate as the intellect and its raw material. But the labor is actually embodied in the symbol made; and the maker (as the representative self-consciousness of his community) is directly conscious that he has made this symbol of the divine.

- 11./694. Now the house [temple] begins to be adorned with plant images. The shapes are abstracted and geometrized; but also the geometry becomes organic, curvilinear. The “root” of free architecture is present.

Nothing is needed here, I think, except to give a “historical materialist” translation of what this experience reflects on the side of its “actuality,” and to expand a little on what Hegel himself says. In real life, the vegetarians have become agricultural serfs, and beasts of burden for the building of monuments; and the animal-aggressors have become trained craftsmen of all kinds (and an army). But in the Religion of Understanding all of the living objects revered in the religion of Plant and Animal become dead stone symbols. The permanence of the stone is an engineered material expression of the “eternity” of all “abstract ideas.” This realizes the Concept of the natural Self-Consciousness in its instrumental relation to the world of Consciousness perfectly. Everything is a tool or an ornament, nothing has its own essence. But at least round shapes come into their own in this way; and Hegel sees in this the beginning of the transition to the intuitive Reason of the freely creative artist. In his mature view architecture is the “symbolic” art.

- 12./695. The temple now has a God-shape in it. This is first an animal shape (the shape of primitive independent life), but the laborer puts himself in too, so the animal head is now a thought-symbol. The God-statue does not speak, however. Its only word is a natural noise (associated with the dawning sun).

Already in paragraph 694 Hegel was beginning to explain what he meant by “the work coming closer to the laboring self-consciousness” as its “sides come closer to one another.” But this is where he explains it fully; and at the same time he explains the “external relation” to the Daylight mentioned in paragraph 692.

In the temple there is a statue of the God (or statues of the Gods). This brings the divine self closer to the human self than before. It looks rather as if Hegel believed that the Pyramids and the cult of the dead were older than the temples and the visible gods in Egyptian religion. If so, he was (I think) mistaken; but the point is interesting, in principle, because this makes the Egyptian cult the first one to which he has ascribed any evolution: he sees the return of Light and of Plant and Animal into the higher concept of the Supersensible Beyond as a gradual process (corresponding to the actual evolution of society in the Nile valley).

In any case, just as the plant-world is reduced to instrumental status, so the lordship of the Understanding over the different natural talents of human beings is symbolized by the combination of human and animal shapes in the statues. The Egyptian statue is a “hieroglyph,” says Hegel. This directs our attention to the most important achievement of the symbolic culture: the invention of writing. In 1807, no one could read the hieroglyphic script; but scholars understood quite well what it was. Ever since Herodotus, indeed, the Greeks had known that there were several forms of hieroglyphic; and they knew something about what the different scripts were for.

The statue, however, does not do what a truly self-conscious Absolute Spirit must do: it does not speak. The dominance of the Understanding is symbolized by the partially human form of the statue; but the non-human aspect of the “matter” upon which the Understanding must work—the naturally given character of physical and instinctual needs that are pre-linguistic—is symbolized equally clearly by

the animal shape. The Understanding speaks; it formulates and solves problems in a conceptual mode of consciousness which is distinctively human. But this problem-solving is not yet the creation of a human world, a human reality, or a second nature whose very being is linguistic, because it rests on laws and customs that are consciously made by the community, and formulated in their daily speech. In the Egyptian world, the Gods and men need different scripts.⁴⁸

It is obvious that social custom, formulated where needed in speech, is essential to the existence of any community of human animals. Shared customs are presupposed by the recognition of the "Light-Essence." But the conscious establishment of custom and law, is not yet recognized as the foundation of our distinctively "human" mode of existence. In the world of Natural Religion, the human community solves problems and remodels its environment; but it has no consciousness of making *itself* by so doing. That sort of consciousness can only arise when there is a *community of communities that do things differently*, and a communication system in which all parties recognize both the legitimacy of this, and the "freedom" that is involved in it. In that world, the statues will somehow have to say what the differing communities need to hear about themselves. For the present, it is enough if the one community has a supreme human shape. Since that shape is a God of Nature, it can make, or be somehow associated with, any sort of natural noise; and its divine utterance can then be interpreted by the priests in any way they wish. The Sun is the supreme manifestation of the universal power of nature; so if a statue can be made to "speak" at sunrise, that will indubitably be the "voice of God."

Hegel is relying here on the account of the colossal statue of Memnon at Thebes given by Strabo and Pausanias.⁴⁹ The statue "spoke"—that is to say, a noise came from hollow channels inside it—at sunrise (or soon after). Hence it was Ra, the Sun God, who spoke through it. But the sound that it made was not human. It was a meaningless noise like the cry of an animal; the outward shape of the self without its inner meaning.

- 13./696. The consciousness of the living organism stands in contrast to this outward selfhood. Inside the statue there is only formless blackness.

Hegel (in common with many romantic intellectuals among his contemporaries) regarded Egyptian culture as an expression of the "riddle of existence." But since he does not himself believe that "life is a riddle," he sees the Egyptian "riddle" as arising from the structure of the Understanding, which can give only a "lifeless" answer to the "riddle of life." The true answer to the "riddle of the Sphinx" is the one given in the Greek Myth: "Man." But the Understanding can only make a *stone* man. Thus the Egyptians could recognize that one divine life was expressing itself in the infinite freedom and variety of living nature; and they "understood" that "selfhood" was the true meaning of this great display. But they had only a mechanical conception of the self. So they could only represent the *outer* selfhood of the Absolute. The utilitarian instinct of Life itself "downgrades" both its own physical inward complexity (the "inner of the outer"—pars. 286ff.),

and its bewildering outward variety, to a mere “housing.” Inside the statue there is neither a physical organism, nor a conscious self. There is only “black formless stone.”⁵⁰ This represents the *enigmatic* river that “cares not what mills it drives” (par. 285). “Natural Religion” at the extreme of its reach can portray symbolically what “natural philosophy” discovers.

- 14./697. The self (represented both ways) as inner and as outer must come together. The soul of the statue that man has made must come forth and speak; and the inwardness of nature in its many forms must express its unity. This is symbolized by the Sphinx (whose *head* is human); and by the oracle whose speech is deep and hard to understand.

Both the *Darstellung* of Spirit in nature, and that offered by the statue, involve the moments of the “inner” and the “outer”; and they display them antithetically. In Nature it is the “inner” that is “selfhood,” and the “outer” is just *Dasein*; whereas the statue is inwardly just *Dasein*, and outwardly “the Self.” As Hegel says, “Both displays contain *inwardness* and *thereness*—the two moments of the Spirit.” Both displays represent Life as the “riddle of the Sphinx.”

The statue has the outward shape of the human self; and that shape points symbolically to the selfhood of the Absolute Spirit in the darkness of the Beyond. But this symbolic inwardness is not humanly expressed. It does not emerge as articulate speech, the *Dasein* of the Spirit itself. On the other hand, the spirit of Life which animates the whole range of organic forms is present in stone here and now on Earth, and not in any noumenal Beyond. But it is silent likewise.

The outward shape of organic life is “multiform.” So the “universality” of Nature dominated by the Understanding must be represented by a blending of human and animal shape. Both elements are symbolic. The human shape represents the Understanding and the animal shapes represent the tribes and crafts in bondage. But the result is a question, not an answer. Consciousness is wrestling with its unconscious living embodiment; the inward simplicity of the abstract intellect is trying to comprehend the concrete multiplicity of things. There is no “inner light”; but everything in the ordinary daylight is well organized. The only voice of the Absolute is that of the Oracle (which offers a wisdom that ordinary mortals cannot understand).

- 15./698. At this point the instinctive labor of self-consciousness concludes. The craftsman has worked himself up to the point where his self-consciousness divides, and spirit meets spirit. His statue-monsters now assume spiritual shape: an outer [the human body] that is alive and conscious [“gone into itself”], and an inner [human Reason] that utters itself. Spirit is Artist.

When the statue achieves human shape (or the Sphinx just a human head), the “instinctive” work of the community’s self-consciousness comes to an end. For the human craftsman (the finite Spirit) is now face to face with an Absolute Spirit which, by the clear logical implication of the symbol, can speak. In Egypt the

image may itself be a riddle, and the divine speech may be oracular and esoteric. But the Beyond, where all will be known, is only just across the water. In the *Greek* Thebes we meet the hero who will purge away the animal form of the Theban Sphinx of Egypt.

The solution of the riddle is there before our eyes. The God's shape tells us that she thinks, just as we do. Why should her language not be ours? She does not have a dog's head now, or the head of an ape. So her language ought to be ours. Alongside the sculptor there must stand someone who knows how to express our communal thoughts as thoughts. We must be able to recognize that our mediator is not interpreting the riddle of a higher "divine" tongue, but saying what we all know about our own universal essence, and about our own relation as mortals to what is immortal. The stone symbolizes the perpetuity of Absolute Spirit. But by giving it a human form, the sculptor has expressed the clear consciousness that it is our Spirit. He has made its bodily shape. A craftsman of a new kind must now make its human voice. The immortal spirit must speak to us not with natural noises but in our own speech; and what she tells us we must be able to recognize as what we all knew or ought to have known. Her utterance must be recognizably divine because it is the voice of Reason.

Notes

1. See *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), chapter III (London, Longmans Green, 85–129).
2. Compare Rosenkranz, 192 (Harris and Knox, 265). T. Adorno claims that Hegel uses the theory of the communal *Geist* to "confer legality on the rule of force over individuals" (1973, 338). G. Lukács, on the other hand, says that Hegel "as good as never troubled himself with the religious need as such" (1978, 57). Both authors are seriously mistaken. Hegel uses the concept of the communal *Geist* to *explain why* "the rule of force over individuals" has legitimacy (or can appear to have it even to the individuals themselves, e.g. Antigone). His own interpretation of "the religious need as such" can be seen in paragraphs 656–671 above; and the "Napoleonic" indifference of *his philosophy* towards religion (about which Lukács is more nearly correct [1978, 58ff]) is exactly what makes his analysis into the best foundation for the *criticism* of "the rule of force" when it seeks to legitimate itself by appeal to the communal *Geist*. (This last point is well grasped and applied by H. Brod, 1992, 123–124.)
3. We should certainly denounce the judicial execution of an offender against this crazy edict as outrageous tyranny, but at that point we should shift the "crazy" label to the side of the supposed offender.
4. Compare Rosenkranz, 135 (Harris and Knox, 180) and 159 (Waszek, 1987, 254). These texts belong to the early Jena years, but the ethical concept of "fate" was formulated in 1797 or 1798 at Frankfurt. The development of Hegel's concept of Religion (and especially of God) during the Jena years is ably expounded by H. Kimmerle (1984).
5. As many interpreters have insisted (e.g. G. van Riet, 1967, 13; M. Westphal, 1978, 195ff.; A. K. Min, 1974) "God" is not originally an invention or projection, God (or the Gods) is an intuitive "concept" that articulates our sense of *what is* as a totality or a whole. "She" (or It or They) evolves as our interpretive concept evolves. We become conscious of

“projection” when we recognize that “She” (or “They”) is “like us” because our interpretive activity is an essential moment in the “whole.” The “whole” is always there as an object of experience. But it is only “there” in the way in which it is experienced. So, to say (as Kroner does [1961, II, 403]) that “Finite spirit becomes more and more conscious of its identity with absolute spirit” is only to say that as the concept of the whole evolves, the community becomes ever more clearly aware about its “absolute” role and status in that concept. As long as we think that “absolute spirit” is *causing* the advance (in some independent way) we have not reached the truly “absolute” concept of it. The “order of Nature” (or the “Infinite” of Understanding) is the “order of causes.” God as a “liberated” (or personalized) *Vorstellung* of the “Author of Nature” is what is eventually recognized as a “projection.” What is *truly* “absolute” is (by definition) *beyond* “causing” anything (except in a *logical* sense).

6. Compare the famous passage at the end of the *Critique of Practical Reason*.

7. The “speculative” interpretation of the Incarnation does involve this heresy. Hegel interprets the Earth as the real “body” of the Incarnate Logos in the Triangle Fragment (of 1802?). See *Hegel-Studien* X, 1975, 133–135; *Toward the Sunlight*, 184–188. But Lauer (1976, 122n.) is mistaken if this is the “burlesque of Christian religion” that he claims to find in paragraph 220. The Unhappy Consciousness does not “think” in this speculative sense; it must learn to think “critically” first. It simply *sees* the miracle of “the shaped Unchangeable” and consumes its symbolic share of that shape. (See further the commentary on par. 220 in *Pilgrimage*.)

8. One might be tempted to think that because of this opposition, the great rationalists cannot properly be regarded as paradigms of “Reason.” But it seems to me sounder to infer that Hegel means to deny the name of “religion” to their rational theology. In other words, Hegel agrees with Pascal about Descartes; and the universal condemnation of Spinoza as a “notorious atheist” certainly confirms Hegel’s logical analysis of how Reason “appeared.” The Leibnizian “best of all possible worlds,” was attacked from the side of Enlightenment, rather than from that of Faith. The *Theodicy* of Leibniz is the mature shape of the “religion of Reason.” I shall leave it to the reader to decide whether Hegel was right to side with Voltaire in regarding it as a joke. It certainly is the “perfect” conceptual embodiment of the formal *Sache selbst*.

9. D. P. Jamros (1994, 53–54) has noted that the religion of the Underworld in True Spirit is the first form of what Hegel calls “Faith.”

10. We all know that Hegel insisted that philosophy is not concerned with the future because the future is not “actual.” In this shape the Greek “reverence for fate” survives in his interpretation. So when he bases his interpretation of World History on the Christian metaphor of “Providence,” he is implying only that Philosophy *is* concerned with the future (as “real possibility”) in its “eternal” aspect, i.e. categorically. In our science of experience we know as much about the future as a mind in the “eternal beyond” could ever know (if the “eternal beyond” were an intelligible concept of “eternity” at all). In the perspective of “philosophical history” Providence becomes “the cunning of Reason.” The absolute contingency of the (Greek) future as future is united with the philosophical comprehension of the “providential” future as what *will be* comprehensively known. Thus, to my eye “the cunning of Reason” appears to be more Greek than Christian. (Another way of putting this is to say that the supposition of a “Divine Mind” that *really* knows “the future” is absurd. All of the Christian theology of Predestination rests upon a philosophical confusion.)

11. When we call Conscience “Reason” here, the proper reference is to the singular finite shape of Reason; to regard Conscience as a shape of singular Reason will help us to grasp

this chapter on Religion as the realization of “Reason” in its *substantial* reality. “Conscience” is, of course, a *world*, for it cannot exist except as a community of “equal recognition.” But in that aspect it *concretizes* the still dialectical community of the “Real Individuals.”

12. The whole *evolution* of Conscience, from heteronomous “obedience to God,” through “self-enclosed autonomy” to broken-hearted reconciliation, is the religious “element.” (We must not think that it only becomes a “universal element” when it breaks “open”; Antigone’s position appears “conscientious” to Goethe, not just because she is “autonomous” but because she is universally “reconciled.”)

13. P. Ricoeur (1982, 86) rightly says that Hegel’s philosophical thinking “does not abolish, but legitimates all the shapes that lead to this ultimate stage.”

14. If we insist that it is a plausible interpretation of certain German mystics, both Catholic and Protestant, we must still confess that it is plainly *heretical*; and that since the greatest of those mystics (Eckhart, Boehme) were *not* heretics in intent, Hegel’s “manifest religion” is not what they intended. This is very clear in the case of Boehme.

15. “A God who produces himself from all eternity” was Goethe’s ideal; and through him it influenced many Romantic thinkers. See *Dichtung und Wahrheit* at the end of Book 8 (*Werke* 13:379; *Collected Works*, Princeton, 4:261–2).

16. God dies, in order to be resurrected as Spirit, so no simple-minded atheism can be founded upon this way of expressing the circular pattern of chapter VII. But it is no accident that “absolute Knowledge” closes with the image of Calvary. (Also, we may note in passing that those who insist, correctly, that Creon is not Antigone’s *moral* equal, have lost hold of the Absolute that should be with them if they think that this inequality is philosophically important.)

17. For the evolution of “Consciousness” itself our experience is contemporary rather than historical; for instance “Sense-Certainty” becomes a philosophical position in the Enlightenment (par. 558).

18. It might seem that Hegel’s project will come to grief on the difficulty that there can be a differential evolution of the “phases”—e.g. a religion of Perception that is *more* “rational” and one that is *less*. But in fact all such “judgments of quantity” must fall away, both because they are necessarily subjective in specific cases, and because the Religion of any culture is bound to be exemplified in a whole range of “degrees.”

19. All “shapes” of Religion are shapes of Absolute Spirit. But the “shape of Consciousness” that is “determined to singularity” by the concept of Spirit itself as “middle,” is plainly “Absolute Knowing.” So there are only three “conceptual middles” in the Religion chapter. Each middle has three “phases.” So there are nine “shapes of Religion” (three natural, three aesthetic, and three “manifest”). In Natural Religion and Art-Religion the Shapes are clearly indicated: first three separately, then three together. In the Manifest Religion they are both separate (phases of development) and together (as moments of the community’s present religious life).

20. I am deliberately leaving out the *Gestalten* of “objective Spirit” because the instantiation of these is peculiar; the “Art-Religion” is the first one that “grabs up” a distinguishable phase of “actual Spirit.” The earlier moments of “Spirit *coming* to actuality” must be looked for in chapter V (under “Self-Actualizing Reason”).

21. Rosenkranz, 135 (1802?); Harris and Knox, 180 (in the language of Hegel’s Incarnation Theology this ineluctable character of “Fate” is the “infinite grief”).

22. In this paragraph Hegel affirms with absolute explicitness that the *Gestalten* of chapters I–VI form *one sequence* (*Eine Reihe*). So what Kenneth Westphal says (1989, 134) about “the erroneous supposition that there is one single, cumulative development plotted in the *Phenomenology*” is itself erroneous. But it is not clear what *error* he has in mind, since he clearly recognizes that there is a linear methodical (or logical) progression in the book (1989, 156–157). It seems to me probable that he has not attended carefully enough to the distinction between the “one string” (which ought to unite chapters I–VI serially) and the circles of cultural development in time which form themselves when that string is cut at the “knots.” But it must be acknowledged, in his favor, that the methodical transitions at the major knots (the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness, etc.) are different from those made at the minor knots (from Sense-Certainty to Perception, etc.). He and I are certainly united in our opposition to those who want to “hitchhike on the highway of despair”—not to speak of the completely “unscientific” interpreters who treat the *Phenomenology* as a collection of loosely related fragments.

23. Hegel says that the one line (of our science) must become “many lines” (at least the *four* unknown “strings” of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Spirit) because he is thinking primarily of the absolute Religion, which comprehends all of its historic phases in an ever expanding way. Thus his point about “the coordinating of directions” is that the phenomenological line of advance which leaves the earlier modes behind it, must now turn into an ever expanding system of circles in which *all* of the moments *grow* with the arising of each new circle. The “one line was itself a line of *circles*. These circles are now untied; and they become radial lines for a series of new circles whose actual radius is determined by the particular “phase” that controls all of the radial lines at the given stage. (We shall see later that for the metaphor to work, the *line* of “Spirit” has to originate where the *Volk* is introduced in chapter V.)

This is how “each particular moment takes and receives into itself in common the identical determination of the whole.” But Hegel’s final warning that the spatial metaphor is not meant literally is important. There will in the end be a religion that comprehends every shape of consciousness (every one of the little circles becomes a radial line in it). But the “shapes” are all transformed in the process of their opening out. Hyperion’s Sunrise (or Wordsworth’s) differs from that of the ancient Parsee, because the God it reveals has a *known* identity which involves the readers themselves. As an “experience” we can call it *both* “deeper” and “shallower.”

24. We shall confine ourselves to the *Christian* communion, because that is the only one recognizable as complete in the evolution of “actual Spirit” so far; but this perfected communion is not denominational, and it is in principle ecumenical, since it has to be reconciled with its “atheist” critics. This transcending of its denominationally “Christian” character by the “absolute religion” transforms our conception of the *systematic* “philosophy of religion” that Hegel left us. Those who maintain the trivially correct thesis that Hegel gives us a logical “typology” of religions (e.g. Schmitz, Jaeschke) typically comment that Hegel “fails to appreciate the degree of inwardness present in such religions as that of Israel, Islam and Catholic Christianity” (Schmitz, 1970, 733). Once we recognize that the typology is determined by the need to array religions in a sequence of phenomenological development, it becomes apparent that with the arrival of the “absolute” religion, all such “comparative” judgments—including Hegel’s own—are logically mistaken. Logical development has no necessary connection either with moral advance, or with subjective inwardness (or “depth”). For this reason, too, efforts to *improve* the logical sequence by supplying “better” religions

than those which *history* gave to Hegel (as in D. E. Christensen, 1970) are misguided. See further H. S. Harris (1991).

25. This paragraph seems to provide the firmest foundation for the Neoplatonic reading of the *Phenomenology* given by Hinrichs—see E. von der Luft (1989). But my approach is from the opposite extreme (sensible experience).

26. See especially *Laws* I, 644d–645c.

27. It seems to me that enlightened “Christian” interpreters like P.-J. Labarrière misrepresent “natural religion” by using language that evokes the “projective” views of such modern materialists as Freud. Thus Labarrière (1968, 166) says that “In natural religion . . . the spirit contemplates itself in the immediate unity of its Self with the being-there that it invests with its presence.” If we think of some tribesman reverencing his totem, this appears to be a neutral way to talk. But if we think of Hegel’s contemporaries, Wordsworth and Hölderlin, it becomes obvious that the expression “invests with its presence” is prejudicial. “Nature” reveals itself to these rational worshippers *as* the “divine life.” It enfolds and encompasses them because they are part of “Nature.” This is a “returned” shape of “natural religion.” But it is the sort of model that we need.

28. The concept formed by this still undeveloped absolute consciousness is quite “true”; so it is “knowledge,” but it is not yet complete or adequate.

29. The Parsis survive as a small part of the great panorama of religious experience in India. But their experience has been transformed by that fact; so there is no need to apply anything that Hegel says about the religion of the “Light-Essence” as an independent cultural phenomenon to them. Hegel certainly knew by the 1820’s that they existed (cf. *Vorlesungen* IV, 257; Hodgson, II, 355 [1824]). But it is clear that he did not mean to refer to them here.

30. That is why the object of Unhappy Consciousness is called “the Unchangeable.” The actual self-consciousness is aware of selfhood as essentially changeable; and even in its reconciled state, it cannot *experience* reconciliation, because true Being remains eternally unchanged.

31. The use of “He” indicates a patriarchal-authoritarian structure in the *actual* community; for that is what makes “He” the natural way to express “superiority.” But if the “life-giving” aspect of the divine power is identified as the ground of the “superiority” then “She” becomes more natural. Hegel put that in second place (which is right for the world that he wants to comprehend). But “It” is the *logical* word.

32. Hegel may have been enough of a dogmatist (in the manner of Aristotle) to believe that the *polis* was the only rational way forward. This is certainly the impression given by his later efforts at a “systematic” philosophy of religion. But equally certainly this “naturalism” represents his weaker side. The bolder project of the concentric circles with *all* of the lines present in *every* religion, is the one that more adequately expresses the *ideal* of a universal human community. So my (logically generous) way of treating the “natural religions” is in principle the right one.

33. We should recall at this point that “Sense-Certainty” began likewise with “Now it is Night” (95).

34. Walter Jaeschke (1979, 198–204) argues that Hegel’s *Lichtwesen* is not really Iranian at all, but an interpretation of Yahweh. We cannot deny that Hegel’s studies of the Old Testament were more influential in his thinking than any other recollected “experience” here. But if he was guilty of projecting a “Nature-Religion” behind the intellectual monotheism of

Moses and the Psalms, then he was not strictly faithful to his observational method. (This does seem to be the case with “Plant and Animal”; and his early interpretation of Abraham’s “experience” fits into this hypothesis—compare *T.W.-A.* I, 278; Knox, 186). But I prefer to give Hegel the benefit of the doubt here, by assuming that he had some knowledge of Zoroaster in 1806. Certainly he had more later; but even in 1797 I assume that his “Geist der Orientalen” (*T.W.-A.* I, 428–432; *Clio*, 7, 1977, 114–116) had more than the Old Testament as its historical foundation; and if Hegel’s *Lichtwesen* was only a guess at the riddle of Abraham, then we are only confirming it “scientifically” by reading in Zoroaster.

35. The religion of Light does not appear explicitly in the ms. of 1821—but see *G.W.* XVII, 100, line 3–104, line 13 (Hodgson, II, 44–46). In 1824 it is the “Religion of the Good or Light,” *Vorlesungen* IV, 254–259 (Hodgson, II, 609–621). In 1831—for which we have only an abstract made by D. F. Strauss—it is the “Religion of the Good” simply (*Vorlesungen* IV, 624–625; Hodgson, II, 737–738). (The point I am making here is made explicitly in 1831—*Vorlesungen* IV, 626; Hodgson, II, 740; but in view of the separation of Persian and Jewish religion in all of the earlier lecture-series this is not very good evidence for Hegel’s thought in 1806.)

36. Even in a world like ours, in which religious anathema has so nearly vanished that we are quite shocked to encounter it (as in the case of Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*) a peaceful revolution is unlikely. This is because all “insight” is necessarily just as much “bad” as “good.” Anyone able to see the general tendency of some change in society, must be able at the same time to see the bearing of that “tendency” upon her own immediately present interest and well-being (and the same applies, of course, to the “vested” interests of finite corporate bodies). This suggests that the bad infinite struggle between Good and Evil, *ought* to be acknowledged as the “self-conscious” moment of the Religion of Sense-Certainty.

37. In his generally sober and careful survey of Religion in the *Phenomenology*, F. Guibal refers to tribal totems (1975, 72n.). If we take this comment in the same trans-historical spirit as his companion-reference to the “flower-religion” of the hippies it offers some insight and does no harm. But we must remember that there is no regular connection between totemism and warfare.

38. Vegetarianism (like the name “plant-religion”) is only symbolically significant, of course. A modern “pacifist” need not be a vegetarian. But it is hard to imagine a naïve community that could feel or recognize “the brotherhood of man” without believing that “everything that lives is holy.” This is the real starting point to which the circle of “Religion” returns.

39. Sexual difference is the fundamental paradigm of “the particular” in Hegel’s philosophy of nature; and “particularity” is the logical moment that we have reached here.

40. D. P. Jamros refers “plant and animal” to Hinduism (1994, 141, 147). Hegel’s first explicit reference to the “Lawbook of Manu” is in 1824 (*Vorlesungen* IV, 236, 249; Hodgson, II, 333, 346). It is not at all probable that he means to refer to the Hindu experience even in paragraph 700. Any such reference would be quite superfluous, because the Greeks were aware (through Herodotus) that Egypt had a caste-system. Plato also refers to it in this way (and his witness is quite possibly independent of Herodotus).

41. The “religion of art” has the “animal-religions” behind it (see par. 727). But it is only after the “folk-spirits” are united into a “beautiful” pantheon—i.e. after they have accepted one another as *brothers* (as the “children of Heracles,” for example, in the case of the invading Dorians)—that they can become masters of the agricultural populations (the plant-religionists) who are already in occupation of the Greek mainland. (Before that, there were the

Minoan lords, who clearly represent an imperialist culture—a religion of the Understanding in Hegel’s terminology.)

42. These *particular* adaptations are what the Master-Craftsman of the next religion will take over and organize into a “universal” system of servile crafts based on the warring tribes that they inherit from the “animal religions.”

43. Hegel’s Berlin lectures show some slight knowledge of the nascent science of Egyptology. But this knowledge was not yet available in 1805/6.

44. It was from Kojève that the first inspiration for my interpretation of chapter VII A came. So I was amazed to discover, when I checked back after many years, how far my interpretation diverges from his. He refers not only to “totemism” but to “peoples who fight to the death . . . and do not know how to take slaves etc.” (1947, 240). That is the sort of arm-chair anthropology that we must avoid. But probably he is right to leave agricultural “labor” to the sphere of Understanding. The “Plant-Religion” begins in “gathering” (rather than “planting and cultivating”) cultures. But what is *conceptually* important is that “labor” takes on a new character when one does it for someone else, and under a life-and-death authority.

45. See especially Plato, *Phaedrus* 274c–275b. (*Vorlesungen* IV, 537 mentions the warring Egyptian tribes in connection with their animal gods. But that passage—from the second edition of the *Werke*—apparently belongs to the lectures of 1831. In that series Hegel came closer to the perspective of 1806 than in his earlier lectures. But this is only a weak support for hypotheses about his early theory.)

46. Here we have another indication that “*instinctive Reason*” should be identified with “Reason operating as Understanding.”

47. W. Jaeschke points out that the *Werkmeister* is also found in the Old Testament (1990, 198). This point seems to me sounder than his reference to the *Lehrlinge zu Sais* of Novalis (which I suspect Hegel of classing with the *Magic Flute*). Jaeschke’s attempt to bring in the *Archaeus Terrae* from Paracelsus seems mistaken to me because that is not a “culturally estranged” image of God. It does not belong to the “house of bondage.” Plato’s myth belongs to the Art-Religion, but bondage is not yet sublated there—as it is in the Christian vision. The *Archaeus Terrae* is an image of “instinctive Reason,” but a modern spiritual, not a classically “natural” one. (I think that this note illustrates why I object to the simple “typological” view of Hegel’s philosophy of religion. It is abstractly intellectual, not concretely historical.)

48. Herodotus, *Histories* II, 36. What the *Greeks* knew about Egypt is important not only because this was the main channel of Hegel’s own knowledge, but because the “comprehension” of the time is principally a matter of recollecting the Greek and Roman heritage of German-Christian culture.

49. Strabo, 17, i, 46; see also Pausanias I, 42, 2. The statues were actually of Amenhotep III (about a thousand years after the Pyramid builders). The “speaking” phenomenon only began more than a thousand years later (first century B.C.) when the top of one of them was dislodged by an earthquake. (Hegel eventually discovered—from his reading of Alois Hirt [1821]—that the statue was a Pharaoh. So he makes no allusion to it in his mature lectures on the philosophy of religion. But he still finds the “voice” spiritually significant in the *Aesthetics* lectures, where he records his sources—see *T.W.-A.* XIV, 281–282; Knox, II, 643.)

50. Baillie thought that Hegel was here referring to the Black Stone in the Kaaba at Mecca, “a fetish still worshipped by the faithful” (as he put it, 707). Miller followed Baillie with such perfect trust that he put the identification into the text. But one thing of which we can

be quite certain is that none of the religious phenomena of Islam form part of the phenomenology of the absolute Religion. Hegel did indeed regard Islam as a “religion of the Understanding.” But he seems never to have known much about it—or if he knew more than he made apparent, it was not important enough to need revealing. The Black Stone does, perhaps, belong somehow to the “symbolic” phase of Islamic “phenomenology.” But it cannot form part of any transition of the Absolute from the natural organic to the human form. Hyppolite recognized the reference to the statues of Memnon in paragraph 695; but he did not understand the “inner/outer” distinction in paragraph 696. So he ended by accepting Baillie’s suggestion. In his book he did not commit himself clearly, but in his notes for the translation he does. See Hyppolite (1946, II, 528 and 1974, 547); also Hegel, *La Phénoménologie* (Paris, Aubier, 1941, II, 221, n, 24). F. Guibal (1975, 74) has followed Hyppolite’s lead; and it is amusing to note that the master of deconstruction has leapt enthusiastically—rather than fallen—into this pit (see J. Derrida, 1982, 345).

Chapter 11

The Divine Intuition

VII B: The Art-Religion

At the point where the sculptor gives the God a human shape, a tremendous revolution occurs. The concept of "Nature," organic and inorganic, is turned upside down. We go from Nature as "given" to Nature as "made" (and raised into the universality of thought). The raising into universality, and the simple substitution of "making" for "observing," of inner for outer, of the self comprehending the world in its "night" instead of the world comprehending the self in its "light"—all this is achieved by the Understanding alone. But the principle of the Understanding is "externality." It is a thought that is outside the world. It is the more comprehensive "world beyond"; and its making is an external craftsmanship, which involves the reduction of all nature to the level of inorganic material; living human beings become building blocks for "Leviathan" the artificial and mechanical "man." (Hobbes, we might say, is the Egyptian scribe of modern Reason; and his great work is a "hieroglyph.")

No man-made machine is humanity itself. That humanity can use itself (and the life of nature generally) to make a social machine is the "riddle of the Sphinx." When we arrive at the artistic conception of man as a self-maker, the whole concept of the intelligence working on nature as dead raw material is inverted into that of "Reason" developing itself within a living organism, an organism that is both Nature and Intelligence at the same time. The human community creates its own "nature," by developing the potential for self-expression and self-knowledge that belongs to it by nature. Humanity now recognizes the full development of its "nature" as its God-given goal.

The transition from external authority, from the commandment of the divine intellect in the beyond, to the condition of "human freedom" in the Greek polis is quite hard to see clearly. The Spartans, who were the great champions of "freedom," appear just as authoritarian as the Persians whom they resisted, or the Egyptians who accepted the Persian yoke.¹ The condition of the Helots was in some ways worse than that of the serfs who built the Pyramids (or the condition of Israel in Egypt). But the Spartan citizens met in council; and everyone expected to understand the decisions for which they must be prepared to die, as well as the political constitution they were operating in and maintaining, and the worship of the Gods for whom they died. Their "lawgiver" was one of themselves, even if he was more of a myth than a reality; and in the archaic times, before their whole constitution was set in stone like the "laws of the Medes and Persians," they had a high

cultural life, and produced some of the best of the early lyric poetry. Above all, after reducing their Messenian neighbors to subjection, and creating the rigid constitution which that "mastery" required, they always showed good sense—or at least far better sense than Athens—about the constitutional freedom of other cities (including Athens when they defeated her). This is the true spirit of "freedom." The Spartans understood that the polis is a communal "work of art"; and that artistic creation is a "free" activity.

(a) *Playing for the Gods*

- 1./699. The Master-Craftsman has become a spiritual laborer. No more synthetic mingling of nature and thoughts.

The practical Understanding is the employment of thought to formulate the problems and goals of nature. In traditional terms it is "Reason as the servant of the passions." To be free, by expressing nature "beautifully," is outwardly only another of the passions, the objective of another contingent natural desire. Freedom is, indeed, a "natural" goal of the self; in the case of the Spartans, because they committed themselves so completely to the maintenance of "lordship," this goal retained its "naturalness." But the Hobbesian "naturalness" of the Spartan drive for "power" appears to us (as it did to the other Greeks) quite *unnatural*. It is the Understanding, not Reason, that is fixated on "mastery." The goal of "free" expression is to create something for enjoyment. The master-craftsman (*Werkmeister*) was a "spiritual master." The free artist, says Hegel, is a "spiritual laborer" (*geistiger Arbeiter*). He labors for the Absolute Spirit; and just as the *Werkmeister* is not simply a *Herr*, so the artist is not simply a *Knecht*. The *Werkmeister* is more than a *Herr*, because he really does know what to do, and by actually shaping the social world his orders shape the subservient consciousness like raw material. Equally, the artist is more than a *Knecht*, because his labor does not only shape the world (like that of the serf); it also shapes the divine "lords" whom this "spiritual laborer" serves. And he serves his Gods freely or ethically, not in fear for his life. He is ready to lay down his life in their service, precisely because he shapes them so that they express his own will. To have a free will is primitively to be ready to die for what that will is set on. The spiritual laborer is as much a lord as a serf, because he is ready to die for the divine ideal that he has himself made. He portrays for the community a rational goal or content which the primitive natural urge of self-assertion aims to realize and maintain.

The Master-Craftsman was an *imaginative* version of Newton's God.² The image of Him that God's Egyptian servants made, represented him as a blending of the rational (human) with the natural (animal) form. The result was a "monster in shape [the Sphinx], in speech [the babble of the Oracle] and in deed [the social Leviathan]," as Hegel put it in paragraph 698. All such synthetic monstrosities are now given up. The Gods are created in fully human form; and their human community spontaneously creates itself in the shape that is "natural" to it—the world of the Cities.

- 2./700. The "actual" spirit that is conscious of its absolute essence in the Art-Religion is the ethical or "true" spirit. The substance here "has individualization" [e.g. as Athena] and is known by the single members as their own essence and work. It is not the universal Light as Lord of all things. Nor is it a war of peoples that do not recognize each other, nor yet a stabilized system of castes where the freedom of individuals is lacking.

The Art-Religion is the realization of an ideal created by the free will of a community which knows that it is the form of "self-actualizing" Reason. At the level of Religion, there is now a real community that projects its own self-image; so the ideal created is the self-conscious intuition of the life that has actually been achieved.³ The religious ideal is projected not as a goal, but for recognition, i.e. for appreciation and enjoyment. The projected ideal is necessary to the actuality of its community; it becomes the efficient cause of its own actuality by being already the final cause. By making this circle it escapes from the bad infinity of critical Reason (which can never realize its formal ideal of itself anywhere) and exists as True Spirit. Hence, if we use the word "reason" (as the Greeks themselves did) to designate the *actual* capacity that distinguishes human nature and human life from the instinct-governed existence of the other animals, then the Art-Religion is the "religion of Reason."⁴ "The *polis*," said Aristotle, "comes into existence for the sake of *life*; but it continues in existence for the sake of the *good life*."⁵ Human life is (by definition) the "life of Reason." So what distinguishes the *polis* is that it meets the needs of life as they are naturally given (in an aggressive species); and it does so in a way that liberates the distinctive human capacity of "Reason." The development of Reason can then become the goal of the "good life."

The "liberation" of Reason involves "mastery"; but the development of free Reason is a matter of artistry. "Mastery" exists here only in a sublated form. Aristotle was conscious that the *polis* was a supremely clever invention, as well as being "natural"; for any political society, its "inventor" was "the greatest of benefactors."⁶ But the "freedom" of the *polis* consists in the voluntary commitment of every citizen to its maintenance. The God of the City is their recognized humanity; she appears to them in human shape. Compared with them she is immortal; and the citizens know that she is also worshipped in other cities. But they know, too, that she depends on them, and on their mortal commitments, for actual presence in this world.

This circle between "life" and the "good life," maintained in a finite community by absolute commitment, is True Spirit. The consciousness of "freedom" can only be realized in a *community of communities*. Otherwise the absoluteness of the commitment on the part of the natural self-consciousness would make its "freedom" indistinguishable from "necessity." The Jews are "free" too, in their Covenant; but theirs is only the negative freedom of critical Reason, the freedom to fail, the freedom to be backsliders. The Athenian and the Spartan, facing one another as they take counsel about resistance to Xerxes, both know that they are "free" in a positive way. God is not for them the light of natural life, and the darkness of natural death; nor is he the spirit of natural rivalry (though that spirit almost triumphs over him, in a way that would bring the struggle for spiritual freedom to nothing). Nor is

God the death-dealing power of the Understanding which triumphed in Egypt by overawing all of the natural rivals, and slotting them into a caste-system of universal servitude.⁷ The Zeus of the Greeks is their universal Father, the spirit of a free people, who know that they have made their own way of life in a variety of empirical shapes; and that they must fight for their common freedom to do this.⁸

- 3./701. The religion of this spirit is an elevation above this actuality, a return out of its "truth" into the knowledge of self. In actual life there is immediate unity with substance and no pure singularity of self-consciousness; so this religion emerges in its perfection, through a divorce from its stable actuality. The actuality of the substance depends, first, on its unchanging stability, and on the fact that self-consciousness is at home in it. But also it is differentiated into many functional sub-groups, so that the single members have to be content with their limited places. When they experience the joy of their singular freedom, trust in the thing-substance gives way to the certainty of self-understanding. The *perfection* of ethical life turns over into the liberation of a singular self in which it perishes. The emergent self-certain spirit is left to mourn its lost world and dream of one elsewhere.

In large measure, this paragraph is a summary of what happens in Hegel's chapter VI A. But that story is now integrated into the evolution of religious consciousness, so that some new logical points occur (or become apparent). One of the most interesting of them is that because the moment of "singularity" is to be excluded as far as possible from the ethical consciousness and its deliberations, the community needs to have the moment of its own "individuality" religiously available for everyone's intuition in a "sundered" form. The "individuality" of the Goddess Athena is to take the place of private (or singular) self-consciousness. In her, all singular consciousnesses are united, and no longer "divisible." To answer the question "who are you?" with "I am an Athenian," is not just to say "I belong to the physically permanent community of Athens" but "I am one of Athena's people, and that I shall be even when I am dead."

The Greek "political religion" is the conscious experience of the sense of *commitment* that constitutes the "truth" of Spirit. It is for this reason that the religious experience of the City's sacred things and ceremonies must be distinguished and separated from the work of the Assembly, the courts, and the campaigns. The worshipper may not even be a citizen; those who are not free can feel themselves to be "Athena's people" too. And apart from those who have no share in political life even in a democracy like Athens—not only the servile majority, but the female half of the free population—there were many distinctions of status among the citizens in the non-democratic cities. Hence the "actual" spirit of a *polis* had two sides—the "Unchangeable" consisting of its Constitution and Laws;⁹ and the "organic" aspect consisting of the variety of social estates¹⁰ and fortunes, with all the highly differentiated duties and responsibilities that this organic structure entails.

The "absolute movement of Self-Consciousness" must pass back and forth between the unity and the variety, because it is of the essence of the free community that its members are conscious of making a free commitment to it. The

“truth” of Spirit requires that this commitment should be both primitive and absolute. In other words, it should be the indubitable context of all thought and all decision. This is the condition that Hegel calls “trust”; the “Unchangeable” aspect of the community life is seen as coming from God, and as removed from all possibility of dispute and controversy. The Constitution rests upon universal Greek “customs” (Antigone’s “unwritten law” of Zeus).

When the Sophists began to compare the ways of life in different cities critically, and even to suggest that the non-political customs of barbarian societies should be examined without prejudice, the civic commitment called “trust” lost its absolute status, and the “absolute movement of Self-Consciousness went into itself.” Self-Consciousness now asserted its “absolute right” as *singular*, and the principle of “rational singularity” was born. The “truth” of Spirit became a mere myth. Thrasymachus proclaims that “Justice” is only the interest of the ruling class; and Critias even puts forward D’Holbach’s view that religion is a mass of fictions invented and manipulated by cunning leaders.¹¹

This *critical* “return into self” must not happen. The maintenance of “trust” requires that when “the absolute movement of Self-Consciousness returns into itself” it must find only the divine guardians of the City’s “unchangeable” aspect. The tragedy of Antigone concerns the way in which absolute “trust” is bound to defeat and destroy itself, because it is inevitably one-sided, and the “absolute right of self-consciousness” is one of its (still unconscious) “sides.” Creon and Antigone are both “lightminded” in their very earnestness; and their story reveals how the “absolute right” is bound to be exercised, even before it is recognized, and when no one is meaning to exercise it.

The function of the religion of True Spirit is to put off the evil day when Critias and Thrasymachus will appear in place of Creon and Antigone. It does this by giving the unbounded “light-heartedness” of Self-Consciousness an open field, in which it can rejoice and actually be without a care at no actual cost. Everyone can go to the play. Even the slaves knew the stories, as Hegel remarks in the only reference to *Greek* slavery that he made in the unpublished early manuscripts.¹² At the play (or listening to a Homer chant) everyone is just a *Greek*; it is only the knowledge of the language and the tradition that matters. Slave or free, man or woman, young or old, rich or poor, King Archon or one of the old age pensioners earning a daily dole for serving on the jury in the courts—all such distinctions fall away. But the *knowledge* of what the distinctions are *for* is not lost; it is reinforced.

Hence, there would be many ordinary unintellectual folk who went home after watching the *Antigone* having understood what most modern audiences do not recognize—that Antigone was in the wrong as well as Creon. That recognition is what makes the experience a concretely *religious* one in the context of True Spirit. This is the *serene* enjoyment of the “absolute movement of self-consciousness.” It has free play, and it does not “withdraw into itself” but lets itself go into what is happening “out there”; it watches. Even when Euripides presents someone who says that an oath is only a movement of the tongue, not a commitment of finite spirit to absolute spirit; or when Aristophanes has “Socrates” tell us that Zeus is a myth and the

Whirlwind is our divine king, the point is still that oaths are sacred, and that children must reverence their parents as they always have done.¹³ But by that time the “serenity” is gone because the mortal children of Zeus are embroiled in a universal civil war. The “unrest of consciousness” cannot be kept in its playfield. The audience laughs; but, unintellectual as they may be, they go home troubled in their minds like the poet. For the “ethical order” is visibly passing away, and the whole actual structure of life is being carried off by the whirlwind.

Art becomes Thought, because the world changes. Plato, the dramatist of thought, is still an artist. The liberation of thought from art, the return of Self-Consciousness “into itself,” its becoming independent of the world, involves the prior destruction of the world in which thought had the supportive (artistic) function of preserving the “truth” of what men had achieved, and enabling them to see it and appreciate it. Aristotle’s “science” and Alexander’s Empire arrived together.

The freedom of thought arrived completely when the Stoic could say that we are all the children of Reason, sparks of the divine fire. But he could say that only because his audience were all estranged from their actually differentiated social existence. Law was imposed on them, and authority did not depend on them—even when it was not, quite visibly, the Thrasymachean “law of the stronger,” and the tyrannical authority of the sword. The Stoic children of Reason have no home in this world. For what has Reason to do with the purple mantle of Marcus, or the fetters of Epictetus? Yet the mantle and the fetters symbolize the social environment in which these lost souls ought to be “at home.” The home of the rational soul is “within” (or as Plotinus will eventually say, “Above” or “Yonder”). The “liberation” of Self-Consciousness is the incipient “unhappiness” of Consciousness.

- 4./702. In the epoch of true Spirit absolute art emerges. Before that there is instinctive laboring of Spirit in nature. Later there will be not just the self giving birth to substance, but a created art-work that recognizes itself in its concept [the Christian self].

“In an epoch of this kind absolute art comes forth.” The only ambiguity here concerns whether the “mourning” for True Spirit by the Unhappy Consciousness is included in this “epoch.” The right answer is that, as far as the *production* of art is concerned, the period after the downfall is not included; but that if we attend very precisely to what Hegel actually says, it is the case that “absolute Art” comes forth *as Art*, only when the Art-Religion has “fallen.” This is clear in paragraph 753. We ourselves continue to create works of art now, long after the “downfall” of the Art-Religion; and our models of what can be achieved come from the epoch of the Art-Religion. But Art does not now express the Absolute Spirit; and in the time of the Unhappy Consciousness nothing did that properly.

We can say, if we like, that at that stage, “thought” expressed the *absence* of Absolute Spirit. But this negative expression of it was the silencing of speech, and the stilling of the movement of Self-Consciousness into the feeling of “devotion” towards what was absent. It was “thought” but it was not the thinking that consciously posits its own existence.

Greek art speaks to us now of the memory of the "True Spirit" that has flown from the world; but it exists now "absolutely" as Art because our religious experience has become separate from it, and has left it behind. This point is important, because the project of the chapter rigorously implies that the experience expressed, and absolutely known, in Art is to be repossessed as a moment in the "absolute Religion." The Unhappy Consciousness is the birth-time of the "absolute Religion." But the absolute Religion's proper "recollection" of its genesis cannot even begin until it comes to maturity. Then we shall see that Art also had its own *religious* place in the development of the absolute Religion.

The experience of *Art* as "Religion," is the intuitive awareness of the Absolute Spirit as a "Substance born from the Self." Even in the stage when the Understanding is the absolute power, and when both the people's God, and the people's real governor, is a "master-craftsman,"¹⁴ we already find Art as subjective competence, and as the skill to make something expressive or *symbolic*, of the "absolute essence." And afterwards, even in the serf's experience, "formative activity" is the experience of spiritual freedom; but this "instinctive" activity cannot be identified as a form of free self-consciousness in society.

A proper artist is essentially free; and art can only be the expression of "what is," when the artist expresses at the same time what *she* is.¹⁵

The final long sentence of the paragraph explains the status of our modern art as a moment of the *absolute* religion. Classical Art directly mirrors the actual ethical substance for the religious appreciation of the Greeks themselves. Beauty is its absolute (or "infinite") aspect; but what is made beautiful is necessarily tragic in its actual finitude. In the absolute experience of Religion as such, this immediate unity of opposites is mediated. The tragedy is thoughtfully comprehended, and the inversion of fortune is comprehensively inverted into a spiritual triumph over death. This is the establishment of the realm of the Spirit as absolute and "free." It comprehends the actual realm in all of its necessity, and does not change that necessity in any way, because natural necessity is the constitutive nature of Spirit as substance.

But in the world of the Spirit that is returning from "estrangement," this substance is comprehended as the substance of the *thinking* self. The tragic comprehension of the artist was simply the subjective apprehension of how the subject is comprehended in the substance. This was a purely theoretical comprehension which (in the works of art recognized by the community as its "ideal" expressions) exactly matched the practical or real comprehension of the individual in the community. But our modern *thinking* comprehension transcends the sense in which the thinker is comprehended in "nature" (including the aesthetically "natural" community), and makes possible the self-affirmation of each and every individual as the universal subject incarnate in the natural social substance. This is what is expressed in the absolute religion as the infinite *love* of God for every one of his "children." Mythically or as a *Vorstellung*, God's love is portrayed as the "Kingdom of Heaven." But we must read the myth rightly; the "eternal life" of which it speaks refers us to of our experience of eternity in this present life. The "experience of

consciousness” must never be taken to refer to a life beyond the actual life which (as self-consciousness learns in its very first “experience”) is its one and only “place.” The “beyond” of any experience can only ever be another experience that takes place now and here. The “absolute Religion” is the finally self-comprehensive *concept* of “experience” as this process of conceptual growth and self-appreciation. Or, more precisely, it is itself the experience of that concept as an object.

In this higher, properly conceptual, mode of experience, Art has to be recognized as the ultimate expression of “finite” selfhood. Each self knows itself to be eternally necessary, and to have “infinite” value (as the object of Divine love). In its artistic self-expression it expresses this for the community, while continuing (like the classical artist) to express the “infinity” of the community for aesthetic enjoyment by the community itself. But these two “infinities” are not perfectly reconcilable in an intuitive form. The consciousness of its own infinity could never have come to the finite self in any way except *tragically*, i.e. in antithesis to the ideal “infinity” (or “beauty”) of the community; and that tragedy cannot be perfectly sublated.

Thus, Art moves from expressing the tragedy of “life as finite,” to expressing the tragedy of *itself* as a finite mode of expression for the life that has thoughtfully comprehended its own infinity. It seeks “not just to give birth to itself out of its Concept [which it does], but to have its own very Concept as its Shape [and as “this self” it cannot do that].” But it can show forth this tragic problem, just as perfectly as it expressed the tragic aspect of natural life. It can express its own tragic relation to the *Begriff* just as perfectly as it expressed the tragic relation of finite to infinite life.

Hence Hegel says that the project of the art of our religious culture is that “the *concept* and the produced work of art know one another reciprocally as one and the same.” But whereas the identity of art and life is tragic for the life of the artist, the identity of art and the concept is tragic for her art. The expression of this tragedy remains just as necessary to the actuality of the *Begriff*, as the expression of the tragedy of finite life was for the actually infinite living “substance” whose ideality (or *Begriff*) it constituted.¹⁶

- 5./703. As pure self-consciousness [Religion], the ethical substance is the bringing forth of spiritual substance. It produces the pure [universal] form of human subjectivity. This, in its turn, is “the night in which substance was betrayed,” and made itself subject. The ethical spirit is resurrected out of this night as a shape freed from nature and its own immediate way of being.

The world that Art perfectly expresses is the ethical “ideal” of the natural order. Since this is a religious experience, it is a universal experience, though it is not an experience enjoyed in every moment of every day. Art is “the *activity* with which the spirit brings itself forth as object.” It is important to note that Hegel says “the activity *with* which” (not “the activity *through* which”). The activity of the artists is an activity *through* which the presence of the divine is mediated. The “activity with which the Spirit brings itself forth” is the religious experience of the worshippers. That experience is necessarily an experience of the art-works (otherwise what I said about the activity of the artists would not be true). But it is not simply that. The

things that the worshippers do as worshippers—ceremonies, contests, assemblies, processions etc.—are all part of the experience of “Religion as Art.” Once the works of art (in the ordinary sense) are removed from this context of life comprehended by everyone as “playing for the Gods,” art ceases to be the universal mode of religious experience—though it continues (in most cultures) to be one subordinate aspect of religious experience. But it is subordinate precisely because the experience of divine service as the free “play” of human self-expression can now belong only to the artist. Any purely aesthetic experience on the part of ordinary worshippers will be strictly *non-religious*—as D’Holbach, for example, might be enthralled by the Rose Window of Notre Dame, or Karl Marx might be transported in listening to an anthem by Orlando Gibbons.

The religious experience of art in the ethical order is not like that. Let us think specifically of the *Oresteia* trilogy of Aeschylus. In the *Eumenides* the Athenian audience sees the son of Agamemnon, the heir to the High King of Argos, come to Athena’s City for the resolution of his tragic situation. That resolution is found in the spectator’s own court, where his ancestors voted in the same way that he does. But for the voters in the play Apollo and Athena are visible presences. These human judges have lived full lives of ethical obedience and service, and they are free of prejudice as judges should be. They are the religious consciousness of “the single [agent] who has worked off every unconscious mode of being and fixed determination [of conscious life] in ethical obedience and service.” They do not decide impulsively (like Antigone and Creon) between the *Dike* of Zeus in the light, and the same *Dike* in the Underworld. They let Athena herself reconcile the two sides, so that Orestes goes free but the Furies are appeased.

In Athena’s resolution (which is only a practical expression of their tie-vote) the “Substance itself has become this fluid essence,” i.e., the essence of communal self-consciousness. It appears comprehensively as the daylight that understands the necessity of the night. In the *Antigone* it is clearly portrayed for daylight awareness, as the night in which the substance cannot help being “betrayed” by those most completely committed to “ethical obedience and service.”

Out of that betrayal emerges the absolute subjectivity of the military leader who makes law knowingly, and without reference to any will other than that of the army which he leads. That absolute subjectivity develops in a long night in which “substance was betrayed.”

It is the long, slow, birth of the Absolute Spirit as “subjectivity” that Hegel wants us to remember, when he describes the fate of the Greek cities in language that unmistakably recalls Judas leading the High Priest’s men to the man whom he kisses in the dark night of Gethsemane. *That* man, that finite subject, was the first to know in a conceptual way how we are all “one with the Father,” the absolute Substance. His death and resurrection was the religious *Vorstellung* of the final “tragedy of art” itself; and the long and tortuous history of that image uncovers every aspect of the tragedy of Art. For just as the “tragedy of life” is enacted by everyone in the Religion of Art, so the “tragedy of art itself” is enacted by everyone in the Religion of pure thought. This is especially true with reference to the

religious thinkers, the practical theologians who interpret the myth of the Resurrection for the universal community. Not without much agony and bloody sweat will “the ethical Spirit be resurrected as the *Gestalt* that has been freed from nature and its own immediate way of being.” The portrayal of the resurrection is natural and easy; and the artists of thought can readily portray even the spiritual actuality that is still a matter of “faith” for the finite spirit. But the full self-actualization of finitely-infinite spirit as “Reason” does not come naturally, and it proves to be anything but easy.

- 6./704. The *Existenz* of the pure Concept is a “Man of Sorrows.” He suffers violence at the hands of his world, but his pure self wrestles with the universal might of the essence, conquers it and makes his Passion its material, so that his unity with the essence emerges as the universal spirit individualized and imaged.

The Spirit “selects the vessel of its sorrow.” There is one sense in which this is obviously true. The man, Jesus of Nazareth, could not become the “Vessel of the Spirit’s sorrow” simply through his devoted consciousness of that sorrow, and his own will to be the vessel of it. Indeed, our record of him—which is the only aspect of his *Existenz* that matters to the “science of experience”—shows that he wished he could escape from being “the Spirit’s vessel” (in the inverted image of finite Spirit, he prayed that “the cup might pass from him”). But he was “chosen”—and his own “choice” was the *ethical* one, the tragic acceptance of fate.

The Spirit that chose him, and with which he tragically identified, was simply the actual spiritual substance of his culture, responding to, and comprehending (in its *substantial* way) his own self-definition as the *identity* of finite consciousness with “the Father.” First, he got just what was coming to him—and the “agony” of Gethsemane consists precisely in his recognizing the inevitability of what was coming. The “positive might” that imposed his Passion upon him was the “universal empire” of Rome.

But, secondly, many moral heroes have been engulfed by the social substance, and have passed away almost as unnoticed and as soon forgotten as those other victims (such as Blake’s Chimneysweep) who are merely typical of the life of their time. That Jesus became the “chosen vessel” resulted from his being there at the right moment; and it is plausible to characterize that “ripeness” of the time in terms of the phenomenal career of another mortal accident, the man who became the apostle Paul. For it was Paul who gave “the pure Self of the individual” its “negative might.” He made the crucial *Vorstellung* of the fate of Jesus, the one in which the universal concept of Spirit can for the first time be clearly discerned.

Thirdly, however, Paul did not “choose” Jesus, any more than Jesus chose himself. It was the “inhabited world” of the Roman Imperium which “chose” the *story* that Paul helped to make—the story in which the acknowledged climax was the curiously irregular “appearance” of the Risen Lord to Paul himself as a “great light” and a “voice.” The world’s choice took nearly three hundred years, and by the time it was properly made, it no longer mattered what the empirical

history at the source of the story was. The Good News that every believer would rise from the dead, and be saved, “wrestled with the unshaped essence” of Roman Law and military violence, and became its spiritual “shape”; the “content” of mundane authority was absorbed into the universal religion of God’s Passion for our salvation.

It was crucially important that this story was the “history of God”; and it could not be played with in the way that Egyptian priests and Greek poets had played with the story of Helen. There is plenty of that sort of play in the “apocryphal Gospels,” but they were suppressed. But what actually happened “under Pontius Pilate” ceased to be important, precisely because the *story*—which includes many things that every sober historian knows did not happen—was canonized. Hegel himself gave us what he regarded as the sober history of the Man of Sorrows in his “Life of Jesus” (1795); and it is the sober history that can be extracted from the “story,” that he depends upon here. The crucial episode is in the Gethsemane chapter, and in the Passion story that follows. Jesus is a “beautiful soul” who “gives himself up” to the universal Spirit that is his true self. But he recognizes the Spirit also as the almighty will that is fulfilled in the unredeemed world of those whom he tried in vain to enlighten. It is *God’s* will that he should suffer, not just the will of a human tyrant. Unlike the natural consciousness, he does not risk his life to prove his freedom; instead, he demonstrates his freedom, like a Stoic, by giving his life up freely. He suffers the violence of the world as his voluntary *pathos*; and through his death, his gospel triumphs over death.

But the man who dies on Golgotha, knows nothing of that triumph still to come. Jesus only enacts the Greek tragedy, the tragedy of natural life consciously sacrificing itself to the Absolute Life. That is why Hegel echoes the language of the Passion at this point. Jesus is the “perfect shape” of the tragic hero. Even Antigone, who being a woman cannot fight for her life, weeps and protests against her fate. Jesus shows his ethical manliness, by sublating his own protest, and accepting crucifixion as the will of God. He is the artist who is his own hero; he makes his own life into a tragic drama of reconciliation. So he presents the Greek artist’s made image of life as a fully self-conscious subjective experience, in which the artist is his own work.

The intuitive, or aesthetic, shape of the Passion of Jesus exhibits the conceptual problem of art as the self-consciousness of life. His story is necessarily chosen by the world, because it is the perfectly individuated portrayal of the fate of the Art-Religion and its world, and the dramatic demonstration of why the tragedy is inevitable. What Jesus *does* in Gethsemane (and afterwards until he says “It is finished”) is what the Greek dramatists said and showed about life; and he did it at the very moment when the “fate” of infinite unhappiness had overwhelmed the finite harmony of Spirit and Nature, or of Self-Consciousness and Life, which the Greeks achieved. The Gospel-story, written by Greeks in the universal patois of the “inhabited world,” is the last and greatest of Greek tragedies. It is when we see it as the *key* to Greek culture, that we understand most completely what Greek tragedy (as the heart of the Art-Religion) was about. Jesus is *every* tragic hero.

VII B(a): The Abstract Work of Art

"Abstraction" in this heading signifies "withdrawal and separation from life." All of Egyptian Art was "abstract"; and almost all of our modern visual art is "abstract" likewise, because we keep it in galleries and museums. Similarly, our Religion is "abstract" insofar as we confine it to Church on Sundays and "holy days." In our religious tradition "abstraction" began with "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy." The "devotion" of the Unhappy Consciousness was "abstract." The "abstraction" of Greek Religion begins with the making of a stone statue and its "house"; it includes hymns and cult activities generally; and it reaches its climax in the sacrifice and the Mystery cults. Sculpture is the visual symbol of "abstraction." In the communal sacrifice, "abstraction" is sublated, because religion and life are united.

(b) Religion in Abstraction

- 7./705. The first religious work of art is abstract and singular. It has to move toward consciousness, and consciousness has to move into it (through the Cult) [cf. par. 693].

We shall not come back to the tragic hero as a forerunner of Jesus until our detailed account of Greek religion reaches its climax. At this point, we return to the moment where the religion of Understanding perished, and the Art-Religion emerged.

The most interesting thing about the transition as seen from the side of Art is that the statue is now called the "abstract work of art." We can properly say that the whole world and standpoint of the Understanding is "abstract"; the manipulation of life according to plan necessarily involves "abstracting" from it in order to plan it from outside. In this perspective it is the continuity of aesthetic religious experience from Egypt to Greece that is evident. So we must ask why Hegel introduces the concept of "abstraction" as a defining moment of Religion at just this point. For "abstraction" is characteristic of Religion as a concept from the first. The Church, the "house of God," is a *place* of withdrawal, a *retreat* from ordinary life.

From our point of view, it seems clear that the "Light-Essence" is "abstracted" from all of the concrete variety of living experience. Its worshippers live and move in a world of natural consciousness and self-consciousness; and we are spontaneously inclined to call their worship of the Light-Essence "abstract" in distinction from that. But when we comprehend their experience properly as *religious* experience we shall not say that; for they themselves do not understand it in that way. "Religion" must always be taken as the community's most "concrete" mode of experience, that from which all others are "abstractions."

We can see this at once in the next phase of the Concept of "natural religion"; for the absolute object of the Animal-Religion is the actual life and substantial institutions of the *tribal* community to which the worshipper belongs; and every activity of life is "religious" in so far as it is directed towards the prosperity and preservation of the tribe.

But in the Religion of Understanding, the abstract intellect is sharply distin-

guished from every other aspect of life. The Understanding is life's *master*, and is the source of authority. One of the primitive names of God as the Light-Essence, was "Lord." God is always appealed to as the source of social authority; but in the religion of the Light-Essence, the "Lordship" of God's Word is not yet sundered or distinguished from the Lordship of his Works. To put it in a way that both Jews and Greeks would have appreciated, the Law of Zarathustra's God is not yet distinguished from the Lightning. God's Lordship is so absolute as to be superficial, because he has no proper "servants" yet. This is what changes in the Religion of Understanding. God himself retires to the noumenal world beyond death, while the priests and other experts who have understanding are his recognized servants in the world of the living, and the rest of the community are *their* servants. This society worships an "abstraction"; abstractness (or "beyondness") is the mark of what is holy.

In the Art-Religion, therefore, the first moment is the preservation of this holy abstraction in a sublated form.¹⁷ The Art-Religion is the religion of naturally self-conscious freedom. The divine does not appear as the intelligence that tells us (with absolute authority) what to do. That is why it must now appear in *theoretical* abstraction, as a free community on its own account and in its own place. In distinction from the actual *polis* the Gods themselves must form an ideal *polis*; and in their presence to us, the immortal separateness of their community is the first thing that must be represented. The means of representation is the same as it was in Egypt: the statue in its temple. Each God has her own "House" among us, *symbolizing* membership in the divine community "above." The Gods dwell "above" in the eternal daylight of life, not "beyond" in the eternal darkness of thought. But as the symbolic statue in the earthly house shows, they are like us, they live in an ethical community, under ethical lordship.

Thus the "cult"—which becomes significant as the distinctive separation of religion from life as soon as the (Egyptian) Gods withdraw into their own world, but which Hegel mentions now for the first time because he wants to designate only a relation of *equal* recognition as a proper "cult"—aims (like "consciousness" itself) at the sublation of the very "distinguishing" (*Unterscheidung*) upon which its existence depends.

- 8./706. We begin with a human-shaped statue in a temple-house for the community. But the temple now has a human architecture—no pyramid-crystals or plant shapes. The geometry is now one of straight lines and incommensurables—so that Understanding is anticipating Reason.

Hegel is clearly anxious that we should realize that although much of the "abstract" aspect of Greek religion looks very similar to the religion of Egypt, it is all quite different in significance. Indeed, he wants us to see the Art-Religion as a complete contrast to Nature-Religion generally. Logically it has to be a comprehensive inversion of the "Infinite" of Understanding; but the overarching story of God becoming Man creates a necessary aspect of continuity which tends to overshadow the dialectical contrasts; and at this point the functional character of

architecture, and the symbolic character of sculpture, are constants that Hegel has to acknowledge.

Greek religion is focussed upon statues in temples. This is a symbolic representation of how the human community *builds* its own world within the natural world, and *uses* its own natural resources of life, strength and bodily faculties. The Statue corresponds to the singular human agent, living and moving in the “house” which is the “universal” inorganic environment of her activities.¹⁸ In their architecture, the Greek artists themselves can only represent *symbolically* the freedom of human life in the organically creative here-and-now, as opposed to the perpetuity of death in the inorganically predictable realm of the supersensible. The Pyramids have the imperishable fixity of crystals, while Greek temple architecture expresses the fascinated interest of Greek geometers in the fact that the simplest shapes that could be drawn or constructed involved ratios for which there was no adequate numerical expression.

Hegel himself *suffered*—I think that is the right word in our more algebraic culture—from this Greek obsession. I doubt if it is (as he thought it was) a “logical” mark of the antithesis between the inorganic and the organic. But Hegel was moderately competent in mathematics, while I am not a mathematician at all; so it is hardly becoming for me to be dogmatic about his concern with “incommensurables.” What *is* culturally significant, I think, is the fact that Greek geometry was a theoretical science, whereas the Egyptian founders of the science were engineers; and as far as architecture itself is concerned, the important thing is that the Pyramids were real *tombs*, while the Parthenon was a symbolic *home*. Hegel’s speculations about crystals and incommensurables have no status in the “Science of experience,” unless and until we have some reliable evidence about what the Pyramid builders actually believed. We are entitled to “observe” both facts and logical relations of which the observed consciousness is unconscious; but if we could observe any absolute logical necessities in symbolism, it would cease to *be* symbolism. So the symbolism that seems “natural” to a modern Romantic sensibility has no scientific status for the interpretation of the Pyramids.

That Greek architecture is not adorned with organic plant-symbols *can* be read as symptomatic of the emergence of the “theoretical” Understanding (as Hegel seems to think). Humans have cultivated flowers and made ornamental gardens in all the urban cultures that we know of; so it may be right to comprehend the geometric starkness of Greek architecture as a mark of the emergence of the “pure” understanding. But Hegel’s suggestion that the imitative aspect of plant decoration is characteristic of the “practical” Understanding has some surprising implications. This interpretation flatly contradicts the thesis of Plato and Aristotle that the Greek artists were “imitating Nature.” Hegel adheres to the main line of Plato’s theory of the Beautiful, and rejects the formal theory of Art offered in the tenth book of the *Republic* as a dialectical pretence. The deeper truth—as he sees it—is that the Greek artists were Platonists. They cannot be interested in plants and animals because they seek to express in outward form the human ideal of life as experienced from within.

- 9./707. The God is fully human in form, although he has a symbolic animal beside him. This by itself shows that his nature is above the level of natural organic life. The God's essence is the unity of the Earth with the self-conscious spirit. But the God is *singular*, so at first he is identified with a natural element. The natural element has been spiritualized however, so it is only a dim memory—the Titanic phase of Greek religion has been conquered by ethical Gods. The Titans were the children of the Light-Essence mating with its opposite; the Olympians are the political communities themselves.

The way that Hegel describes the evolution of sculpture here shows that his “black stone” has nothing to do with the sacred object in Mecca. For that has never been subjected to the impious and idolatrous violence of human hands, whereas the stone of which Hegel speaks is an animal idol that is now transformed into a human image. The symbolic animal now *accompanies* the immortal human ideal.¹⁹

There is a rather naïve type of enlightened rationalism at the core of Hegel's reading of the Olympian pantheon. The Olympians were, he suggests, originally *identical* with the elements over which they later presided. Zeus was Sky, Poseidon Sea, Apollo was Helios, the Sun etc. This is the kind of interpretation found among the Greek enlighteners themselves—for instance in the Sophist, Prodicus.²⁰ But it is of little importance to the “science of experience,” because only conjectures are possible about such questions in any case. All that matters in principle is that the Olympian religion evolved out of a more primitive natural religion.

The theory given here about the transition from Understanding to Self-Consciousness—or from the natural elements to the ideal selves of the political communities—is not easy to reconcile with the postulation of a direct transition from tribal consciousness to national consciousness in paragraph 727. Hegel reads Hesiod's account of the theogony of the Olympians, and the battles between the Gods and the Titans, as the portrayal of the transition from Understanding to Self-Consciousness. But he does not attempt to interpret either transition in detail. Both of the transitions (from Understanding to Self-Consciousness, and from natural Self-Consciousness to Reason) have to occur. The Olympians can only emerge as the absolute (or “immortal”) shapes of rational Self-Consciousness, because they embody the sublated moments of Consciousness and Self-Consciousness equally. The Titans represent the Egyptian-Understanding phase of Greek religion; and in the first “generations” of Hesiod's story we can recognize the Light-Essence, the Earth-Mother (of the Plant-Religion) and the warring tribes. The Abstract Work of Art is concerned with the making of the Gods, i.e. with the evolution of the communal consciousness from Understanding to the free self-conscious Ego. But for the finite rational consciousness this transition is identical with the discovery of the *polis*, as the genuine “thinghood of Reason”; so there is also a transition from “Reason as Understanding” to “Active Reason” which is only just beneath the surface here.

The fact that Religion involves a “bonded group” of conscious categorical moments explains how all these transitions are linked. The transition in Reason is the properly political one, for which the work of the *heroes* (especially Heracles and

Theseus) is emblematic. The Greek poets did not “invent” either the Gods or the heroes. But they represented the ideal transition from natural religion to the religion of the “immediate” spirit of communal freedom and self-affirmation, as the triumph of Zeus and his Olympian family over the Titanic forces of nature. Zeus and his kin had to take over the Titanic functions themselves. But because of the comprehensive inversion that is involved, the contrast is much more important than the continuity. The Olympians have conquered the forces of nature; and the animals and plants they are associated with symbolize their “gifts” to civilization. The myths about Zeus and the Olympians express what the political communities know that they have done for themselves.

- 10./708. In this cultural process the flux of immediate life becomes stable. But self-consciousness is still restless. The artist has expressed the stable substance [of the *Volk*] but he may not express himself as its personal voice. He has to make himself an empty vessel, a prophet, and he cannot give the work a living soul. That soul comes from him first and the spectators later. Even if they forget it we must not do so.

Hegel believes that in the more primitive nature-religions the bad infinite was endemic. Primitive culture was an indefinite multiplication of tribal units; and religion likewise was an indefinite multiplication of spirits everywhere. In the Greek context we have only to think of the satyrs, nymphs, dryads, tritons—and then of the household gods and the ancestors. The Olympian religion brought order to this chaos, both natural and human. How this order was established in the actual world we shall have to discuss later; the poets did not produce that, they only recalled and celebrated it in their epic chants.

Let us take as our paradigm Athena in the Parthenon. Her people, the Athenians, believed they were actually children of her part of the Earth. They still revered a host of local spirits, and each family had its ancestor cult; but Athena was the guardian of it all, with her remarkably unfeminine combination of political prudence and military resolution.

How is this wisdom, this guardianship, to be expressed? There is a verbal tradition which has inspired the artist. But the statue in the temple is mute. Pheidias, no doubt, was pleased with Athena's image, and with himself. But if the ordinary citizens said, and he agreed, that Athena herself had inspired him, this does not alter the fact that he looked for and received commissions from elsewhere, and he certainly expected to be well paid for his work. He was, in fact, unjustly accused of stealing some of the gold supplied by the City's treasurers, for the decoration of the statue; and subsequently he was prosecuted, rather more successfully, for impiety, because he imaged both himself and Pericles upon Athena's shield.²¹ If he believed that Athena herself wielded the chisel, he was certainly intensely aware (just as we are) that the hands were his. But unlike his Renaissance successors he could not express that consciousness without impiety. The ordinary Athenians could find men, women, boys and girls in the great frieze, who were just like themselves. But everyone was ethically anonymous; and all were mute. By rendering himself and his great patron recognizably, Pheidias made the statues *speak* for themselves.

Unlike the Egyptian tomb-paintings, however, it is ordinary life that is represented in the Parthenon frieze. It is not the soul's journey to the other world that the frieze portrays, but a procession in the City itself; and everything is public. The Goddess and her great procession need the living audience (who know what it is all about). Someone must say what it all means; but whoever does that, must speak without appearing in her own person. For that sort of natural self-assertion is unethical (as Pheidias learned to his cost).

- 11./709. The general admiration must make the artist aware how different the people's consciousness of producing the substance is from his own. And if they are *submissive* to his creation, he has a *master*-consciousness of it. But he learns, above all, how different the work is from himself.

The religious rejection of the "cult of personality" (as we call it) teaches the sculptor that as far as the Goddess is concerned he is just one of her mortal children like the others. *She* is the Immortal. But the transition from sculpture to poetry is mediated through the consciousness of the artist, because he (or she in the case of poets) has the special role of the "middle." The people see the image of the Goddess (and of themselves in the frieze); and they know who made these images. So the sculptor is admired. He is the one who knows what was really involved in making the statue; but even the ordinary folk who make offerings to the Goddess know that they are not really offering gifts to the statue. They know that the statue itself is their first communal offering to the Goddess. If the beauty of it is what it really has in common with Athena herself, then the aspect of experience reflected in it is just the *joy* of life. The tremendous, lifelong, discipline and effort of "playing for the Gods" is not expressed. The artist has experienced that; now, like everyone else, he experiences the *joy* of it, quite separately.²² For him, the statue exists willy-nilly as the made thing, a perceptible object, through which his two experiences are connected. In the new, non-authoritarian social situation it is the artist who emerges as the *master* still. If he succeeded, it was because the Goddess herself inspired him. But this means that, as far as the statue is concerned, she made him the master of it; the people are her servants through it.

(c) *Religious Language*

- 12./710. For there to be equality the people must make God speak. Now the artwork has a real divine soul. Singular and universal aspects are united, as body and soul. The hymn is the unity of inward and outward devotion. Singing together in devotion the people is aware of its unity of consciousness.

The inevitable survival of the Lord/Bondsman relation in sculpture—though now as an *ethical* relation of voluntary admiration and homage—is a form of unequal recognition in which the Goddess herself ought not to be involved. In a *free* community there should not be distinctions in her relation with her servants. That the Athenians should prosecute their greatest native born sculptor for impi-

ety is *tragic*; but it is logically implicit in the title “maker of Gods” that was given to Pheidias.²³

So another form of expression is necessary in which all can be equally involved. This is the *hymn*.²⁴ We do have a collection of “hymns” among the works ascribed to Homer, and Hegel may have thought that some of them were originally folk-compositions for unison singing in the temple of the relevant God, or at the appropriate festivals. But he probably relies mainly on such sources as Plato’s idealized picture of the simple life (in *Republic II*); and on the more realistic ideal of the *Laws*, Book VII. Plato insists that the poetic talent of the hymn-composer matters less than the life she has lived, and the sentiments that are expressed. What is logically important about the hymns that Hegel refers to here is that they are anonymous productions, communally performed.

The Goddess—let us stay with Athena—actually *speaks* in the choral hymn of her people. They are all *one* in and with her. This devotion passes directly into thought. It is not stopped short at the brink, as in the Latin chants of the Unhappy Consciousness, where all sing together, but only the priest knows what is sung. It is quite possible that Hegel’s portrayal of Greek religion is influenced here by the hymn-writing of Luther; for the Reformer’s great hymns and chorales are a perfect example of the “universal infection” of which he speaks. No one thought then, or thinks now, of Luther as a poet. His hymns come directly from the Holy Spirit; they are like the translation of the Bible. But even children and the illiterate masses can learn them, and so participate directly and equally in the experience of singing; whereas in relation to the Bible the congregation must be passive even when it is read to them in the vernacular.

This anticipation of how the hymn will function once more in the absolute religion prompts some reflection on the role of hymns in the earlier stages. Hegel must have been aware that every community sings and dances for its God(s). But the degree of self-assertion involved in such performances is determined by the general conception of the relation between the community and its God. Thus, for instance, Plato admired the *fixity* of everything in Egyptian aesthetic-religious practice.²⁵ But that meant that there was no opportunity for individual self-expression, and hence no consciousness of a likeness between the hymn-singer and God; and in the worship of the Light-Essence the evanescence of song would be what attention was focussed upon. Language is the fundamental medium of religious experience; the Unhappy Consciousness is most remarkable for its reduction of language to mere thinghood. But language has many aspects; and now that the topic has arisen Hegel is going to illustrate this at once.

- 13./711. The hymn is different from the Oracle, which was the first speech of God as the power of spirit in nature. In the Oracle God speaks as an alien power, not a self; and what God says develops, beginning with a simple proverbial wisdom that seems trivial to more advanced cultures.

The primitive divine speech was the Oracle. The Oracle belongs to the natural religion of unequal recognition; and its proper form is some natural phenomenon,

for God speaks in it as the spirit of universal nature. The Greeks had an oracle of this kind at Dodona, where Zeus spoke through the rustling of the leaves of his oak-tree. But the greatest oracle of the Greek world was at Delphi, where Apollo took possession of his human priestess, who spoke in a trance.²⁶ When the God expresses himself through the sounds of nature (and other phenomena, as in the taking of auguries from the entrails of sacrificed animals) the significant point is that a divinely privileged interpreter is necessarily involved. The language of "God as Nature" is *alien*; this aspect of divine speech survives in the Unhappy Consciousness, which makes even hymn-singing oracular. But in its proper use, the hymn is the language of universal self-consciousness.

Hegel refuses to call authoritative speech a religious revelation at all. Instead he calls all oracular utterance, from natural noises, and babbling trance sounds upwards, an expression of the "Concept" of God, but not a "realization" of it as Religion. The experience that is properly religious is universal; Religion "realized" is absolutely democratic. Thus we can all share the actual religious experience of God as mysterious and unintelligible. But when someone is recognized as the God's privileged interpreter, a concept is formulated but not "realized"—we have here not a proper concept, but the *Vorstellung* of an absolute communication. It is not a realized Concept because it is not yet a *universal* experience. God must *say* what everyone needs to know, in a language that everyone understands; and he must also say it "in their hearts."

In the nature-religions God speaks initially as a singular *Lord*. Thus "the universal spirit of the Sunrise who has still not specified His way of being" speaks through his prophet Zarathustra; and his invisible twin, the God of Abraham, speaks through the prophet Moses. But everyone who hears his commandments recognizes them (just as Moses Mendelssohn did) as the deliverance of healthy human understanding.²⁷ This God says only what everyone in the more advanced cultures is bound to know; and in the free community of the Art-Religion, Antigone will hear this voice without any need for the mediation of an authoritative prophet.

Eventually, in the modern Enlightenment, this sublime wisdom of nature—the revelation of God as "Reason"—will become trivial. But, at first, God speaks through prophets and oracles. Where God is an alien consciousness the "mediator" is essential; but only what is expressed for the people in its own language properly belongs to the concept of Religion. Thus there are different degrees of realization, depending on "the universal determinacy in which the absolute spirit is posited." The concept of "God's speech" is not fully realized until we reach a consciousness like that of Antigone (a consciousness which Goethe could misread as "Conscience").

- 14./712. This simple wisdom becomes an inner oracle in the culture that has a free consciousness. Antigone does not have to consult Delphi to know what God's law is. But God must speak about the particular problems that face his people. Socrates has this "particular" oracle inwardly, alongside his knowing consciousness; but in public life what

cannot be decided by custom or reason is left to augury from natural phenomena, or trances induced by the Earth's vapours. Where one tries to decide rationally what is best for oneself, one is only consulting the oracle of one's own character; to appeal to the Oracle shows that we are prepared to leave our accidental fate to God because it is not what is important. The highest state here [Socrates] is to deliberate, but to *know* that one is only consulting an oracle in doing so.

It is clear that Hegel wants to regard all prophetic revelations as "oracular"; and that he does not regard anything as the proper speech of God except what every worshipper says or can say "for God." This universal speaking for God begins properly with the Greek *hymn* (as Hegel interprets it). But in the "practical" mode of most oracular speech, the paradigm case of God's proper speaking is the oracle that Antigone finds in her own heart, when she is faced by Creon's edict. She only says what everyone knows (and Haemon tells Creon that the whole City secretly sympathizes with her). But she does not cite the authority of Homer or anyone else. Her oracle is "the secure and unwritten law of the Gods . . . that lives forever, and of which no one knows from whence it appeared."²⁸ She is *Meister* over the "pathos of Substance," i.e. she self-consciously comprehends and asserts what "prophets" like Zarathustra and Moses "suffer" as God's command.

Antigone also betrays the Unwritten Law because she is "master" of it. The betrayal springs from the mastery, and it resembles the introduction of Pheidias' own image on Athena's shield. But the inevitability of it is implicit in the fact that everyone knows the law to which Antigone appeals without being told. Hegel says, very instructively, that "the universal truth that was *revealed* by the Light-Essence, has here retreated into the inner or the under[world]." No one could get into Antigone's situation in the culture of the Light-Essence, because in that culture no one has the conscious "mastery" of the revealed law. Ismene's view that it was not Antigone's place to defy Creon would have absolute authority in the world of the "nature-religions."

But, now, in the world where everyone incarnates the Ethical Spirit, the alien oracular voice which formerly spoke universal truths through Zarathustra and Moses, falls from being a voice of universal wisdom (which none of us now need) to the level of a *particular* wisdom that tells both the community and the private individual what to do at some critical juncture of life. Everyone knows what to do in general; no one needs Zarathustra (or Moses) to tell them that. But just as Socrates distinguished the deliverances of Reason (for instance, the protests of "the Laws" against his supposed right to run away from an unjust death sentence) from the unreasoned feelings of constraint that came from his *daimonion*, or "divine sign," so the ethical community distinguishes between its universal customs, and the particular situations of empirical uncertainty in which *it* seeks for "divine signs."²⁹

As far as Hegel is concerned, appealing to Delphi was just like tossing a coin, or throwing the dice. He knows that that was not how the Oracle's clients regarded it; but he also knows that when Plato's Socrates refers to Delphi for the "abstract" religious arrangements of his ideal City, he is speaking in this same ironic spirit.³⁰

It is the problems that can *best* be settled by the toss of a coin that should by custom be referred to the Oracle. Otherwise one should use one's understanding as well as one can; but always with the clear awareness that one must be ethically indifferent to how things go wrong (if they do).

- 15./713. The hymn is the self-conscious being of True Spirit. But the voice in the hymn is transient, while the statue abides.

The *hymn* is the first "true" being of Spirit as language. It is the necessary complement of the statue, which is a symbol of the substantial permanence of Spirit as what "truly is." But the singing of the hymn is a transient moment of experience; the community is consciously at one for that moment, but then they fall apart into their private selves again. Thus the tragedy of the Art-Religion is clearly foreshadowed in its "abstract" realization. The statue symbolizes immortality; the hymn realizes living unity. But each of them is an abstract moment. The stone is abstracted from life; the singing is abstracted from life's differentiated variety. The hymn is the sense-certainty of Absolute Spirit. But its thinghood is only symbolized by the stone statue. Both are beautiful; but the twinning of their beauty expresses only the tragic impossibility of their unity.

(d) *Religious Cult*

- 16./714. In the cult it all comes together. God descends as a self-consciousness on his own account.

The tragedy is only implicit. We must remember that Antigone knows exactly what the *Dike* of Zeus requires; and she is a typical citizen in that respect. Everyone knows what she knows, and they know it all the time. Thus when the Athenians come into the presence of the Goddess—who stood in stone as Athena the Champion outside the temple of her virginity, and sat enthroned inside it in all the splendour of ivory and gold leaf—when they come to sing their hymn, they are only giving a formal, "abstract" expression to the truth of every moment of their lives. The Cult expresses something just as permanent and abiding as the stone of the statue. Only when Athena's children fail her as a community can the temple be robbed of its ivory and gold—as it eventually was. When they sing to her they are saying she is with them; and she is indeed with them, because what they sing is still true when they go to the Assembly, or go home. Hegel was taught in the Tübingen *Stift* that the Greeks were "idolators"; but he rightly insists that they did not worship the statue. It served the same function in their cult as the crucifix did in the Lutheran piety of the *Stift*. The mistake of the "pagans" was just that their Goddess is not an "immortal" (as they believed and said). She will die when the City does. But in their cult God is truly "revealed," because She is truly "incarnate." She "comes down from Heaven" just as the Crucified One does. The echo of the Christian symbolism here is very deliberate indeed.

- 17./715. The cult is the developed concept of the hymn. It is the abstract purification of the soul to receive God. The purification does not yet involve *repentance*; it is ceremonial cleansing for participation in the Mysteries.

The hymn sung in the presence of the Goddess is only the seed or germ, so to speak, of the full cult of Greek Religion.³¹ Hegel finds the full expression of the Cult in the Mysteries. Depending, as he did, mainly on the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, he knew that the Mysteries of Eleusis were part of the religion of the Underworld. But from what Aristophanes presents, together with what Plato, and others, say, he inferred that the Mysteries were “open secrets,” and that the *impiety* of “revealing” them did not consist in saying something that was not generally known.

The Mysteries formed a climax of religious experience where the worshipper was concerned with her salvation as a singular individual. But the singular individual remains an abstraction in the ethical order of True Spirit; and the Mysteries are concerned with the singular self only as a natural life. So whereas Hegel underlines the anticipation of the Incarnation in the Hymn, he takes care now to underline the *difference* between the symbolic purification of the body for the Eleusinian Mysteries of the Bread and Wine, and that purification of heart for the Mass which filled Luther with such terror after his ordination. The Eleusinian purification is ceremonial only; and the experience is imaginative only.

“On account of its abstraction, [the purified soul] is not the consciousness that distinguishes its object from itself, and so it is only the night of its being-there and the *place made ready* for its shape. Hence the *abstract cult* raises the self to the point of being this pure *divine element*.” These are the difficult sentences in this paragraph. First, we should notice that Hegel speaks consistently of the *Seele*. Scientifically, this means the “life-principle”; and that is what it meant for the Greeks; what Christians refer to as the “soul” is in Hegel’s science “the Self.” The *Seele* acts consciously, but it is not yet the “Self” of the “Beautiful Soul” (as Hegel goes on to tell us).³² The Greek mystic soul has natural being (*ist ein Seiendes*), but in the mystic purification it *forgets* (becomes unconscious of) its status in the world. It is only the principle of natural life, “the night of its *Dasein* [as the self]” and the “place made ready” for the spiritual “shape” that it will self-consciously assume in the “living work of art,” and above all in the spiritual work of Art. But Hegel emphasizes the expression “*bereitete Stätte*” because it is an anticipatory echo of the *Christian* “mysteries”; in that returned form, it is the *Beautiful Soul* that is the “place made ready”; and the “objective *Dasein*” that it is ready for is the “body of Christ.”³³

The “purification” achieved in the abstract cult of the Art-Religion is the first “station” of the Soul on the way upon which it “purifies itself for the life of the Spirit” (par. 77). We have already seen that the tragedy implicit in the antithesis between statue and hymn, is the experience of the Absolute Spirit as Sense-Certainty. But we ought to have said “sense-certain Self-Consciousness,” since the Absolute Spirit as simple Consciousness is experienced in the Nature Religions. It is the Light-Essence in its transcendent *otherness* of which Sense-Certainty can say only that “It Is.” With the Art-Religion as cult, we enter the “homeland of Truth”

where the Absolute ceases to be transcendent and makes its first appearance in its proper shape (as the "I that is We, and the We that is I").

In the religion of the Light-Essence it was Consciousness that was the determining or defining moment. Now it is Self-Consciousness; but for this free Self, its naturally finite being (*Dasein*) is a dark unknown, still hidden in the "night of the Self." For this natural principle of self-consciousness, for this "soul," its body is a *thing* to be used freely. But its "first experience" was the discovery that body and soul are inseparable partners who must march together on the way of "purification for the life of the Spirit." The washing and adornment of the body for the mystic sacrifice—which was, of course, a banquet—makes *it* the "prepared place" for the appearing of the Spirit. The "I that is We, and the We that is I" is about to make its appearance in real life, as the *Volk* in its Games, Processions and Poetic Festivals; so the mystic "preparation" of the body is here put into its logical place. But it is only a preparation of the body—the conscious "object" of Self-Consciousness.

Hegel's initial reference to the Eleusinian Mysteries as the *practical* transcendence of Sense-Certainty through consumption and enjoyment, and as a step towards "absolute knowledge" which even the animals make (par. 109), falls into place at this point. The Mysteries "teach the truth about sensuous things"; specifically, they teach the true relation between the animate body and other things. *Abstractly*, on the other hand, the soul prepares itself for the long, hard discipline of the way ahead. But it is joyful, not grim or despairing.

- 18./716. The Mystery is a *secret* one in its first aspect. The worshipper must go forth and *live* the truth of it. The descent of God in the cult must become public and actual.

"Only at first," says Hegel, "is this cult something secret." Its secrecy is identical with its abstraction. To speak of what is experienced in the Mysteries was impious, not because the content of the experience should not be revealed, but because "speech" was absolutely the *wrong* way to reveal it. In the mystic cult it is "secretly experienced" in the mode of speech; and the cult is quite democratic; no true Greek is barred from it. But the true meaning of the linguistic experience (which is the *Vorstellung*, the imaging of a life of "purification"), is a life of active commitment. One must not talk about it, because it has to be lived. The purpose of the *Vorstellung* is to aid the initiate to rise into *pure* self-consciousness, i.e. the awareness of union with the divine, or universal self-consciousness. The descent of the Goddess into the singular consciousness, which takes place momentarily and transiently in the Hymn, must now be made actual in our lives. It is to be shown forth in action. The body, as the "place prepared" for the Absolute Spirit, becomes its dwelling place in truth. The worshipper freely gives her *life* to the statue. The Goddess has life, in the way that the worshipper has it, i.e. as a natural self-consciousness. She is "the soul," the life-principle, of her community.³⁴

- 19./717. For the single self-conscious agent the natural world is for his use; for the worshippers, however, Nature (as living) is divine. In *actual* cult, God is actualized, because the finite self is sacrificed to Him, while finite Nature is sacrificed to the self. The

action (of Sacrifice) has the double motion of sublating the abstractness of God into actuality, and raising the actual worshippers into universality.

It is interesting to see how in the experience of Absolute Spirit, the reality of finite experience reappears *both* preserved in its natural shape, *and* inverted by sublation. Hegel knew that the most important actual event of the Mysteries was the “sacrifice.” So, by putting what he knew about Greek sacrifices together with his interpretation of the purification rite, he produces the requisite circularity of the properly religious experience.

The “night” of the natural self that has not yet descended into itself, is the order of nature out of which the immediate Ego has risen, and to which it has opposed itself. In the finite perspective, this “infinite” order of nature is just a mass of problems and utilities. But as the “true Infinite” it is immortally alive; and as such it is divine. The natural self-consciousness recognizes itself in this “infinity”; and Nature itself is the Absolute Spirit which the naturally “self-conscious” (or free) community incarnates.

For the natural self-consciousness, Nature, the whole *world* of Consciousness, now has two opposite meanings. It is subordinate, merely instrumental; and it is superordinate, it is divine. The union of the worshipper with God is the resolution of this contradiction; for in its union with God, the soul becomes entitled to use finite nature for its own purposes. This resolution of the finite in the Infinite—as both “identity” (the Earth-Mother) and difference (her mortal children)—is what is portrayed in the sacrifice. The natural self-consciousness devotes itself to God (in the *Vorstellung* of “purification” which is to be lived out); and so it can participate with God in the enjoyment of finite life, and of its inorganic environment. This whole cycle is necessary in order that the divine, the infinite life itself, may become actual as experience.

- 20./718. This ceremonial sacrifice must therefore begin with a deliberate *wasting* (wine poured on the ground, flesh burned). Then the Gods themselves are eaten and drunk in their symbolic animal (for the upper powers) and real vegetable (for the underworld) forms. By the eating the worshippers show that *they* are the God’s higher form. Only when sacrificing to Hades is anything wholesome allowed to go to waste [the wine poured out]; otherwise what is wasted is only what is unusable. Thus sacrifice mainly asserts the union of man and God.

In the sacrificial rite a libation of wine was poured out on the ground, as the share of the Gods below; and the surplus fat, with the entrails and bones, was burned on the altar, for the enjoyment of the Gods above. But almost everything edible, or potable, was consumed by the worshippers. The Greeks were themselves conscious that there was something rather paradoxical about the claim that they were sacrificing “to the Gods.”³⁵ Hegel’s doctrine of the divine incarnation resolves the paradox.

Abstractly (or in thought), the return of what the community cannot use to Earth and Sky, expresses in an image the fact that everything, both natural and

human, belongs to the divine infinity of Life. The perishing of what we eat and drink, together with our own eating and drinking, are "reflected into the Universal." The worshippers are conscious that they belong to Zeus above, and to the Mother and the Daughter below³⁶ as absolute property. They are living *things*, perceptibly endowed with being-for-self (i.e. with freedom of choice); but as self-conscious mortals they recognize themselves to be produced by, involved in, and completely dependent upon, an *infinite* (i.e., immortally cyclic) life-process.

In the sacrifice God and man "die" for one another. But the prophetic anticipation of the mutual surrender in the Crucifixion is only symbolic. The sacrificial animal is a living thing like the worshippers. They have cared for it, and it belongs to them (as property). But it represents the God(dess) and in a spiritual sense it belongs to her. The animal eaten is the recognized *symbol* of the free spiritual life of the Olympians, and of their politically devoted children.

In the case of the bread and wine, the identity is closer on both sides. This is already food and drink, the actual sustenance of our mortal bodies; and it came directly from the "secret and cunning" life force of the everliving and fertile Earth itself. The Earth is the universal grave in which the seeds die, so that the plants may grow; and the worshippers will all find their last resting-place in her. In the sacrifice to the powers of natural life and death, therefore, there is no deceit. They share directly in what they gave. Our labor and skill does not go into cheating them. We begin the sacrifice by pouring some of the wine that we have made upon the ground; and whatever does not burn away on the altar, returns directly to the Earth.

It is the Olympians who have only a *symbolic* share (the smoke that rises to Heaven); for the free community itself consumes the *real* share of the Olympian Gods. The pattern as a whole reflects the fact that although the sacrifice, with the recognition and resulting incarnation of the Gods, is the free act and life-work of the human community itself, this community with its spiritual knowledge and creative activity could never have existed if the infinite order of nature were not already organized in the "cunning" way that generates finite life and rational consciousness. Humanity becomes the self-consciousness of the Spirit, by its own creative act; but it becomes the self-consciousness of nature, by Nature's own gift.

"The divine substance" (i.e. the ethical substance, the *polis*) is sacrificed really, rather than "abstractly," through the City's living service to the Goddess (which goes as far as the laying down of life by the young men who fight for her); but the divine "essence," which is the "truth" of life as Nature, "is sacrificed already *an sich*." The Gods take *shape* as the food we eat; and we owe them a death in some ethical shape.³⁷

The actual enjoyment of the feast is the moment when everything comes together. The transient, sense-certain, aspect of things is consumed; and the self-certainty of the community is both realized, and naturally sustained. By making the most ordinary and necessary act of life into a communal religious experience—by eating and drinking in the presence of the Gods and on their behalf, with gratitude and rejoicing—the community feels and expresses its unity with God.

- 21./719. So far, however, the cult is mainly devotion. Its universal significance exists for thought only. But in the building of the temple and its decoration everyone participates. All can bring offerings (not just the artists); and the temple is not just God's place but everyone's. The festivals are festivals of the *Volk* and of the families.

This religious cult (in the ordinary sense of the word) is "abstract" because it is consciously distinguished and separated from ordinary life. But the explicit function of distinguishing it as "the worship of the Gods" is to make a reflective (or thoughtful) statement about the relation of humanity, in its ordinary life, to the Gods. The "cult" is the open declaration that our whole natural and human existence—i.e. whatever freedom we can secure from the necessary round of maintaining life—is freely devoted to the service of the Gods.

The real significance of this thoughtful declaration (made verbally in the singing of hymns, and "secretly" or inwardly in prayer and mystic ceremonies, but understood perfectly clearly by everyone) is in the effect that it has upon actual life. Whether we mean what we say and sing, is tested at every point where there is opportunity to show it; and in the "ethical order" there are some easily identifiable testing-times. Men, young and old, must go to war; and their womenfolk must support their resolve, not hold them back. The rich regard it as the supreme advantage of wealth, that they can provide ships for the City's defence; and to be called on to provide a chorus (i.e. to put on a play) for a poet at one of the festivals is the highest social honor for them in time of peace.

This brings us to the circular concretion of the "abstract work of art." The "abstraction" of the Cult from ordinary life requires a mass of real things and resources. Temples must be built, statues not only carved (that is a divinely privileged task) but paid for (and anyone who has "freedom" in a monetary sense can do that). Processions must be organized and mounted, choruses and actors dressed and paid during the rehearsal time, etc. In the peacetime existence of the City, the regular practice of the Cult itself becomes an important medium for demonstrating in actual life the seriousness of one's declarations in devotion; and the Temple treasury was the public reserve for all military and economic emergencies.

When Athens became an imperial power under Pericles, with all of the disposable economic resources that that produced, he embarked on a great programme of "public works" for the beautification of the City. These public works were mainly the temples; and everyone could and did join, according to their differing abilities, in the building and adornment of them. Citizens dedicated all kinds of things; Heracleitus dedicated his book to Artemis, by depositing it in the great temple of his native Ephesus. So when we read Hegel's calmly scientific generalities about "the cult being the common or singular task that everyone can perform" we must linger with his words, reflecting on what they actually mean in the objective "phenomenology" of the Art-Religion—that is to say, its historical blooming in the "Fifty Years" which were its moment of perfect "appearance." The City of Athens had a social welfare system, sustained by its "allies"; and those who needed the welfare support had what was universally recognized as the most important of all work to do—they decided the cases brought to court. It is no great wonder that

Pericles, in spite of all his associations with “impiety” (both as free thought and as “unethical” modes of life), was impregnable in the Assembly against all of his more conservative opponents.³⁸

The best paradigm of the Cult as a “singular” task (i.e. a family responsibility) is offered by Cephalus (in the opening pages of Plato’s *Republic*). He illustrates the complex equality of “recognition” in the “natural” society that has passed over to ethical “freedom,” because he is a free Greek, but not an Athenian citizen. He and his family are “metics,” or resident aliens. He is a rich man, well able to pay his debts, both personal and social, and ethically secure, because he is conscious of having always paid them. We can logically infer, as he leaves us to “attend to the sacrifices,” that being a model of “justice” as he understands it, Cephalus is going now to do his part in the welcoming of the new Thracian goddess Bendis, to the city of his hosts. Socrates, Thrasymachus, and Plato’s brothers will all be participants in this domestic ceremony, when the feast is ready. The fortune that Cephalus has inherited and increased is that of a shield-maker; and the great war with Sparta has begun. But the Fire still burns brightly in Plato’s Cave; and this is what its private happiness was like.

Before we go on to chapter VII B(b), we should pause to consider what the “circle of the Abstract Work of Art” contains. In general, the Art-Religion is the “absolute” (i.e. communally rational) shape of “Self-Consciousness.” Thus the Abstract Work of Art is the circle of “natural Selfhood as the immediate self-consciousness of Life.” The actuality of the Art-Religion is the spiritual “Thing.” But in this first “abstract” phase we have noticed the particular importance of the moment of “sense-certainty” in the “perceiving” of the Absolute Self by its finite mortal members. At the level of Reason, we find ourselves in the sphere of “Reason as Observation” as far as the statue is concerned. But the presence of “Reason” is complex, for “Pleasure and Necessity” is certainly experienced here (emblematically by the artist, but universally in the Hymn and the Mysteries).

In the Art-Religion there is no “Individuality” except that of the City. So “individual” Reason is swallowed up in “True Spirit.” We can see that the Abstract Work of Art is just the first stage of the religious education by which the singular self is absorbed into the identical self of the Substance. It creates the God who is this universal self. We should notice that it is the “universality” of the Greek *Volk* that is emphasized at this stage, as much as or more than the “individuality” of the City. My solution for the formal problem is as follows:

Perception (First Moment: The Intuitable Ground)

The Self as *Satisfied Desire*: a) The Purely Immediate Ego (Statue)
 (Defining Phase) b) Self-conscious mediation (Hymn)
 c) The new Self (Mysteries and new life)³⁹

Observing Reason *finds* itself as a Thing (see pars. 349–350)

(The moments here are: (a) inorganic, (b) organic, (c) self-actualizing)

True Spirit A: The Ethical Order (The Olympian Order)

VII B(b): The Living Work of Art

In contrast to the religious Cult (which has “devotion” [Andacht] as its focus) there stands the direct expression of identity with God in the active life. This begins as an ecstatic identity with the powers of unconscious natural life, and moves through the self-conscious competition of the athlete, to the great public processions in which every citizen lives out the experience of identity with the divine subject of the City’s substance. (Among these processions, those of the drama festivals were especially important. So the Art-Religion unfolds as an unbroken continuum.)

(e) Religion as the Art of Life

22./720. This religious consciousness is quite unlike that of the [Jews, whose] Light-Essence is not spirit but an abyss in which their self-identity is lost, a Lord in whose sight no man living is justified. It is not yet monotheism [“abstract simplicity”]. Man *knows* himself in his God, but without the *depth* [of Jewish inwardness]. Instead, there is a relation of equal recognition.

There is no mistaking the intended contrast between the Greeks and the Jews in the first paragraph of Hegel’s discussion of the Living Work of Art. The topic of this section is going to be how every aspect of human political life is “lived *for* the Gods,” in so far as it can be set free from natural necessity. Here, the Jewish conception of “walking in the sight of the Lord” by following his Law provides the most obvious contrast. But the Jews actually remained invisible to the Greeks, just as their divine Lord remained invisible to themselves.

Yahweh was not the Divine Light of the Sunrise. He was the purely inward light of rational intuition. But from the standpoint of “natural Reason” that we have now reached, everything Hegel says is true about both of the “shapes” of the “Light-Essence.” This is because of the direct logical identity of opposites in the case of what is immediately “inner” (intellectual intuition) and what is immediately “outer” (sense-certainty, including all images and symbols). At the level of simple immediacy “thought” and “being” coincide directly. There is the transition (called “abstraction”) from the singularity of being, to the “universality” of thought. But the content is identical. Thus, now that we understand “abstraction,” we can recognize Yahweh as the abstract “thought” of the absolute *being*. He is the “It Is” of which we were visually conscious in the spiritual Religion of Sense-Certainty.

There is one significant difference (arising from the act of intellectual abstraction) between the Jews and those “Medes and Persians” who worshipped the “Light-Essence.” With the transition from Being to Thought, the Jewish people is conscious of *itself* as important to God. His choice of them, and their Covenant with Him, remains a mystery in the language of sublimity and “lordship” which they share with Zarathustra. But Yahweh is “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”; and hence we cannot properly say that He is *selbstlos*.⁴⁰ We are up against the paradox of the primitive principle of natural Self-Consciousness. Being blindly negative, primitive self-assertion does not have a *determinate* self to assert. As a

tribal God Yahweh is just the corresponding principle of blind self-assertion; but he is the *Universal* God, and hence not simply an “animal” God. (I hope this was already clear in the commentary on par. 689.)

Yahweh is the God of a people that *thinks*—the God of negative Reason, or the absolute expression of the Self that knows what Freedom is *negatively*. Hence Yahweh has no sensible shape; and what He promises to His people is the enjoyment of natural security *in freedom*. His people regard Him as the *absolute* Pharaoh; but his absoluteness involves the abolition of the Pharaoh in this world, the abolition of this world’s claim to absoluteness. In that aspect Judaism is a return to the Light-Essence. But because of the discovery of thought as absolutely negative, and of the Self as negative freedom, Judaism is a great advance into the *depths* of the “night” that enfolds the Light which it has returned to. The Jews were “preparing the place” for the Man of Sorrows just as the Greeks were “preparing the place” for his universal community.

Greek culture could never have produced the Man of Sorrows. He had to come from the world of the “Light-Essence”; and the Greeks had no concept of the *depth* of the Spirit as pure inwardness. We might perhaps hazard the guess that Hegel thought Abraham and Moses were less strictly “necessary” to the appearing of the Spirit than Homer and Sophocles. The Divine Man’s story would have come from somewhere in the world of the Sunrise, when it was needed (just as a prophet came from the Arabian desert nearly six centuries later). But this is only guesswork. Even if we think our guess about Hegel is good, we do not have to agree with him about the facts. The Science of Experience does not stand or fall by Hegel’s every reading of it (or mine). It is a quest for comprehension that involves *claims* about “historical necessity”; but the act of interpretation remains radically “free.”

In actual fact, Hegel seems to have held that the Jews were “necessary” to the appearing of the Spirit, because they are the original Unhappy Consciousness or the religion of self-rejection. It is certainly true that, because of their rejection of integration with the Gentiles, they were rejected by the Gentiles; and this meant that in the Roman Peace they were finally (though not for the first time) scattered. This *Diaspora* was functionally important for the spreading of the new universal Gospel; and the Gospel turned the Jewish experience of backsliding and repentance, into the doctrine of Original Sin as an inescapable “fate” of human freedom.

But to say that what was crucial for the early Christians in the Jewish tradition is definitive of the Jewish experience itself would simply be to make an arbitrary judgment *a priori*. The opposite judgment is equally possible. In the “thoughtful depth” of the Jewish experience, the universality of “reconciliation” is just as much implicit as the universality of “rejection.” If the impossibility of “justification” is vital to the Pauline conception of spiritual salvation, the Suffering Servant image is no less important to the Johannine conception of love; and in the circumstances of the Diaspora, how can we find any criterion for saying which was (or is) more important for the Jews themselves? They must be left to interpret their own tradition—whether in a Hegel-inspired way, like Franz Rosenzweig, or otherwise.

As for the Christian heritage, to say that the rejection of the natural world, and

the sublation of all dreams of natural happiness in the world, in favor of the “depth” of pure thought, was the highest moment reached in Judaism, does the Jewish tradition no dishonor; but to presume to decide that the sublation of the self, and of an earthly Messiah-King—which was logically required by that step—was simply *negative*, is a plain instance of “hardness of heart.” Faced with a forced option between the Pauline and the Johannine heritage from Judaism, the sincere Christian must side with John (and with the Second Isaiah). But the good Hegelian ought to say that the option itself is foolish, since both moments are necessary. By appearing to justify the Pauline view only, Hegel was implicitly supporting the thesis that the persecuted status of the Jews (in his own Christian world) was their own fault, because it expressed the righteousness of their own God. This is not the “truth” of his philosophy, any more than it is the “truth” of the Jew called Jesus of Nazareth. So Hegel’s claim that Judaism is the religion of simple *self-rejection* must be rejected as conceptually inadequate.⁴¹

Jewish “depth” is radically ambiguous, because it is abstractly immediate. Greek culture is immediate in another way. It lacks depth precisely because it sees the identity of the two opposites (the identity that Abraham and Moses so strenuously denied) and puts them together immediately. So the Greek “fate” has the tragic finality of a direct “contradiction.” The negative meaning of pure thought is immediately expressed in the positive freedom of artistic creation. The Greek expression of the divine in Art is a form of “absolute knowledge”; and because it is explicitly *self-knowledge*, it is the immediate existence of Spirit *as* Spirit, the first mode of knowledge that can be called “absolute” in a concrete sense. “The *essence* is *immediately unified with the self*.” God is here *incarnate* in his community for the first time.

- 23./721. The whole people, not just the artist, knows its individuality in God. The sun of Heaven has set in the satisfied life of a self-conscious *Volk*. Selfless nature sacrifices itself to a nature that is selflike: the Earth-Spirit flourishes with its feminine and masculine sides.

Because the community is self-consciously identical with its Gods, Hegel can legitimately say that in the abstract Cult of the Greeks “Self-Consciousness is satisfied in its essence.”⁴² Athena is incarnated in Athens; and the Earth-Mother and Daughter in the Hellenes. Zeus himself enters into his habitation (by the grace of Pheidias) at Olympia. This “habitation” is not now the temple and the statue, however, but the “place prepared” in the hearts of the people. Every initiate in the mystic Cult incarnates the Gods; but she does it, here and now, in actual flesh and blood. Pheidias incarnated the divine in the making of the statue; he was inspired. But the tension of that effort ends when Zeus sits enthroned at Olympia; worshipping in the temple Pheidias has the same contemplative experience as the rest of the community. That is the “Truth” made possible by the creative “abstraction” of the work of art out of the routine of life. Now, in the new moment, everyone issues forth from the temple to make their devotion count in their lives (just as Pheidias did in his workshop, before the statue was there to contemplate). This is the

pathos—the “suffering” of the “Light” that is now contained in the dark Temple of their inward selves. They return to their daily life “from the *Anschauung*, and from the *aufgehoben* objectivity” of their contemplative devotion.

Hegel explains (or, if you prefer, he develops) his metaphor of the “night of the Substance” by saying that it is “the divine light of the Dawn that has *set* within itself, and has Self-Consciousness (its *sunset*) within itself, and hence it has [finite] being [*Dasein*] and actuality.” The inward realm of the self remains unexplored, unilluminated; it is a “place prepared,” but it is still dark. The self has *Dasein*, it is there for itself in the world of daylight; it can act and be actual. But it is still dark (like the inwardness of the stone statue) until it expresses itself through the activity of the body, and becomes visible to the senses. To be is not to be perceived (as *Dasein*), but *sich vorstellen*, to make oneself perceptible in an image. The Living Work of Art is human life as “playing for the Gods.” The Gods now assume the spectator role of the Self as “the Other,” the role that was played by the worshippers in the Abstract Work of Art. The self-conscious structure is that of “equal recognition”; and for this reason the moment of Observing Reason is inverted but preserved by the alternation of the roles. Reason now *finds* itself as the self-producing of finite being and actuality. The fact that the stance of Observation is conserved transforms the finite *Gestalt* of Self-Actualizing Reason which is the moment here determined.

What is shown forth, *manifested* like an intelligible force of nature, or revealed to the self as its “self” is not yet the self as Spirit (absolute self-creation “from nothing”), but the natural self in its free self-expression as a physical agent. The Gods have given the people their daily bread and wine; the people now display to the Gods what can be made of that gift. It is the Earth-Spirit, or Dionysus and the Mother and Daughter of Eleusis, who come to their perfect shape of free expression at this stage. Zeus and the Olympians must wait, still, for the artist and the people to come together in the highest *kind* of “play”—the *drama*—as the final consummation. Even the Daughter’s consort, Hades himself, must wait; for “the living work of art” is a celebration of *life* not a reconciliation with death; and Hades, as the brother of Zeus, is Pluto, the last of the Olympian Twelve.

This is the moment of natural Life raised into its religious absoluteness—the peaceful “plant-religion” at its moment of self-conscious perfection. The principle of free self-assertion (which is masculine in its finite context, but not in the “darkness” of the home, or in the religious Daylight of the Spirit, as any objective observer of the Olympian Twelve can see) is here in both of its sexual shapes, moving blindly towards its death and resurrection. Dionysus, the masculine spirit of the “natural fermentation” that Hegel refers to here, is as much a destroyer of life as an enhancer of it.

- 24./722. Thus the enjoyment of the sacrifice reveals the meaning of the mystery. God and his world are for our enjoyment. The secret only needs to be recognized and proclaimed.

The mystery of the Sunrise at dawn (and implicitly the first mystery of the resurrection of the Spirit) is just the “knowledge” that all animal life has, and which

only some forms of human ascetic piety and moral theory have forgotten—that life is to be *enjoyed*. The mystic banquet of Eleusis (unlike the purely symbolic scrap and sip to which it is reduced in the Eucharist) makes this statement plainly. It is the Christian sacrament of the Bread and Wine that conceals its meaning, and is a “mystery” in that sense. The preachers of the Beautiful Soul theology claim that the secret is “manifest to Reason and to the heart.” But in all the verbal flood of their piety, it is still a secret because it is not lived out by anyone except Julius and Lucinde. The mystic sacrament of Eleusis, on the other hand, is a full and concrete act of life-enjoyment. The Aristophanic Dionysus can smell the roast pork; and we know that his own contribution to the festivities will flow freely.⁴³ It is in the celebration of the Mysteries that the abstract work of art *comes to life*; and the gift of Bacchus is the main agent of its release in the “darkness” of subconscious existence.

25./723. What has to be recognized is the many faceted force of life. This is Bacchic ecstasy.

Light and darkness are naturally necessary to each other. Finite Consciousness (and Self-Consciousness) is a “light shining in the darkness.” This darkness does not “comprehend it”; but it can be comprehended by it, for as the “night of the Self,” it is the unrealized potential of Reason. The light of Life must become the light of subjectivity and comprehend the darkness of Nature; that is what the Greeks got right. The identity of the “universal light” with “life” in all of its particular variety, is spoken of in the first chapter of John. But the identity of spiritual life with natural life is not spoken of; on the contrary, it is implicitly denied.

Hegel expects us to pick up this implicit echo of the Christian Gospel by ourselves, and there are three explicit echoes of other moments within the Science of Experience itself. The first is an evocation of the marriage-syllogism as the actual balance of the Ethical Order in paragraph 463. Like Plato, Hegel seems to have believed that wine brings the unconscious forces of instinct into the light of consciousness. That is why the cult of Dionysus is associated with the Goddesses of Nature. The “*woman's* syllogism” (the “upward movement of the law of the Underworld to the actuality of the daylight and to conscious thereness” [par. 463]) is recalled here as the “movement upwards out of its night-like buriedness into consciousness.” But this is one side of the total syllogism of the marriage bond; so the “*simple essence*” here is the Ethical Order as the object of identification in feeling.

The second echo is both further away and closer at hand. We have to understand the “mysteries of the bread and wine” as the Greeks did (par. 109). The “*inspiration*” of wine, in particular, teaches us that the life of nature *generates* the light into which it comes; and that the return of natural life to the darkness of instinct (and to death) is essential to that generative activity. The fermentation of the pressed grape and the drinking of the wine is here presented by Hegel as a *Vorstellung* of this mystery. In drinking the wine the celebrant becomes possessed by the God; but in the same measure the Spirit (masculine “I” and feminine “We”) descends from self-consciousness into the darkness of subconscious animal existence. The cult of Bacchus is the Plant and Animal-Religion in its fulfilled (or reconciled) shape.

The third echo is both the furthest away and the most direct. Hegel calls the Bacchic dance-troupe “the untamed revel [*Taumel*] of life in self-conscious form.” When he turns back to write the Preface he will say that Truth itself “is the Bacchic revel in which there is no member that is not drunk” (par. 47). This makes it very clear that the *self-conscious* character of the group is important; for Hegel does not want to identify Truth with the “dark night in which all the cows are black” (par. 16). Drunkenness is not a normal condition of “self-consciousness.” But the drunkenness of this “revel” has been freely chosen, and deliberately embarked upon. The full horror of the tragedy in the *Bacchae* of Euripides springs from the fact that Queen Agave has clashed consciously and violently with her son Pentheus about her adherence to the new God, before she and her troop kill him in their transported condition of enthusiasm. Here, the Sphinx takes her revenge upon Oedipus. The memory of *this* “sacrifice” (and of its self-conscious context) is essential to the contrast that Hegel makes with the Christian sacrament in paragraph 724.

- 26./724. But it is only the secret of spirit as Nature, only the living self of family life that is so far revealed. Finite spirit must still sacrifice its self-consciousness for its resurrection as Absolute Spirit [the *tragic* life-play for the Olympians, and beyond that the mystery of the Passion].

What has been revealed so far is still only “the absolute spirit that is this simple essence”—i.e. the essence of the *polis* as a community of natural kinship, the community whose “element” is the Family, and whose “simple essence” is the double movement of the “syllogism of marriage” (pars. 460, 463). It is the Eleusinian mystery of the bread and wine that is revealed, not yet the mystery of the flesh and blood. That higher mystery, too, will be celebrated and tragically revealed in the Art-Religion. Its revelation involves the deliberate and willing acceptance of death by the natural self-consciousness. But at present, this natural self is only preserving its own health and integrity by its voluntary surrender to self-forgetfulness in the subconscious darkness of animal existence.

Spirit recognizes itself *as Spirit* in the epic, and in tragic drama. Here natural life is not lived, but *portrayed* as a free sacrifice of self-conscious individuality “for the Gods.” This linguistic representation of the meaning of human life is the Greek Eucharist, the open “mystery of the flesh and blood.” In the epic, and the tragic drama, we have the finite life of the human heroes resurrected “absolutely” (or as Spirit) in the spiritual independence of a work of art which exists for everyone who will learn the *language* of this people and its Gods. The artist expresses spirit *as* spirit, the actuality that must “make itself” in order to *be* at all; and the medium she uses is the one of which we must all be master in order to be human spirit at all. It is only thanks to this “mystery of the flesh and blood” that we can properly comprehend the “mystery of the bread and wine.” Without Aristophanes and Euripides we would be almost helpless here. The “Bacchic revel” is the

essence of Truth, at its very “simplest”; but we no longer celebrate this “mystery” of “pure enthusiasm” ourselves.⁴⁴

- 27./725. The unstable revel of life must be stabilized as a living human “object.” Man can celebrate his service of God, although God cannot be completely incarnated in finite life. The *processions* are the democratic-universal aspect of this. But victory in the Games is the artistic level of expression for it.

In the “enthusiasm” of drunkenness, we experience the “infinity” of the “pure Ego.” But this must be inverted into the experience of self-control. Drunkenness cannot literally be the meaning of life for the self-consciousness that surrenders to it. It can be recognized as necessary and hence “divine.” But the imperative of Pentheus (in the *Bacchae*) cannot finally be lost. He perishes as a moment, because in seeking to assert that Reason is “the whole,” he is ready to deny that “enthusiasm” is a moment of life at all. But the assertion that “Truth is the Bacchanalian revel” does say *more* than the converse form “The Bacchanalian revel is truth.” So it is the proper way to express what Pentheus failed to grasp. “Truth” is the Bacchanalian revel that fully comprehends itself. It is the *Bacchae* of Euripides rather than the *Bacchae* of Dionysus.

It can only become this comprehended wholeness, however, by regaining self-possession gradually. In the very first step the wild dance must become a disciplined physical activity that is self-consciously controlled by its devotion to the Gods. But, of course, no control of the body can be *identical* with the divine—at best, the living body can only stand in for the God, in the abstract way in which the statue does. Thus, Zeus presides over the great Games held in his honor every four years at Olympia in Elis. Here the victors in the contests, being physically their own work of art, are celebrated and honored in the way that the Athenians would not allow Pheidias to honor himself or be honored. The first universal calendar that the Greeks possessed was based on the recorded names of those who won the foot-race at Olympia. But they were mortals who died in their time; and their names were soon reduced to numbers.

To be an Olympic victor was certainly a privileged relation to Zeus. But the Games (and all festivals that involved processions, beginning already with the Eleusinian Mysteries) were democratic celebrations of our human devotion to the Gods. Anyone can be a torch-bearer, as Hegel says; and Sophocles was only fifteen when he led the chorus that greeted the Athenian contingent—Aeschylus among them—returning victorious from the battle of Salamis.

Of course, we would not know these facts if Aeschylus and Sophocles had not done divine service of another kind. The religion of art is the expression of an *aristocratic* ethics. We do not know the names of the sculptors who carved the Panathenaic Procession for us (in the Parthenon frieze) any more than we know the names of their ordinary Athenian models. But we know the name of Pheidias; and the Greek calendar began as it did because the names of the Olympic victors were carved in stone. The living victor was crowned with the God’s wreath and given a

civic reception, just as our great sporting victors still are. In this respect, the “absolute Religion” has already repossessed its phenomenology perfectly.⁴⁵

- 28./726. Neither Bacchic ecstasy nor self-celebration in the Games is a balanced relation of recognition. The two must be united in one. The medium for this unity is speech. *Literary* art is where man self-consciously expresses the meaning of his devotion as embracing the whole of his human being; so it is the dramatic festivals that are the full expression of this religion. But the victorious athlete is the moment of transition from nature to universal humanity.

The Bacchic enthusiasm incarnates life as transcending the self. The victorious athlete incarnates the Spirit in its finite living movement. But the Games directly invert “enthusiasm” by exalting the singular embodiment of life above the universal continuum that sustains it. Only in *language* does the relation between the inward universal significance and the outward singular agent become perfectly balanced. There were poetic contests at Olympia, so the displaying of the Art-Religion was as continuous in historic reality, as it is in Hegel’s scientific exposition. Just as the institution of sacrifice, and the Eleusinian Mysteries enabled him to pass from the “abstract” work of art to the “living” work of art, without a break, so the Olympic Games enable him to pass from the “living” work to the “spiritual” work in an unbroken flow in which the philosophical discussion simply portrays the actual world of consciousness. Nowhere is our “observation” more purely contemplative than here.

In making the transition to language as the *spiritual* medium for the aesthetic expression of the divine, it is important to see what the differences are between the linguistic forms of worship that we have already encountered and the linguistic form of the Spirit. For the Oracle (which is the linguistic expression of the divine in natural religion) the distinction is easy. On the one side, those who come to the Oracle have specific and contingent problems; while on the other, the God expresses *himself* spontaneously, in proverbial aphorisms such as “Know thyself” and “Nothing too much.” But the inequality of the *sides* is patent. Whether it is given to *all* or to *this one*, the Oracle belongs to the God and only to him (as Oedipus finds to his cost).

Also, although Hegel does not remark on this here, the language of the priestess at Delphi is the same delirious babble as that in which Dionysus manifests himself through his dancers. In order to be responsive to the needs of the petitioners, the God’s utterances need to be interpreted; while his proverbial wisdom comes from the first recognized philosophers (the Seven Wise Men) and has received the divine stamp of approval through those same interpreters. The mediating third is essential.

In what he says about the “Hymn” it is clear that Hegel wants to make the continuum perfect. On one side, the continuum with the epic songs, to which we are about to pass, is obvious. It is the difference, or inequality, that is subtle. The Hymn belongs to the God and to all of his worshippers together, but to no one in particular. It is biographical (it deals with the God and his deeds); and if humans

are involved, their position is that of patients. They receive rewards and punishments. The Epic too, belongs to everybody, but there are *human* heroes. The War (or the Return of the Heroes) is fought out on two levels, and both are equally essential. It is clear that the Gods can achieve nothing without the devotion of the warriors on the plain of Troy itself.

On the other side, Hegel conceives of the hymn as originating in a spontaneous outpouring of the natural feelings of the worshipping community. It “remains at the level of feeling.” All that distinguishes it from the babble of the Pythia is that we know what it means directly, so that we can enter into it immediately, without the need of an interpreter. We sing it with the emotions that the words themselves signify and generate.⁴⁶

The strangest thing Hegel says about the Hymn is that it “praises only the singular God.” We might say as much about some of the Choral Odes in tragedy; but if we react like that we shall miss the point. When the literary artists turn their attention from the Gods to the human heroes of epic and tragedy, the action becomes completely “singular”; but the theme is now the *universal* spirit of humanity, not some *specific* aspect of human nature, such as the metal-working of Hephaestus or the hunting prowess of Artemis. We can see the transition in the Olympic victor. He wins glory for his City, and receives honor from his fellow citizens; but in emptying his nature out to the last ounce, he becomes a universally human figure.

The language of “the spiritual work of Art” has a content that is both *clear* and *universal*. “Clarity” is another quality that distinguishes it from the Hymn. For what Hegel means by this clarity, is that the symbolic and allegorical aspect of myth is overcome. The action of the story is human, and takes place in human terms. Heroes may suffer hallucinations like Ajax, and heroines may become frantic like Phaedra. But they know they are responsible for what they do.

The *universality* of the content springs from this “clarity” in which the human agent knows herself to be the only agent of the divine powers. Zeus sits enthroned at Olympia as the universal father both of the Greeks and of their Gods. At the Games, the Greeks were all brothers; the Olympic victor is the “universal man.” His own City honors him because all Greeks recognize this. The athlete forms a counterpart to the Beautiful Soul; he is the absolute Spirit poured out into a beautiful body.⁴⁷

In the Games, the masculine principle of “struggling for recognition” is harmonized into its naturally self-reconciled form. Those who are vanquished survive to applaud, to learn from, and be inspired by the victor—and perhaps to be victors themselves next time. In the Bacchant, Self-Consciousness freely subordinates itself to, and submerges itself in, the natural life-process. That is the “feminine” cycle of natural spirit—the tragedy in which the mother kills her son, the king. In the athletic victor we have the masculine cycle. Instead of spiritual self-loss in the body, we have the self-affirmation of the Spirit as free in the body.

But like the spiritual affirmation of natural death in the Crucifixion, this affirmation of natural life is the “emptying” of the spirit; it is one shape of what theo-

logians call God's *kenosis*. The athlete's victory is implicitly tragic because it is for this moment only. He is the "honor" of his City; but his victory is mute. It does not say what it signifies. "For itself" it is just a moment of glory, and it must pass away to make room for the next moment. Only the moment that can express itself in language can triumph over this emptiness by displaying what it means; and in doing that it triumphs over the transience of nature and the body. It becomes the properly substantial expression of Spirit. Zeus and his Olympian kindred can have their own heavenly kingdom (instead of a few days of strenuous existence at Olympia) in the Spiritual Work of Art; and in that apotheosis, they cease to be just the Gods of one *Volk* and become the Spirit of universal humanity.

It is much easier to identify the "circle" of this phase of the Art-Religion than it was in the case of the Abstract Work. The determining moment of Self-Consciousness is "Recognition"; and the reference is to the proper concept of "equal recognition" (pars. 179–181) not to the "experience" of unequal recognition that is crucial for the singular consciousness. At the level of Consciousness, we have a second moment of "Perception" where subjective sensation and objective being are in perfect agreement. Similarly, in Reason there is a perfect correspondence of Virtue and Custom (instead of the decadence of "the World's Way"); and in "True Spirit" we have an Ethical Action that expresses the Ethical Order without breaching it. Thus, in summary, we have

Perception: the Thing intuited in its Ground

Equal Recognition (a) Enthusiasm

(b) Bodily discipline

The beautiful fighter (Warfare in reconciled shape)

(c) The Judgment of Recognition (reconciled in the coming Syllogism of linguistic expression)

Rational Virtue maintaining Custom (compare par. 390—we can now see why this "aside" was needed)

Ethical Action: The Syllogism of Marriage (reconciling Divine and Human Law)

VII B(c): The Spiritual Work of Art

This is the stage at which the Olympian Gods achieve their proper prominence. (The Living Work of Art was divided equally between them and the gods of the Earth and the Underworld.)

There are three moments in Poetry and Drama as religious experience: Epic (the moment of the Volk as universal); Tragedy (the moment of the City and the Hero(ine) as particular); Comedy (the moment of the individual who is consciously Universal as a particular being—i.e. the appearing of the Concrete Universal).

As "spiritual" the work of art is distinct, but not "abstract." It is enjoyed universally, and it preserves its universal independence of meaning. But it contains and expresses the

whole of life. The Abstract Work expresses the whole symbolically; and in the Living Work we make our own bodily activities and exertions into a symbol of our devotion to the whole as particulars. But now we intuitively experience (and participate in) the life of the whole.

(f) *Epic Universality*

- 29./727. When the particular animal gods unite communally we have a pantheon that exists in the human element of language. The Greek peoples achieve their *universal humanity* in their common language when they undertake the Trojan War together. They are an ethical community, but not a political one. Everyone has immediate trust in his own *Volk*, and all participate in its decisions. This participation has to be set aside for the duration of the communal effort of the war.

The Olympian religion has its principal foundation in Homer (and secondarily in Hesiod). Herodotus—who says various dialectically conflicting things about Greek religion—says, in one place, that Homer and Hesiod created the “theogony” of the Greeks.⁴⁸ Actually, the “creation of the Gods” is a complex process in the evolution of communal consciousness. Thus, in the transition from naïve Understanding to “natural” (i.e. intuitively self-conscious) Reason,⁴⁹ it is the recognition of natural need and of the social structure that satisfies the need, which determines what Gods there are (as the necessary functional aspects of Life). Every “natural” community has a Mother Goddess; and those who have a War-God typically have a distinct Sex Goddess also; and so on.

But every natural community that manages to survive absorbs other communities; and when that absorption is by coalescence through free and equal mutual recognition, a different reason for the multiplication of the Gods comes into play. There has to be a communally shared religious structure for coalescence through recognition to happen at all; for it is at the level of “worshipping the same Gods” that intercommunal “recognition” takes place. Tribal communities whose ways of life, of subsistence, and of worship, are quite different must regard one another as “different animals”—especially when their differing relation to the environment encourages or necessitates conflict. But those who meet their needs in similar ways (hunter-gatherers or nomadic herdsmen in the same territory; agriculturalists farming the same soil etc.) can readily learn from one another, so that they “realize” their cultural identity before they “recognize” it.

This is the painless “flowing together of animal *Volksgeister* into one Spirit.” To unite warrior communities “freely” on the basis of this cultural recognition is the work of a *hero*. Hegel understood the political achievement of Theseus in Attica in this way from the first.⁵⁰ The common worship of the Olympians—and probably the hostile threat of the invading Dorians, who thought of their leaders as the “children of Heracles”—was a necessary presupposition for any such “political” achievement.

Long after the work of the heroes was done, there came the poetic genius who made the story of the Siege of Troy and the “wrath of Achilles” into the common

heritage of all who spoke the language, and worshipped the Twelve. Hegel seems to have accepted F. A. Wolf's view of Homer in a fairly strong form. The *Iliad* is the product of the communal genius of the Greek people. Many voices contributed to it. Some *one* bard (surely?) impressed upon it the unity of the "Wrath" theme. But the topic of the great collaborative war-expedition is the heritage of a many-voiced oral tradition; and the ethical ideal of life embodied in the heroes is that of a real society which has inherited this tradition. The bards (and their inspiring "Homer" whether he be myth or reality) portrayed this ideal, and made it more effective, by making it permanently present. Thanks to Homer the Greeks could never forget they were a family, however passionately they (and their divine models) might fight among themselves. But they were a family of independent communities. The "immortality" of the Gods pictured the immortality that was proper to the communities. The unity of the national family is a unity of natural feeling (and hence of religion); it is not the *made* unity of a political constitution. The Achaean community in Homer exists in the shape in which Athens probably existed even before Theseus appeared; and the model had a powerful religious import and validity for the community of completely political communities which came together to fight the Great King of Persia.

This community of "cities" is the community of True Spirit. Hegel is describing a family of fully political communities when he defines the *Sittlichkeit* of the "actual *Volksgeist*" as resting partly on religious feeling ("the immediate trust of the single [members] in the whole of their *Volk*") and partly on political practice ("the immediate participation of all, regardless of the diversity of their estates, in the decisions and actions of the government"). Each "single" member of the "whole *Volk*" will be a member of her "individual" community; but the move from the hymns of communal "identity" to the heroism of tragedy raises *religious* consciousness to the recognition that all of the cities are *Greek* cities, and the heroes are *human* heroes. Aeschylus can even set a tragedy in the *Persian* court.

Hegel's insistence on universal *participation* should not be taken simply in its Athenian democratic sense. It does certainly suggest the working superiority of the Athenian model; but even in Periclean Athens the opposition was politically alienated; they wanted a reform of the constitution which would recognize the variety of "estates." Hegel, like Plato, agreed that some mediation of participation was necessary.⁵¹ Like Aristotle, he holds that "citizens" must be "participants," but that they can participate in different degrees, and in a variety of ways.

In the Homeric situation, the "immediacy of participation" applies only to the heroic princes. In the politics of wartime, even at its most mature, only "trust" is effective; when Thersites speaks up for "democracy" in Homer, he is roughly handled. But every community had to participate "individually" in the resistance to Persia, just as the princes do in Homer. The Athenian "Empire" sublated this "individuality" (which the princes, with their powerful self-will, mythically portray). In the Epic every hero is the incarnation of his *particular Volk*, just as the Olympic victor is. Achilles and the Myrmidons are one and the same.⁵² This is the thread of logical continuity in Hegel's portrayal of how the Art-Religion "appears."

- 30./728. The life of the Gods portrays this situation. They are the substances of what their self-conscious (human) community is and does. To begin with, this essential unity is concealed under a friendly but external relation of Gods and Men. By this means the divine essence will return from substance into self-consciousness.

The assembly of the Gods on Olympus (in Homer) portrays this political situation in its primitive form, because "trust" is the foundation of participation, and religion, in this world of True Spirit, is the self-conscious awareness of "trust." The natural communities are "ethically obedient" to their Princes. Through the Olympian religion, this general pattern is extended to the natural environment. The Olympians govern the whole order of natural necessity, as well as incarnating the order of natural ethics. Their own society is one of "ethical obedience." The *Oberbefehl* of Zeus and Agamemnon (as contrasted with the *Oberherrschaft* of Ra and the Pharaoh) expresses itself in human terms as the "unwritten law," by which all political decrees and decisions ought to be bounded and constrained. The Spartans established *Herrschaft* over the Messenians; and because they had to live always, thereafter, with the clear awareness of what *Herrschaft* meant, and what it cost, they were not tempted to transgress the ethical limits of *Befehl* in their relations with their allies (as the Athenians did).

The "self-conscious essence" of which Hegel speaks is the political freedom of the individual community. The cities are self-consciously independent; every community goes its own way and defines its own constitution. They have different constitutions; and all of them have considerable populations in various forms of servitude. Thus, "ethical freedom" does not mean the same as Kantian moral freedom at all; but the Olympians as tutelary deities of the different cities are the religious Substance towards which the bond of absolute commitment and trust is felt. We must not make the mistake of supposing that only the free population shared in this "substantial trust." No one expected a serf to die for his loyalties; but serfs are praised and blamed (in Epic and Tragedy) for showing or not showing the "virtue" appropriate to their station; and the foundation of that "virtue" was even more obviously *loyalty* in the case of the bondsmen, than it was in the case of the free agents.

Without ethical loyalty the Gods would be impotent, because this is the source of their *Kraft*. Hence Achilles must somehow be persuaded to put his wrath aside; something must be done to heal his injured pride (without a new injury to the pride and authority of Agamemnon). Similarly, Zeus must bring his warring household to agreement. Each of the Gods has her favorites; and the virtues of the free man (especially the warrior) do not all harmonize readily under the supreme purpose of ethical trust and loyalty. Achilles would not be the great warrior that everyone recognizes him to be, without the proud temper that can brook no insult (even from his commander). Every hero has at least one of the Olympians on his side; and the multiplicity of virtues which this poetic image expresses, seems often to involve only the most contingent connections. The favor of Aphrodite is the simplest instance here, because the sort of gift that she can confer is so easily turned to

unethical uses. The war would never have started if her favor to Paris had not enabled him to seduce Helen.

We have to think about the Olympians in this *ethical* way, if we are to understand

the return of the divine essence into self-consciousness . . . which already contains the reason [*Grund*] why it [self-consciousness] forms the midpoint for those divine forces, and conceals the essential unity [of the divine and the human essence, or of substance and self-consciousness] for the moment, under the form of a friendly external connection of the two worlds.

The *unity* that is hidden by the poetic fiction of the Gods on Olympus is the ethical unity of self-consciousness, or the political ground of all virtue. This buried unity of God and man is the first stage in the return of the divine essence into humanity. The next stage will be the explicit assertion of “what the *self-conscious* essence *in itself* is and does.” At that stage the natural ethics of Antigone (represented by the Stoics) will be an illusion, the unwritten law will be the “law of the stronger,” and loyal commitment will be the “folly” that Thrasymachus declares it to be. For the moment it is Aphrodite who is, as always, wayward; and Paris and Helen are the deluded ones.

- 31./729. The artistic consciousness that expresses this relation thinks in images and creates Epic as the first linguistic medium for universal truth. The bard experiences this universe as *memory*, and his Muse sings directly through him. Through the heroes of the *Volk* the Bard is linked with the universal community of the Gods—the epic syllogism.

The “universality” of this religion of art is that of linguistic *Vorstellung*. “Set forth” (*vorgestellt*) in language the Epic Universal is the universal background (or the canvas, so to speak) of an imagined world. The poet *sings*, just as the community does in its Hymn; but she is creating a world of memory, not proclaiming the present glory of a god. This *Vorstellung*, or “exposition,” is defined by Hegel as “the synthetic tying-together of self-conscious and external *Dasein*.” Hector and Achilles are not ourselves; even for the schoolchildren of Periclean Athens they were very different beings “back then” in Homer’s account. But the account is in words; and those words have their being as meanings in the mind of the reader or reciter, whether it be the Athenian schoolchild, or the modern student of a translation.

But Hegel does not want to introduce a *written text* into his portrayal of the Art-Religion. He wants us to go back into the preliterate experience of those who heard the bards (and the illiterate experience of the mass audience for the dramas). At its “spiritual” level the Art-Religion was all “representation.” The bard was obviously a highly trained and skilled person—we can take the *Ion* of Plato as our paradigm, since Hegel was certainly familiar with him. *Ion* has learned his craft *by* reciting. He does not have books, or accept the concept of an authoritative text. He has good days and bad days; but on his good days “Homer” is in him; the audience can feel

it, because they are carried away too. When Apollo's Pythia speaks, the hearers are not carried away themselves; they can only watch in wonder, and some fear, as the priestess is transported out of their ken. But where the bard goes, they go too; his world is their world, brought back from far away and long ago by a divine power. The bard forgets himself, and they forget him and themselves. The moment of Bacchic "enthusiasm" returns in a perfectly human and "equal" shape.

The so-called "Homeric problem" has no meaning for the actual experience of "Homer" as folk-poetry. What matters is *this* song, *this* experience; we cannot even say "this *performance*" until we are reflecting upon it afterwards. For from a religious point of view, this song, sung now by this bard, is an experience of the Gods, through the recalling of the heroes. The song is about the heroes, and what they did, not about what the Gods did (or do). But it does seem to be about both parties, because it represents both in the same way, though in different worlds. The Gods, however, are "free universals." They are untouched by what they do or suffer. The heroes, though they become universals—for they live again in the universal medium of language—are *determinate*; they are bound and defined by what they do. They belong to this saga—not to every saga, like the Gods.

At this point, we need to inject a note on logical structure. Hegel speaks of the experience of Epic poetry as a "syllogism." The universal world of the Gods is linked with the particular world of human action through the singular inspiration of the bard (his Muse). The truly singular agent (the bard himself) disappears in the total experience (just as singular agency disappears everywhere in the Ethical Substance. But the bard no longer disappears into the unconsciousness of Nature, like the Bacchant. Rational human singularity is in the process of being formed.

This Epic syllogism of the "two worlds" is the first term of a "syllogism of development," which goes from the universality of the divine and human worlds to the conscious singularity of the comic actor, through the particular experience of the tragic hero in relation to a specific God; and when we comprehend *that* larger syllogism, the Epic syllogism itself will be seen as the Concept of the Ethical Order, which moves through the Judgment of Tragedy and Comedy, to the humanly universal Syllogism of the Manifest Religion.

- 32./730. Thus the epic *displays* what happens implicitly in the Cult. The peace of the Earth with its dead, is disturbed in order that they may be resurrected [*Odyssey* XI]. In the action the heroic leaders are the self-conscious aspect and the Gods are the substantial aspect. Because of their external relation in the imagination everything that happens is over-determined; both sides do the same things. The Gods are superfluous since they must act through the men. But humanly the losers at least are wasting their efforts (and the winners are needlessly anxious). Mortals both defy the Gods, and give them their actuality; but these seeming puppets on Olympus are also the natural stuff that is being fought over, and the ethical passions that motivate the fight. Win or lose the Immortals abide in their place, while the heroes *all* die.

Hegel uses one of the most remarkable adventures of the wily Odysseus (in the epic of the "Return") to express the action of the Bard. Odysseus himself belongs

to the older world of natural religion and ritual magic. He fed the shades with whom he wished to converse, upon a blood-sacrifice, so that they could return to life and speech. Ion does not need any natural means of this kind. His action is the purely spiritual activity of self-consciousness. He recites, and the peace of the Underworld is violated forthwith. "The departed spirits, thirsting for life, receive it in the act of self-consciousness," not in the natural mystery of flesh and blood. But of course the Bard does devote his whole being (as mortally finite flesh and blood) to his craft of resurrection.

This action of the Bard—"the essence that is conscious of itself"—"disturbs the peace of the substance and arouses the essence through which its simplicity is divided, and is opened up [*aufgeschlossen*] into the manifold world of the natural and ethical forces." Thus, what divides the substance into the natural and ethical orders is self-conscious Reason. Before the dawn of the Art-Religion, there was only the "order of nature." Humanity had some practical understanding of this order, but there was no awareness yet that it was to be used for the creation of an ethical order of free self-expression. Odysseus himself does not do his natural magic with any such consciousness.

The opening up of this division (between the natural and the ethical) creates a paradox, because the ethical order still has the natural order as its "substance." On the one hand, the human world (being spiritual) must make itself; while, on the other hand, since it is naturally substantial, it must be eternal. The paradox is imaginatively presented as a "*synthetic* tying together of the Universal and the Singular." In other words, the meaning is universal, but it is embodied in singular shapes; and the paradox of being both spiritual and natural at once, becomes two worlds that are put side by side "synthetically."

In each world "individuals" (i.e. not "singulars" but "universal-singulars," or "concrete universals") are the agents. The Gods appear to be agents, although they cannot really act, because they are not properly singular self-consciousnesses at all. They are the specific shapes of the Universal (i.e. they are logically Particulars, not Singulars). All they can do is what the true singulars—the mortal human heroes and their warrior-bands—do.⁵³ The Gods get their "individuality" only from the logical character of *Vorstellung*, in which a singular image represents a universal concept. In the poet's account, they are angry, they weep, or they fall about in uncontrollable laughter (an excess which Plato found particularly scandalous).⁵⁴ But all of this emotion is quite laughable in itself (rather than scandalous) we might say, because the Gods are in full charge of what the mortals do, and they cannot do anything except through the mortals. Also why should they be emotional about the outcome of the struggle since they are the Gods of both sides equally? (Why should Zeus weep, as he does, for the downfall and dishonor of Hector?)

On the human side, Hector and Andromache dramatize the tragic futility of carrying on the fight when you know that the Gods are against you. Hector knows that his resistance is doomed. Men must do the heroic things; but it is the Gods alone who dispose of their projects.

If we move to the other Epic, however, we can easily recognize, in the wily Odys-

seus, the ephemeral mortal who is “at the same time the mighty *Self* who brings the universal essences into subjection, injures the Gods, and procures for them in general, their actuality and an interest in the action.” With its concentration on a single figure, who loses his crew, and regains his kingship almost singlehanded, the *Odyssey* prefigures the final triumph of human “individuality.” But we must be careful here, for at this stage we are still witnessing the *birth* of the Ethical Substance; and what Hegel says is that “the ephemeral mortals” (collectively) “are at the same time the mighty *Self*.” Hence, we should go back to the case of Achilles and notice that his *wrath* “injures the Gods, and brings their essences into subjection.”

On the Trojan side, and more obvious still, there is Paris, who put himself forward to choose between the Goddesses, and set off the whole story by his choice of Aphrodite (in preference to the political wisdom of Athena, or the family guardianship of Hera). Achilles and Paris are the models that we need; here “the Gods” can be recognized as the dominating *passions* that drive “natural selves.” In the light of these examples, Odysseus can be recognized as the *single* “Self who brings the universal essences into subjection” because he has his passions under control. He is not the plaything of any spiritual *pathos*, but only of the forces of nature, and specifically of the sea; what is crucial is that he is not yet the single self who asserts himself *against* the social substance. The ethical unity of the Substance (the virtue of Zeus as king) is his guiding star.

- 33./731. Just as the Gods get into a contradictory relation with mortals, so their universal status comes into conflict with their specific character. They present the comic spectacle of fighting over things that don't matter, in spite of the fact that they cannot really hurt each other, or enter each other's proper spheres. They triumph over mortals, but their own struggles are either a joke, or reveal that they are finite selves subject to fate; and the universal self [of philosophical thought] hovers over them as a blind fate.

The philosophical inadequacy of paganism, which accounts for the eventual triumph of Christianity, can be summed up by saying that the Gods both are, and yet cannot be, “true selves.” They are ethical ideals of nature harmonized in beauty; but the living human nature that generates them remains obstinately selfish and self-willed (both meanings are probably contained in Hegel's *selbstisch*, but the second is more important, because a “nature” that is “selflike” is one that has *selfhood* as its goal, not some other contingent desire).

The Gods are the universal “elasticity” of life. They are ethical motives that never perish. But their “elementary natures” are “brought into actuality and into activated relationship by the free self of individuality” (par. 730). What is displayed by the conflict between “universality” and “particularity” in the divine natures, is the untruth of the claim that the *polis* is a “complete and self-sufficient” whole. Within the “ethical individual” (i.e. the heroic leader) these “elemental natures” appear as the self-willed passion (or *pathos*) that reveals the presence of some particular Immortal. So the opposition between “ethics” and “nature” is a contradiction within the Gods themselves.

The Gods are bound to quarrel. One might think that the devotion of Hippolytus to Artemis was so complete as to make him safe from harm or wrong.⁵⁵ But Euripides shows us that his obsession with hunting is connected with his hatred of Aphrodite, who motivates adultery, and so makes nobly ambitious young men like himself *bastards*. When Phaedra's secret is revealed to him, his puritanical reaction is so violent that she believes suicide by itself will not suffice to keep her secret. Hence she explains her suicide with a lie that is credible to Theseus (who has no unnatural antipathy for Aphrodite); and Artemis keeps the peace of Olympus by sacrificing her votary. Hippolytus dies at her hands, as well as Poseidon's, because he has the devoted hunter's confidence that he can control his horses.

Euripides does not let the Gods themselves quarrel. But Artemis has to suffer loss, in order that Aphrodite may triumph over all. In Homer, of course, the Gods behave like wilful children; and the spectacle is, as Hegel says, *comic*. Plato found it scandalous; but from the perspective of the modern era, we can see that it was tragic. It is for this reason that Hegel here introduces the "invincible divine force" of the fate against which not even Zeus can fight. But he means us to linger with the comic aspect first.

The first aspect of this divine comedy is that because their "*determinacy* is rooted in their divine permanence, and has in its bounding, the independence of the whole individuality" the characters and actions of the Gods become just as ambiguous as those of human agents. They are immortally independent individuals. So Artemis cannot always be as faithful to her hunting, and her chastity, as Hippolytus was to his. There is a great hunter, Orion, with whom she falls in love; and her brother Apollo has to remove him smartly from the scene with an arrow.

More disastrous—for this is where the shadow of Necessity arises—is the fact that all the freedom of life is reduced to *play*. The shadow of death broods unacknowledged over the whole world of free self-expression. When the City finally exists, there is nothing serious left to do. This is reflected in the pointlessness of Olympian existence. Zeus and Hera are the best paradigms here. The king of the Gods, and the very god of kingship, has nothing to do but seduce mortal women; and the Goddess of wedlock and legitimate birth exists in perpetual jealousy. Even the girl-chasing and the jealousy are pointless, because the stories refer to that "always" which is "once upon a time," i.e. a long time ago. *Wesen ist was gewesen ist*, everything essential has already happened.

When the Gods act like free individuals, and are not bounded by their determinate character, then "the *pure force* of the *negative* confronts that independent security, and as its ultimate power too, over which they have no control." This only makes sense if we take the "pure force of the negative" in two opposite ways. What the Gods have no control over is the historic process that leads to the demise of the Cities, the establishment of the Empire, and the final emergence of a universal religion of the God who died as a man in radical disharmony with all natural ethics. This whole process is just something that happens incomprehensibly. The Gods "behave to it as [beings] without a self, and are in mourning." This grieving of a self that knows itself not to be a self is the paradoxical condition of the "Unhappy

Consciousness"; and the long slow death of "paganism" is part of the Unhappy Consciousness of the World-Spirit. The "purity" in which "these *determinate* natures do not find themselves" is the "purity" of the Christian devotion which accepts the loss of this present world and of its life in the world.

So far the interpretation is relatively easy. But now we must attend to the fact that this incomprehensible "happening," this "*conceptless void of Necessity*" is the "*pure force* of the *Negative*," the "ultimate might" of the "independent security" of the "whole individuality." This "pure force" and "ultimate might" is clearly the negativity of *thought*. That is why the incomprehensible fate that "hovers over [the Gods], and over this whole world of *Vorstellung*" is the "*universal Self*." Just how does this *pure force* of thought hover over the Greek gods? That is what *we* can observe, and the pagan worshippers cannot. For them what happens is incomprehensible and "conceptless"; but we must comprehend it.

The answer is quite simple. Inside the Epic the Gods are "the universal and positive as against the *singular self* of the mortal [worshipper]." But the universal self that "hovers over them" and endows them with the "independent security" of the "whole individuality"—so that their actions as individuals contradict their "*determinate* natures"—is the poet (*in primis* the communal poetic faculty of the bards, and of the preliterate community that generated the myths originally). The whole world of these Immortals is a "world of *Vorstellung*." The capacity of humans to present an ideal to themselves is the first stage, but only the first, in the evolution of the distinctively human capacity for thinking. Thus the "might" that looms over the world of individuated beauty is its very own might, the evolving power of the thought that created it.

How the evolution of consciousness will proceed we already know. The first stage is the emergence of the Roman Emperor, a singular self who is master of the world; he is both a living God, and the universal self who is supreme arbiter regarding the admission of other Gods to the universal pantheon. But this situation is contradictory. The truth of the Roman World is that all the Gods have gone to the Egyptian Realm of the Dead; and the Universal Self must be resurrected from there as spirit proper. It must return to itself as the Reason that comprehends itself as the self-constituting and self-interpreting process of universal human experience, founded in the rational community as its substance, but embodied in individual self-consciousness, so as to achieve itself as subject. This whole cycle of self-comprehension is God incarnate as Spirit.

- 34./732. This necessity is the unity of the Concept. The active *middle term* in the poetic world is Achilles. Actual singularity is split into two moments and banished to the extremes: abstract Necessity and the actual singular Bard. Neither is involved with the hero. Necessity must enter into the story, and the hero must speak in the poet's words.

Having recognized the two-sidedness of "Necessity"—as historic *fate*, and as the logical evolution of pure thinking beyond the level of *Vorstellung*—we can see how Hegel can call it "the *unity of the Concept*" immediately after saying that it is experienced as "the *conceptless Void*." What is important at this juncture is that we

know how and where this unity of the Concept is present in the world of *Vorstellung*. It is the Bard to whom “the contradictory substantiality of the singular moments is in subjection.” When we read that through this subjection, “the inconsistency and fortuitousness of the agency [of the separate moments—i.e. the Gods] comes to order, and the play of their actions receives in the actions themselves its seriousness and value,” we ought to think of the bards for whom the Homeric canon is already established. The popular imagination—the primitive identity of Mnemosyne—which finds a dryad in every oak, and a nymph in every stream, creates contradictions certainly, but no easily detectable order. But the Bard who besought the Muse “*Wrath sing, Goddess, of Peleus’ Son Achilles,*” and made all the traditional lays fall into place (almost!) round the quarrel of the High King with his best warrior, was no run of the mill community storyteller.

This epic poet—unique and original genius as he undoubtedly was—himself disappears in his theme. His world “plays its motion, set free on its own account, in the *middle*.”⁵⁶ The middle of the epic motion is Achilles son of Peleus, who is named in the very first line; and the quarrel itself, which is the “content” in motion, is the topic of the first book. The “content” of the motion is the Wrath of Achilles, which is resolved finally when he surrenders Hector’s body to Priam. The hero is a tragic figure *in expectation*, since he knows that he will die young. But the epic does not arrive at this moment of personal completion.

It is obviously significant that Hegel speaks of Achilles as an *Individualität*, but of the actual bard as “the *within itself fixed and actual Einzelheit*.” Achilles in his Wrath is permanently individualized. The “singularity” of his creator has two sides: the *abstract* one of Necessity (i.e. the uncomprehended contingently singular Fate of the hero in the story); and the concrete or actual one, which Hegel himself identifies as “the speech of the bard.” The Bard as the composer, is the fate-determining “Necessity” of his song; but also he is the external narrator whose voice brings the epic world into being. Achilles does not bring his fate upon himself, so “Necessity” is not part of his life; and the Bard does not take the life of Achilles upon himself. These two “extremes” (the artist’s singular story, and his own activity as a singular agent) must “draw near to the content.”

What this means with respect to the “speech of the Bard” is plain enough. The Epic must become *drama*; the hero(ine) must speak and act for herself. What Hegel means by saying that “Necessity has to fill itself [or fulfil itself] with the content” is a bit less obvious because it is two-sided. On the one hand, the hero(ine) must make her own fate, not someone else’s, and not as the result of something as fortuitous as an insult giving rise to wrath; but on the other hand, the *Vorstellung*, the “story,” must become the content that fulfils the “necessity” of logical thought. These two requirements are one and the same, because when a *self-made* destiny replaces the blind necessity of fate, the transition cannot happen unless the audience is thoughtfully aware of it. Even if the tragic hero (or the Chorus) thinks aloud for us, we must recognize that she is thinking truly; and if there is anything fortuitous about the hero’s fate, we shall not (or ought not to) agree with what is claimed.⁵⁷

(g) *Tragic Particularity*

- 35./733. Thus we arrive at Tragedy. Here the Concept realizes its syllogistic moments in active shapes. The hero speaks for himself, and unlike us, he is a linguistic artist who can say what he knows. We are now the observers of an *action*; and if we abstract from that [by reading] we admit that Art does not yet contain the authentic *self*.

Since the Art-Religion itself exists as the created world of *Vorstellung*, the approach of Singularity to the content (the divine life) begins from the side of language. The language of the bards becomes the dramatic self-expression of the hero in Tragedy. The world of the singular consciousness is that of action; this is to be “brought closer to the essential world.” So the “essential world” of the divine substance goes apart into its *shapes*. One would have thought that this had already happened in the divine family on Olympus. But that family is just the universal shape of the undivided “Substance”; a spiritual substance is necessarily a community. The decidedly quarrelsome and often inconsistent council on Homer’s Olympus is just the *Vorstellung* of a Concept at rest. The conceptual moments of Universality, Particularity, and Singularity must be united in the concrete Individuality that returns directly to Universality because it knows itself to be universal. The stability of this circle is what the Olympian Family surveying the Epic battlefield artistically represents. This resting Concept must now pass into a Judgment. It must divide into the radically antithetical sides of an action in which the hero is face to face with some specific God. We already know what the structure of tragic action is because we have encountered it (as an aesthetic *Vorstellung*) in the Ethical Action of the real world of True Spirit. In that perfectly developed shape the confrontation is completely personified. But now we shall be looking not at the content of one Sophoclean Tragedy, but at the *form* of Tragedy generally.

The hero speaks for himself; so the audience have become viewers, and not simply hearers. Moreover, the hero is *self-conscious*, he is identical with the poet, and can define his own specific aim and his rights, he knows who he is, and he can *say* what he wants.

Hegel is very emphatic and detailed about this. Tragic heroes, he says, are artists who can use language to express their inner nature; its *specific* aspect is constituted by its *pathos*, the passionately felt limitation that determines the direction of the heroic action. This is contrasted with the superficiality of what we know and say about ourselves in ordinary life; and with the fortuitous character of the circumstances that determine our actions. We can see the relevance of Hegel’s comments even with respect to the Epic hero. The story of the Wrath is the story of how Achilles learns to be a hero, and so comes to tragic maturity. He does not know who he is when he is insulted, and the *pathos* of Wrath reduces him to inaction. A genuinely tragic action begins when Patroclus borrows his armour; but even in his mistreatment of Hector’s body Achilles is still learning how to be a hero. His lesson makes great drama; but it is not typical of Greek tragedy. Odysseus is closer to the self-knowledge that Hegel ascribes to the hero. But again, the story of Odysseus is not typically tragic; and his *pathos* in the conflict with Poseidon is external.

Tragedies have to be acted; and whereas the successful Bard disappears—for we become unconscious of his person if we are fully enchanted by his song—the successful actor is the focus of all eyes. The epic song can seem like a divine gift of inspiration (indeed, that is precisely what Plato's *Ion* claims it is); but just as we know that the statue was made blow by blow with mallet and chisel, so we are even more vividly aware that the drama is being humanly produced before our eyes. If a good play is not well acted, we may distinguish between the quality of the performance and the quality of the play itself; or we can still *read* a play. But then we have to be very much aware of its “make-believe” aspect. When we listen to the Bard, we “forget” both him and ourselves in the created reality of the epic world. But when we read the play, the “performance” only becomes unnecessary because we ourselves become the Bard. We must now be aware that the authentic “self” is our own, and that it is not in the play.

We have still to understand the logic of this progression from Epic to Tragedy as an “experience.” Hegel's description of what happens as “the extremes coming closer to the content” or “the essential and active worlds coming nearer together” does not sound like a methodical progression by inversion. But that is what it is for both of the “extremes.” On the one hand, the poet's part is “inverted” from that of “universal creator” into that of singular actual hero; and the epic World as a sublated “experience” provides the raw material for this new artistic venture. On the other side, our world of the inner imagination as we listen is inverted into this external performance that we are watching; and our capacity to appreciate the hero's deeper self-knowledge and self-making depends on our familiarity with the Epic tradition too. This last point Hegel will now comment on.

- 36./734. The world is still that of the Epic. The Chorus expresses the wisdom of the *Volk*; but it must do as it is told by the King. Lacking the negative power (of thought) it has to praise all the Gods in their turn. When it does espy how badly things go with the Gods, it recognizes only an alien Fate, and experiences the emotions of pity and fear [Aristotle, *Poetics*]. It is submissive.

In the new Concept, the experience of the Epic World survives in a sublated shape as the Chorus. They watch what happens, and lead us, the audience, into the right ethical understanding of it. Thus the ordinary consciousness of the *Volk*, the audience both for the bard and for the drama, is brought before our eyes as a necessary moment of the audio-visual presentation. They are the moment of Universality, the Concept which is to observe and suffer its own split into a Judgment. The “individuality” of the *Volk* is still their King, just as in Homer. But he is the Government, not a war leader or ship-captain far from home. Hegel's characterization of the Chorus as the “*universal soil* upon which the movement . . . proceeds” is important, because it shows us how to generalize his theory from the paradigm cases of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Antigone* (which he uses here again, just as he did in chapter VI). It fits his view perfectly, for instance, that Deianira (in the *Women of Trachis*) should have a chorus of the local women. This directs our attention to the fact that the tragedy is based in family life—and Heracles, for once, is a patient of

action. Antigone, who takes the initiative in the male world, has a chorus of scandalized elders, to underline both her sex, and her youthful status. The Furies themselves form the Chorus of the *Eumenides*.⁵⁸

Hegel is certainly somewhat unjust to the Sophoclean chorus of Elders when he says that "lacking the might of the negative it cannot hold together and discipline the riches and the varied abundance of the divine life." The Sophoclean Chorus *thinks* as well as anyone in the drama, and often better than the heroic agents. The heroes sometimes derive their clear self-knowledge from the Chorus; so we must allow that Hegel's contrast is a bit overdrawn.⁵⁹ But, of course, *no one* in the world of *Vorstellung* has "the might of the negative" in the way that the poet (and we ourselves) have it; and it belongs to the essence of the artistic *form* to let the specifications of the Concept (the Gods) go their ways, with all the inevitable conflicts and inconsistencies of their individuated natures.⁶⁰

Hegel's claim that the traditional wisdom of the Chorus is helpless in the situations where the "Concept marches forward trampling the [Olympian] shapes into fragments" is certainly true of the two Sophoclean tragedies that interest him most. Apollo's dealings with Oedipus are denounced by the latter in a heartrending protest; and Antigone's last long speech ends with a challenge that the Chorus has failed to meet—a challenge to the justice of Zeus which leaves the rationality of her own loyalty to the Unwritten Law in doubt.⁶¹ In the present state of the record we could also appeal to the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus as a clear case; but I doubt whether this appeal would be justified if we had the whole of the Prometheus trilogy. Euripides I have not studied adequately. The *Trojan Women* may be a good case; but by dramatizing the Homeric image of the two worlds, and letting the Gods speak on high "from the machine" he makes them the recognized mouth-pieces of the conceptual advance. So they are not "shattered" by it, but *sublated*.⁶²

I am not sure that the Sophoclean chorus *ever* takes refuge behind "the empty wish for peace of mind, and feeble talk of the calming of the storm." It does often urge resignation, and its religious function is to portray reconciliation; and in the last choral dialogue with Antigone, it does, perhaps, come fairly near to deserving the more extreme reproach levelled here. But that is the only case I can find. The Chorus of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* responds with firm opposition to Jocasta; and that of the *Oedipus Coloneus* is quite resolute in its conventional stance (but, of course, it only needs to be obedient).

Hegel applies Aristotle's doctrine in his own way when he ascribes purgation through pity and fear to the chorus.⁶³ What they are *fearful* of is, first, the *Dike* of the public and the private worlds; secondly of the conflict between them; and ultimately of the breakdown of the substantial constitution into the arbitrary subjectivity of the "law of the stronger." At any rate, these are the "rational fears" identified by Hegel's "science of experience," and made explicit in the *Antigone*. We can also find some clear cases where the Chorus recognizes a "Necessity" against which even the Gods are powerless; and in their response to Jocasta's blasphemy against the truth of oracles, they show clearly why we must support the Gods as best we can against the emergence of that "Necessity."⁶⁴

We do not need to be preoccupied about whether the Chorus fears Necessity as “alien fate” (as in the sack of Troy at the end of the *Trojan Women*) or as the “simple self.” Troy perishes by fire; but its women go to a life of servitude under the same “simple self” who burned their City. It is not Descartes’ *thinker* who is the “simple self” in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. The really “simple self” is an incomprehensible “fate,” because it does not comprehend *itself* at all—it just acts to satisfy desire; and, as the case of Achilles illustrates, its “desires” are impulses that take consciousness by surprise.

- 37./735. Spirit appears to this audience as the simple splitting of the Concept: protagonist and antagonist display the Justice of Zeus to an audience represented on stage themselves [cf. Antigone].

In commenting on paragraph 733 I said that the Concept divides into the sides of an “action” in which the hero faces some specific God. I was thinking not just of Orestes and the Furies, but of Oedipus whose real antagonist is Apollo. But Hegel chooses to concentrate on the most completely developed “shape” of the tragic conflict. Here two different “divine powers” face one another embodied, in a human protagonist and antagonist. The division of the Epic Concept into a Judgment takes place before the eyes of a Choral Concept-consciousness. In the *Antigone* the two sides of the justice of Zeus are fully incarnated in the human agents. The King of the Gods assumes his logical role as the ideal unity of the sides. Antigone and Creon identify quite simply with the Divine and the Human Law; and the dramatic medium makes it possible for the “universal individualization” to have its *Dasein* in two flesh and blood actors.

In the *Eumenides*, the same judgment is put before us, except that the dramatic Chorus has to play a double role. They have Antigone’s part as well as their own,⁶⁵ and the part of Orestes is doubled by Apollo: Athena herself is the justice of Zeus; and the Furies, as Chorus proper, confirm its triumph. Athena, of course, is doubled by the silent vote of the human court. So the whole situation is portrayed Homerically; and in the happy resolution of the conflict we see the Concept at rest.

But the *Phenomenology* requires the Concept in motion. That is what we see in Sophocles, where the resolution is through the triumph of natural necessity in the shape of death. Like those who see Eteocles and Polyneices kill one another, we have to learn the lesson thoughtfully, i.e. at a higher level of conscious reflection. The audience in the theatre can, of course, supply the wisdom of Athena; that is what Sophocles himself intended. When the Chorus condemns “proud arguments” (*megaloï logoi*) at the end, they mean Antigone’s arguments, rather than Creon’s; after all the play is not *his* tragedy, just because he lives on after a loss which Antigone dies rather than accept.

But this splitting of the Concept as Law is properly the tragedy of finite Spirit. It is not the reconciliation of Family and City that is the absolute religious problem, but the reconciliation of Spirit with Nature (or of the free human community with the order of natural necessity). That is the problem of Oedipus rather than

Antigone; and we shall shortly see how Hegel does now offer a broader perspective upon it.

- 38./736. We have already dealt with the content (in *True Spirit*). The Gods are reduced to the two laws (human and divine). The dispersal of the Gods [in Epic] is the dissolution of the subject into moments of substance; now it is gathering itself, and a greater variety of characters is superfluous.

Religion is the “pure” consciousness of the Substance of Spirit, of which we are objectively conscious as the social structure of our way of life. This social substance is the logical and real foundation of our selfhood. We are, of course, living “subjects” by nature; but that “nature” is a blind urge, which achieves selfhood only in some social situation or other. So the logical minimum for “self-consciousness” is the recognition of one’s self in some blind or half-blind urge for self-expression.

The Art-Religion is the “pure consciousness” of the City as a free community of tribes and families. “Freedom” inheres in the decisions of the community, not in those of singular agents. It is only in council that these human animals become rational; but consciousness is the achievement of the singular subject, so the “freedom” of the community has to be embodied in singular consciousness. Hence the “pure” consciousness of the community requires either a political self-identification or a family self-identification. The first is religiously mandated for males, the second for females. The holy Thing is in both cases the Community; but on one side it is seen as the achievement of freedom, and on the other as the law of nature.

The Greek Tragic Drama evolved in the context of certain great religious festivals, beginning with the chorus, and adding progressively one, two, three (and finally in Euripides four) singular speaking agents. Hegel is showing here why the Aeschylean minimum of two actors was essential. *Two* divine powers must present themselves before the Chorus, the power of Nature and the power of Freedom. This was necessary to the Drama as a religious institution; beyond this any additional means were mere “utilities” the disposal of which was determined by the practical problems of presentation. Offstage events must be reported by messenger, and the social context of the antagonists must be indicated somehow. But the essentially religious purpose dictated a rigorous economy of means; everyone must be able to see clearly where the tragic conflict (i.e. the religious problem) was.

- 39./737. The substance is also divided with respect to knowledge and ignorance. The agent’s *character* [male, female] determines his/her [ethical] knowledge. The other power remains hidden. What is known [by the male hero] is the daylight side of Apollo and Zeus. But it is full of traps. The riddle guesser Oedipus and the simple hearted Orestes both come to grief. The Delphic priestess, and the witches inciting crime in Macbeth are the same power, and both speak with forked tongue. Hamlet therefore does not trust the voice, for even if it is his father’s it could still be the devil.

Certainly not every important Greek Tragedy can be brought under Hegel’s model of a conflict between the two laws. But a conflict between private and public

“ethical relations” can be found in many of them.⁶⁶ The most general problem that Hegel recognizes in Greek Tragedy—the religious, as opposed to the political, problem—is that of “ethical knowledge.” Apollo, the God of Light, the Sun that shines in the human intelligence, and gives the human law the absolute sanction of Reason, is also the oracular God of Delphi. He has conquered the Great Snake of the Earth-Mother, and his priestess carries the title “Pythia” in memory of that. But the Oracle keeps the Earth-Mother’s secrets, and gives clear directions only regarding the good of the community.⁶⁷

In view of what Hegel has already told us (in par. 712) about the “indifference” of oracular knowledge in the *ethical* world, it is obvious that we must interpret what he says about Delphi, and about the “knowledge” and “ignorance” of ethical agents, with care and circumspection. Everyone (man or woman) knows the ethical “law”; no one (man or woman) knows their own natural “fate” (or needs to know it). The first thing to note (after that) is that the power that is “shy of the light” (par. 469) is the Oracle. It is the Oracle, not the Sphinx, that deceives Oedipus here. The riddle of the Sphinx he solves; he knows that “Humanity” exists only in political freedom. It is precisely the answer to this riddle that requires male blindness to the natural dependence of aged parents, wife, and children upon the husband when the City requires his service.

As we already know, it is an ethical ignorance that Hegel is talking about. In the normal order of things, no one is ignorant of his ties of blood in the way that Oedipus was. That ignorance was put upon Oedipus by Apollo (through the first oracle to Laius). Equally, no woman (not even an alien like Medea) is empirically ignorant of the political obligations and loyalties of her father, husband, and brother. What determines ethical knowledge is the commitment called “trust.” In the ethical sense we know what we must be *loyal* to. Loyalty involves a necessary ethical blindness; and in that sense it is “ignorance.” So ethical knowledge is oracular, and deceitful because it is necessarily one-sided. Oedipus, the riddle-solver, is the most extreme of all possible cases of ethical ignorance; Antigone, who faces an outraged King, and the condemnation of the Chorus, knows her own one-sidedness as fully as possible. But both obey the “oracle” of Socrates, the oracle of their own sense of what must be done.

The individuals of Greek Tragedy are universal models of how the singular consciousness can or should identify itself with the whole. The hero(ine) takes her goal from her *character*. Her character is what is “ethically essential” to her; it is what she “knows.” The other side “lurks in ambush” because it is “ethically essential” also; but the ethical necessity is to ignore it.

Hegel says that both Oedipus and Orestes were “sent to ruin” by what Apollo revealed to them. This is clear enough in the case of Oedipus, who cries out against Apollo himself. In the case of Orestes, where Hegel is certainly depending on Aeschylus (as well as Sophocles),⁶⁸ we must examine the facts more closely. It was certainly Apollo who caused the Furies to be roused against Orestes; but Aeschylus presents him as supporting his suppliant firmly throughout. So it is an overstatement to say that Orestes was “sent to ruin” by the Oracle; but it is an overstatement

in any case, because he does not go to ruin in the end at all. Athena saves him. Hegel's point, therefore, must simply be that Apollo could not really protect him; and even that is not accurate, because it is the Oracle that sends Orestes to Athena. Hegel's comment is valid only for the condition of Orestes when he comes back to the Oracle for help at the beginning of the play. At that point his first appeal to Apollo had "brought him to ruin." He brings the Furies with him, of course; and the Pythia herself is terrified.⁶⁹

The Pythia, says Hegel, is nothing else but, or nothing other than, in no way different from, "the equivocating destiny-sisters" who deceived Macbeth. But there are some remarkable differences which this remark commands us to overlook. We can get over the shift from one prophetess to three without invoking Christian symbolism (a line of interpretation which is plainly outlawed by Hegel's *nichts anders als*) because the Greeks acknowledged Three Fates, and Shakespeare was plainly thinking of them. Furthermore, although Apollo refuses to acknowledge the Furies, and argues always from the public perspective, it is very plain that he knows *all* the aspects of the destiny that he brings upon Orestes; when Orestes returns to Delphi and is purified by Apollo, he is clearly warned that the Furies will still pursue him. So it is legitimate to identify the Pythia with the Three Fates together.

This does not mean, of course, that we must identify the "childlike trust" of Orestes with the criminally motivated superstition of Macbeth. When Hegel calls the "trust" of Orestes "childlike" he means to suggest that Orestes simply did not *see* that his action could be viewed in the morally critical way in which Euripides viewed it. The adjective indicates that Orestes did not *see* this, precisely because he did not have any non-ethical motive; he was just doing what custom required. The Pythia is "no way different from" the weird sisters, because they are both external authorities, blindly followed and not comprehended.

Hegel makes this point much clearer by bringing in the genuinely modern case of Hamlet. Hamlet faces exactly what Apollo threatened Orestes with: his father's ghost. But he is both more self-possessed (*besonnener*) and more deeply founded (*gründlicher*) than Orestes, because he knows that the oracular voice is within him—and that it may be just the voice of his personal ambition—or at least it is likely to be so interpreted.⁷⁰

- 40./738. Orestes must come to grief, since the "objective essence" counts as much as his knowledge. By converting knowledge into being, action brings forth its injustice, the Furies, who must be recognized alongside Zeus, god of Justice and Kingship.

Hamlet has passed beyond "trust" to the state of distrust, because he knows that he is caught in the antithesis between his certainty that he is the rightful successor to his father, and the objective essence which dictates first that he must not take the law into his own hands, and secondly (as in the case of Orestes) that he must not raise his hand against his mother. It may seem that Hegel wants us to ignore the problem of securing public recognition of what the new Aegisthus has done; but

that involves a distortion of Shakespeare, and of the objective difference between the naïve world of Orestes, in which the avenger simply acts, and proclaims his own justification afterwards, and the constitutional world in which justice must be demonstrated before it is executed. This change in the world is one aspect of the deeper grounding of Hamlet's consciousness, so it ought not to be ignored.

The naïve ethical consciousness (of Orestes on one side, and Antigone on the other) simply *knows* what justice requires, and knows that the burden of fulfilling justice falls directly upon it. This is, in reality, the pre-political attitude. Orestes is the case that Hegel is concerned about, because succession to the kingship through a killing is the crucial problem for the essentially political religion. Everyone knows that Aegisthus is not the rightful king; and everyone knows that Clytaemnestra killed her husband to keep Aegisthus on the throne. Hence Orestes must kill *her*; that is the justice of Zeus as proclaimed by his son, Apollo. There is nothing mysterious about this oracle; it is the age old law that the King-killer must die. This is the law of the Daylight, not of the darkness. But Orestes cannot kill his own mother without a pollution that is public and objective; no community can harbour a matricide. This is what the "childishly trusting" Orestes of Sophocles' *Electra* seems not to be aware of.

The Furies *are* public opinion (just as Hegel's theory of the Chorus claims); so the action of Orestes is inverted as soon as it is done. From being the duty of a prince towards the King, it becomes the appalling outrage of a son against his mother. Orestes saw one side at the bidding of Apollo; but every family in Argos sees the other side; and wherever Orestes goes it is the same. He is an object of religious horror. Apollo wants the Furies sent to Hell with the other spirits of the pre-political age of the Titans; but Athena (like her jurors) knows that the older Justice of the Underworld is just as important as that of Apollo. The Furies accept this verdict, and Orestes becomes merely the limit case, released because the votes are equal.⁷¹

- 41./739. So there are just *three* essential divine moments in Tragedy. Zeus is the unity of the substance, God of City and of Hearth alike. The God of Daylight [Apollo, Athena, Artemis etc.] and the Furies [Pluto, Persephone, Demeter] represent the known and the unknown law. The substance divides into its two sides as human agents. The substance has *two* sides; the agent's certainty depends on *forgetting* the one that destroys him.

Having dealt with the structure of the religious conflict in Tragedy in its explicitly political shape (Antigone, Oedipus, Orestes) Hegel now tells us how to generalize the theory so as to comprehend the whole range of tragic situations. Zeus is the unity of the ethical Substance—the God of Kingship and the Hearth. Antigone's "*Dike* that dwells with the Gods below" belongs to the justice of Zeus, just as much as Creon's *Dike* of the community. But Zeus, though he may be God of the Hearth, and guardian of all guest strangers who come to it, is an eternal disgrace as a husband. So there can be many tragedies where Hera's jealousy or anger represents the offended justice of the Underworld.

The appearance of the Gods in their own person (as in the *Eumenides*) is exceptional; Zeus and Hera must normally appear in the interaction of human champions. Take, for instance, Heracles and Deianira in the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles. Deianira has been deceived; she did not mean to subject Heracles to a torture from which death is the only release, but to ensure his return to her as his wife. The substantial identity of City and Family can only be represented through Zeus and Hera in amity together. It cannot be dramatically individualized in one alone. The Concept as Judgment requires a double *Gestalt*. The doubling is necessary because of the ethical ignorance created by identification with one's character as defined by custom. Tragic heroes know who they are, and can say it with perfect clarity, because their identity with the customary roles (which everyone "knows" in a linguistic sense) is absolutely definitive. Their "self-knowledge" is an absolutely solid and unhesitating identification with an "other" in which they intuitively recognize themselves.

Thus every tragic hero(ine) has a necessary ignorance as well as her knowledge; and the division between the Gods of Light and those of Darkness is only an abstraction. No tragic hero can simply incarnate Apollo or Artemis; and no heroine can incarnate Hera or Persephone (or Aphrodite). Apollo is the God of the Oracle that once belonged to the Earth-Mother. Hades himself is the brother of Zeus, and the Goddess of Childbirth is the Queen of Heaven. Aphrodite belongs in the marriage-bed, but there is no doubt of her presence in the market place; and so on. Athena's wisdom in the *Eumenides* exposes the abstraction perfectly; and Apollo only argues as he does, because human justice to Orestes requires it. Apollo executes the Justice of Zeus. He declares that every oracle he has given is in direct obedience to that.⁷² But Athena is the *wisdom* of Zeus; and she shows that Zeus is (as Hegel says) "the necessity of the *connecting* of the two with one another."

This "connection" is expressed in three ways: first, knowing is free and independent, it is the subjective consciousness of the hero; "but it has its truth in the simple," i.e. in the ethical substance (which has *no* consciousness except the contemplative observing one of the community). So as soon as the hero takes sides in action, his knowledge becomes ignorance, and his justice is revealed as a crime.

Secondly, "the distinction, through which actual consciousness subsists, has its ground in the inner essence that cancels it." The "distinction" is that of knowledge. This has its ground in the "inner essence" of the God who reveals the justice of Zeus as *one* of the two laws. That same God (who is only abstractly a God of Light, or of Darkness, of Heaven or of Earth, of ethical freedom, or of natural bonds) cancels the distinction. In the *Eumenides* it is actually Athena who cancels the distinction, which Apollo abstractly maintains; but the identity of Apollo with the Earth-Mother is declared in the Pythia's first speech. It is Zeus himself (or all the Gods together) who "cancels the distinction" for Antigone (as she acknowledges in her last long speech). The clearest case of "cancelling the distinction" that I can think of, however, is that of Artemis in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. Sadly, but inexorably, she sacrifices Hippolytus in justice to the offended Aphrodite.⁷³

Thirdly, "the *assurance* that is clear to itself, the assurance of *certainity*, has its confirmation in *forgetfulness*." This third form of the necessary relationship is not

just the first one over again; it is not the identity of active knowing with ignorance. Nor is it the identity of the God who reveals with the one who conceals. Rather, it is the reconciling form of the identity; “forgetfulness” confirms “ethical certainty” by functioning as the immediate (or aesthetic) shape of forgiveness. When the Furies accept Athena’s justice they must forget the offence of Orestes. Antigone (in the great speech that Hegel himself misinterprets) is offering to forget her immemorial right, if the City will forget her offence (and so maintain that right itself in future). The natural right of revenge must be *forgotten* if there is to be civic justice. The most fundamental case of all is that Oedipus must forget what Apollo did to him, and trust the God still, when he comes to the grove of the Furies at Colonus; and this he does, although he cherishes his family grudges to the very last. Ethical “forgetfulness” is as strictly practical as ethical knowledge (or “certainty”); it need not involve ordinary forgetting at all—and certainly it does not involve the forgiving of our human enemies.

- 42./740. Consciousness uncovered this antithesis through action. [Orestes and Antigone] followed one law and were brought to justice by the other one. Oracles clearly show why they are not to be trusted; and the truth that is ignored is always there in the open, easy to see. The truth that ignoring it reveals, is that both laws are equally right (or in their exclusiveness equally wrong). Lethe is the only resolution of conflict here—either civil oblivion or natural death. But the peaceful harmony of Athena’s settlement is the mask of Fate and Death.

Tragic action “unlocks” the antithesis of nature and freedom within human activity. In order to follow “nature” we must freely condemn our freedom as evil; in order to assert freedom, we must pretend that we have no nature. The myth says that the Oracle deceives the hero; but real deception requires an almost miraculous set of coincidences as in the story of Oedipus; and even then Jocasta was not “deceived.” The ethical commitment is accepted knowingly as necessary. Orestes knew quite well that he was killing his mother, just as Antigone knew she was burying a declared outlaw; and the guilt—i.e. the ethical knowledge—of what one does, is never “forgotten.”

The ambiguity of “forgetfulness” is important. The wisdom of Athena “forgets” the offence through a conscious civil decision; but an obstinate insistence on the ethical forgetting of the law transgressed, brings the ethical substance of both laws to destruction, and the heroine to the “forgetfulness” of death. “Ethical ignorance” is rational folly because the whole Truth of Spirit is clearly visible; and “ethical forgetting” must turn into the oblivion of natural death, because the harmony of the two laws involves the inaction both of the natural individual (on behalf of the Family) and of the government (for the *polis*). The Olympians can only disappear into the simple sovereignty of Zeus, when his Justice emerges as the almighty power of Fate.

- 43./741. This advent of Fate depopulates Olympus, because we can now see that the Gods are not real individuals. Greek philosophy begins here, but the lesson is anticipated in

Tragedy where we are brought to see that Zeus must embrace all the other Gods in himself; and that the necessary moments are human. In spite of the Chorus the unessential character of the other Gods is revealed; only the logical moments of universal and particular matter.

The “return of Apollo and the Furies” into the “simple Zeus” completes the “depopulation of Heaven.” The Gods are not agents; they are not even the spirits who inspire the action of the heroes.⁷⁴ It is the abstraction made by the hero(ine) that inspires her. Greek philosophy is the advent of thinking in the critical form that rejects the “individuality” of the Gods. Philosophical criticism of the Gods goes back to Xenophanes and Heracleitus at least; so it is actually older than the tragedians. But Hegel is thinking of Plato’s attack on Homer, and his banishment of the dramatic poets from the Ideal City. Homer deserves banishment, Hegel thinks, because he is guilty of a “thoughtless mingling of individuality and essence”; but the great tragedians are unjustly condemned, because their heroes are servants of the “simple Zeus.” Tragedy identifies the necessary logical moments of the simple unity. The division of the Substance (into Community and Family, Heaven and Underworld) is ruled by the philosophic concept. “Hence the individuality [of tragedy] is the essential one [unlike the “individuality” of the Gods in Homer], and the determinations [of substance and/or individuality] are the absolute characters.” These “absolute characters” both male (Orestes) and female (Antigone) are the self-consciousness that recognizes only the absolute divinity of the ethical substance: one and the same Zeus in the justice of Apollo, and the Justice that “dwells with the Gods below.” One Zeus alone is the God both of Kingship and of the Hearth; as the *necessary relation* between them he is the God of the Oath. And “in the antithesis of knowing [and ignoring]” Zeus alone is the “father of the knowing of the *particular* [i.e. the male or female hero] as it comes to shape.” The movement of the particular shape goes from Zeus the King to Zeus of the Hearth, or vice versa, and so discovers Zeus of the Oath as the “shape” comes to completion. Orestes and Antigone illustrate the opposite directions of necessary movement, as well as the fact that the “particular shape” may be that of a life or of a death.

But the moments to be reconciled can take many other abstract forms—as the Chorus (save only in the *Eumenides*) always reminds us. Thus Antigone dies for her ethical duty to a dead brother; that is her *ethical* “pathos.” The husband whom we see, and the son whom no one will ever see, sink down into *natural* passions. So we need not speak of ethical *pathos* in that connection; the German or English vernacular is good enough. But in other tragedies any of the ethical bonds—wife, husband, son, daughter, guest-friend, etc.—may achieve the dignity of an essential *pathos*. Thus Alcestis dies *for* her husband; children she has, and with proper ethical simplicity she prays for a good marriage for each of them. She asks her husband not to marry again and he promises not to; but we have been told before we ever see her that she does not expect this. In fact, he *does* marry again, but the mythical reconciliation is that the bride—a prisoner of war, fortunate to have the

status of wife at all—will be a *new* Alcestis, and not the “stepmother” of universal folk-tradition.⁷⁵

- 44./742. The Gods as aspects of Zeus, and the heroes as agents of the two laws, perish together in death. Tragedy makes Necessity emerge as the truly divine power; the Substance and Necessity coincide as the abstract negative force of self-conscious action. The *consciousness* of this belongs to the surviving observers, the chorus and the spectators (who experience pity and fear [as Aristotle says] for the human and divine aspects respectively). But all of it is only a *play* for their enjoyment anyway!

Death is the power that triumphs; and in the tragic defeat of both of the laws of the Ethical Substance, the Gods who personify the separateness of these laws perish also. Zeus in his simplicity has no voice, no consciousness; he is just the unconscious necessity of nature. Every finite consciousness knows that natural necessity as the limit called “mortality”; and Greek Tragedy culminates in the struggle of the two brothers who kill each other, and the struggle of Creon and Antigone about their equality in death. Self-Consciousness is shared between them (as it must be, if they are to be ethical agents at all). But it does not *mediate* itself. Athena persuading the Furies in the *Eumenides* is only a *Vorstellung*; neither of the parties in that collision is a mortal human agent.

But Creon, surviving as an impotent observer of the downfall—and the Chorus directing our attention to the fact that “proud arguments” do not become us mere mortals—both point to a further moral. The whole presentation of the ethical heroes in their relation with Zeus and his twofold justice is made for the mortal self-consciousness of the audience. Here, in the *conceptual* comprehension of the living audience for whom the whole show is put on, is the self-consciousness of Necessity, its free spiritual aspect; this is the real self-consciousness of “the simple Zeus.” Aristotle is right in saying that the audience must experience pity for the mortals who suffer, and fear of the immortal powers. The “fear” is evoked by the *alien* character of Necessity.⁷⁶ The Gods are not individuals like us, but a process of fate in whose grip we are helpless; and “compassion” (*Mitleid*) is what we experience because we are observers, not agents.

The agents have quite a different *pathos*. But this brings us to the final irony; there are no real tragic agents at all. It is all a “play,” a hypocritical pretence. The consciousness that is involved in the action is that of an “actor,” i.e., someone who creates the “imitation of an action” (as Aristotle put it in his definition of Tragedy). The true unifying of self, destiny and the ethical substance is not present here; we shall meet with this union only in the Providence of the Christians. Oedipus and Antigone are just masks put away until the next performance; the player goes home to a family of her own. So, in the Art-Religion, this hypocritical pretence must finally be presented honestly too.

- 45./743. The acting hero must take off his tragic mask and admit that he is both the “destiny” of the Gods, and an ordinary man like the Chorus.

We are now going to move on to the Old Comedy of Aristophanes as the “comprehensive inversion” of the Epic world and Tragedy. But—whether Hegel wanted us to or not—we can easily apply paragraph 743 to Euripides. For already in Euripides we observe a resolute refusal to treat any one passion as an ethical *pathos*. What distinguishes the real *pathos*, as I understand Hegel, is the hero’s conviction that *this* passion is a *determination by God*. The *pathos* is what is logically represented by the mask; that is why I interpreted Hegel’s remarks about “the self-scattering moments which the Chorus allows to count one after another” (par. 741) to mean only that the other passions (which the Chorus acknowledges to be divine) are not divinely validated for the particular hero(ine) of the tragedy at issue. Their validity for the Chorus means that they could each be the *pathos* of some other tragedy. Each of the “Gods of the Chorus” can become one of the two “absolute powers” (or even both of them at once).

But Euripides, though he certainly recognizes human nobility, does not concede that any passion is simply determined by an *ethical* imperative. His *Electra*, for example, is very clearly meant to be a moral valet’s commentary on the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus. Everyone has non-ethical motives, and everyone has an ethical defence for their position. The hero’s tragic mask has slipped badly, and Euripides lets the Gods themselves tell us that the heroes are, indeed, the “Fate” of the divine powers. The Euripidean *Electra*, however, is no comedy; it is a consciously *hypocritical* tragedy.

(h) *Comic Individuality*

46./744. *Comedy* is where this final transformation happens. Here the Gods are not selves, but simply the universal moments of selfhood. This secret is let out of the bag by an actor who is just like ourselves.

In the Old Comedy of Aristophanes all hypocrisy has fallen away. A God can come on the stage in his mask (as Dionysus does in the *Frogs*). But the mask is transparent; at no time does the character pretend to be anything but an ordinary man, whose like is to be found in every row of the audience. Dionysus in the *Frogs* is even further removed from the awful presence of the God in the *Bacchae*, than the “Socrates” of the *Clouds* is from the Socrates of the *Phaedo*.

Dionysus is the only God actually brought onto the stage by Aristophanes (in the plays that survive). He is the principal God of the dramatic festivals, and his project in the *Frogs* is to bring Aeschylus back from the Underworld, because he does not like what Euripides has done to Tragedy. This project fails. So does the quest for “Peace” in the comedy with that title (Peace is to be drawn up from a well). In the *Peace*, moreover, the main character engages in the religious cult of an enormous dung-beetle—an “Egyptian” fantasy on the part of Aristophanes. These are the best examples of the irony of comedy about “abstract moments” that pretend to be independent essences. The religious message of the *Clouds*—that Zeus is dethroned and the Whirlwind is King—is more tragic than ironic.

"The pompous pretence of the universal essentiality is betrayed in (and to) the Self." The word *verraten* here looks forward to the counter-betrayal of "the Self" by Judas. That other betrayal is also necessary, before the "universal essentiality" of God can be properly united with selfhood (or before Substance can become Subject). Jesus himself, the *absolutely* Beautiful Soul, is only a Self playing with the mask of divinity, as long as he is a flesh and blood person saying things like "I and the Father are one"; for this is just what the comedian is saying, when she lets the mask slip so that we can see her face, and recognize her as one of us. She is not a hero at all, not someone who incarnates a divine *pathos*; the only *pathos* left to her is that of being *honest*. She wants to be "something *recht*"; so even on the stage she must say to us "Look, it is really an ordinary (wo)man, behind the mask." But, since she is just an ordinary (wo)man "imprisoned in an actuality," this betrayal of the truth *in* her self and *to* us the audience, is only the disappearance of divinity from our world of experience.

As long as we take the "betrayal *an dem Selbst*" in this double sense (*in* her, and *to* us), however, we can see the higher truth in it. The "self" who is the "Fate" of the Gods is not just the Emperor. That is a comedy which turns soon enough into the bitterest tragedy: the Gods have flown from the Earth, and the religious consciousness is left forlorn. But in that forlorn world, there is a Self who can see how to portray the *thoughtful* identity of "the universal essentiality" as the actual identity of the community.

- 47./745. This resolution becomes more recklessly deliberate, when the subject of the play is serious. The sacrifice is already a comic ceremony, but Comedy recognizes the humor of it. [In Aristophanes' *Knights*] City and Family have openly collapsed into the character of *Demos*. Politicians fool him, but he is the boss, and there is nothing traditional about his policies.

We have to take *das Selbst* in this concretely universal way (accepting the actor as the interpreter of our communal situation) if we are to understand Hegel's characterization of the destiny of the Gods as a "general dissolution of the shaped essentiality generally in its individuality." Unless we take the stage *persona* as the universal interpreter of her community the actor is only an *Einzelinheit*. It was the actor's tragic mask that was an *Individualität* (because of the hero(ine)'s identification with her ethical *pathos*).

"This universal dissolution . . . becomes more serious in its content, and thereby more mischievous and more bitter, insofar as it has its more serious and more necessary significance." The truly serious and necessary significance of the religious drama is explained in the next sentence: "The divine substance unites within it the significance of the natural and ethical essentiality." On the side of Nature this "more necessary significance" directs our attention to the *Frogs* as a play about "the mystery of the bread and wine." But the serious aspect of that play was already obvious and we have, by now, discussed it enough, since we got our view of the Mysteries from it.

On the side of Spirit, the “ethical essentiality” is the political topic of Tragedy: the unity of family custom and public law. By his reference to the *Demos* (the vulgar community of ordinary folk, who constituted the “democracy” by voting upon everything they wanted to in the Assembly) Hegel himself directs our attention to Aristophanes’ *Knights*, in which *Demos* is the central character. But we should not forget the *Wasps*, where the Chorus is the Athenian *jury*; for jury-voting was the other great function of the *Demos*. There is also the *Acharnians*—in which a Megarian peasant is driven by the famine to try to sell his young daughters to the hero. This comedy deals quite “bitterly” with the private aspect of the “Ethical Substance.” The *Lysistrata*—where the women start a political revolution by refusing their marital obligations—belongs here too. Aristophanic comedy is “more serious in its content” here, because it is more realistic. It has real life as its content; and this “more serious” content is the real tragedy of the ethical substance—the War between Athens and Sparta. Whether it is *mutwilliger* (more sportive or mischievous) than the *Clouds* or the *Birds* (which last is a true fantasy) may be questioned; but there is no doubt of its greater *bitterness*.

Hegel characterizes the adventures of *Demos* in some detail. In the *Knights* (as also in the *Wasps*) the main target of Aristophanes’ attack was the democratic leader Cleon. Pericles managed to wrap himself in the tragic mantle of the hero (nowhere more obviously than in the great Funeral Oration that Thucydides gives him). But Aristophanes leaves poor Cleon no vestige of dignity at all; and we need to remember how the Aristophanic picture of Socrates compares with that of Plato, if we are not to lose our historical perspective regarding his political victim. Hegel’s concern is with the *representative* function of Comedy, so the historical justice of Aristophanes’ attack is not important to him. We should notice that, whereas the flesh and blood actor is the “individuality” of the divine essence, his mask (as *Demos*) is now called “the principle of [the people’s] singularity sundered from the universal.” The pattern of Tragedy—a mortal singular portraying a mortal (and hence tragic) individual—is now perfectly reversed: a mortal (and hence comic) individual portrays a logical “singular” (the “common man” or “the man in the street”). The same analysis applies to the *Acharnians*—where the central character portrays the ethical universal: he is Dicaeopolis, Mr. Just City. This hero is not unique like Lot in Sodom (for Aristophanes hoped to reach everyone); but he is just as much a helpless puppet of events.

On the other side, the Family-Singularity is *Lysistrata*, Mrs. Let-the-Army-Go-Home. Dicaeopolis and Lysistrata personify the singular intelligence as moral critic. The Sausage-Seller in the *Wasps* (Cleon, with his Chorus of Pensioners) represents those selfish purposes of the singular consciousness that have usurped control of the Commonwealth. Singularity has broken free in both ways, not just in one of them. The Ethical Substance has dissolved in moral criticism as well as in selfish exploitation; and the exploitation (at least) was always there. So we can hardly deny that the War has produced an advance in spiritual consciousness. Pericles has been dead only twenty years, but it is already clear that the Constitution he lauded is a contradiction between theory and practice.

- 48./746. Rational thinking destroys the conventional pieties of the Chorus. The Gods return to their natural aspect. They are the *Clouds* [of Aristophanes], the simple *thoughts* of values in philosophy. The sophists corrupt the youth and the wisdom of experience is a joke.

Aristophanes wrote his most famous play about the breakdown of the traditional ethics almost as soon as Pericles was dead. In the *Clouds* he presents us with an old peasant, Strepsiades, who goes to the school of Socrates to learn how to cheat his neighbors. Here the new “gods” of the scientific philosophers are presented to us as the *Clouds*. Since the *Clouds* are the Chorus of this comedy, it is clear that Hegel is *contrasting* the Comic Chorus with that of Tragedy when he speaks of the “conceptless wisdom of the [tragic] Chorus.” The *Clouds* (and their divine king the Cosmic Whirl) are precisely “concepts.” Strepsiades returns in the end to his peasant proverbs, and in our last sight of him, he is setting fire to the Socratic “Think Tank.” This is a prophecy of what the conceptual whirlwind will indeed produce. But Strepsiades is doing what his proverbial wisdom tells him to do; so his action reveals the revolutionary dialectic that was always there locked up in the proverbs.

When Hegel gives the *Clouds* a positive ethical significance as “the *simple* thoughts of the *Beautiful* and *Good*” he probably means us to remember the *Birds* as well as the *Clouds*. In the *Clouds* Socrates organizes a debate in which the Unjust Logos drives the Just Logos off of the stage. So the “Clouds” are “simple” only in Hegel’s own dialectical sense; simple Goodness and Beauty have gone to Cloud-cuckooland. Unlike the “simple *Idea*” portrayed in Tragedy—which must be *embodied* if it is to be an “Idea” at all (i.e. a unity of intuition and concept)—the “simple thought” is an immediate unity of *conceptual* opposites. The Unjust Logos is just as essential to the bare Concept of “the Good” as the Just Logos. It is the reference to “the Beautiful” that directs our attention to Cloudcuckooland; the Unjust Logos reigns on Earth because the “simple Ideas” (and the Olympians who incarnated them as intuitions) have gone back to Heaven.⁷⁷

The trial of Socrates for impiety is in Hegel’s mind too. The rule of the Unjust Logos in the real world is symbolized by the condemnation of the real Socrates twenty-five years later, for the sins of the stage Socrates. “The force of dialectical knowing abandons the determinate laws and maxims of action to the pleasure and lightmindedness of the youth led astray by it.” The primary reference of the sentence as a whole is to the plot of the play; but we ought not to miss the reference to the trial of the historic Socrates, and to his quest for ethical definitions. The “youth” referred to in *that* context is Alcibiades, and not just the nameless son of the Aristophanic Strepsiades. Socrates, son of Sophroniscus, is the “singular self” who was already walking the streets of Athens before Aristophanes put him on the stage as a mask. His actual conversations are the comic drama of “the Beautiful and Good” as pure thoughts; and he and Alcibiades show the range of “the play of the opinion and the caprice of the accidental individuality.” Nothing could convey the comprehensive inversion of the Homeric world more graphically than this use of the word “individuality.” For the chancy mortal consciousness has always been an *Einzelheit* till now; only the Gods on Olympus, their Cities, and the community–

leaders on the battlefield of life have been “individualities.” But Socrates can teach anyone—from slave-boys upwards—to think.

It is, perhaps, the accusers Meletus and Anytus (or Plato’s Anytus and Euthyphro) who express the traditional “determinacy” of the pure thoughts “as content.” We certainly have to choose someone who was actually subjected to Socratic dialectic (and Alcibiades does not appear as a victim in the dialogues accepted as genuine) because it is the Socratic elenchus that is “the absolute determinacy” of pure thought.

It is the philosophically reflective Understanding—the Understanding of chapter III—that is being born here. We are leaving “Spiritual Thinghood” behind. Like the Pharaoh, the “God” of this Understanding will be a finite human self. But he will now be consciously dissociated from the natural world. He will be the “mastering” power of human self-consciousness. For the present, we simply have the comic spectacle of the ordinary “vulgar” intellect, which knows perfectly well that there is nothing “divine” about it, but which has recognized itself as the maker of the Gods, and of human values. The “Socrates” of the *Clouds* is the Young Rameau of the Ethical Substance; and Unhappy Consciousness is the “inverted” shape of Comedy. The world, being deserted by the Gods, is “unhappy.” But for the moment the finite consciousness is completely happy and at home.

- 49./747. Thus through *Comedy* the previously blind might of Fate is united with the singular self. The Art-Religion culminates in the happy consciousness of man as a singular self creating and mastering everything. The hero of comedy is a man just like the actor and like us in the audience; so we all share the Happy Consciousness.

Aristophanes borrows Socrates directly from the real world for the stage; and Socrates is the universal interpreter of a new world, the world of the natural philosophers. In his own “conversion” (as described in the *Phaedo*) natural philosophy becomes ethical, and the quest for truth becomes a dialectic of pure thoughts. This is how the two aspects of Fate are united. Tragedy and Comedy give birth to Philosophy in its naturally mature form.

But it is crucially important that the historic Socrates is put to death. For it is the *singular* self, the mortal who goes to his death voluntarily and affirmatively, in whom the Gods disappear. In his pure thinking, the ideals that they represented, maintain themselves as Platonic Forms; so the religion of Art is fulfilled in him, and is completely returned into itself in him. The great document of this “return” is his inner dialogue with the Laws in the *Crito*; but the maintenance of the Self in this “nothingness,” so that it is not “the emptiness of the disappearance” is set forth as the great argument for immortality in the *Phaedo*. What that proof means, and just how the Socratic (or Platonic) “soul” can be immortal, is a long story, which we have still to traverse. But it is the realm of pure thinking, where everything is an eternal essence, and nothing is simply there in a natural way, that we have now passed over to.

We should notice that this *conceptual* analysis of the downfall of the Ethical Substance does not cohere with the claim that “womankind is the internal enemy” or

“the eternal irony of the community” (par. 475). Whatever insight there may be in that contention belongs to Hegel’s own social world, and to our own subsequent inversion of it. The theory of “True Spirit” in Hegel’s “Science” directs us to take “woman” there as Tragedy’s universal symbol for the Family; and the Family of True Spirit is as patriarchal as the City. Now that we have arrived at the level of Absolute Spirit, it is easy to see that the sexual contrast to which Hegel’s Science properly points is that between Xanthippe sent home before the serious conversation begins (in the *Phaedo*) and the part played by the Mater Dolorosa (and the other women) in the narratives of the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

The transition to Unhappy Consciousness lies still ahead of us. What has come to consciousness perfectly in Comedy is the universal “happiness” of Consciousness in the Art-Religion. The philosophers are the grave-diggers of this spirit; but just as the finitely natural self-consciousness ended in tragic unhappiness, so the naturally infinite self-consciousness ends in comic joy and laughter. The poet, the actors and the audience are not philosophers. They are all ordinary folk, who have recognized themselves as world-creators, and as the creators of the Gods. In this perspective, Comedy is the moment of perfect self-consciousness of what Art is. We have left the realm of the immediately natural self and entered that of *rational* self-certainty. Thinking is now recognized as the “absolute might”; God does not need to be embodied in a statue, in an athlete, or in a tragic hero presented to us in an imitative mode, as a model for our imitation. Nor do we need to forget ourselves, to lose ourselves in that union with nature experienced in the Mysteries, and portrayed so frighteningly in the *Bacchae*.

Socrates, therefore, is the appropriate hero for Comedy at its highest moment. He, who had absorbed even the Oracle into himself, wanted everyone, young and old, rich and poor, to join him in the new “cultivation of the soul.” They did not want to go with him; but it is through reflection upon his mission that we can best comprehend the *existential* truth of Hegel’s claims about the significance of the Old Comedy. Obviously, although the topic of the War was tragic and bitter, the audience went to the theatre to enjoy themselves. They knew what they were watching, but they laughed. Aristophanes has his bitter joke at Socrates’ expense, with justice. For Socrates certainly did not know that his dialectic, his care of the soul, was the final dissolution of the Ethical Substance.⁷⁸ For him, as much as for any of his fellow-citizens, the life of the City was the *enjoyment* of human nature to the full. His “examining of life” is the final expression and purpose of the Happy Consciousness which has executed the Gods (as substantial individualities) in order to worship not the Whirlwind, but the Beautiful, the True and the Good.⁷⁹

This final phase of the Art-Religion repeats the “syllogism” of Stoicism, Scepticism and Unhappy Consciousness. But each moment appears in its properly reconciled and infinite shape: the Stoic “freedom of thought” is the freedom of the Gods upon Olympus; the negative “suspense of judgment” (in Scepticism) is the tragic reconciliation of the hero with God as the positive “ethical individuality” of the Olympian shape (which itself only pretends to be a real individual); and the Unhappy Consciousness of Fate as the absolute Self, is the Happy Consciousness

of the Self who is the Fate of the Gods. This syllogism determines the total pattern of the circle as follows:

Conscious Spiritual Perception (Third Moment): The self-maintaining Comedy of Common Sense (cf. 131)

Self-Conscious Freedom:

- (a) The Epic love of Fate
- (b) The Tragic making of Fate
- (c) The Comic self-recognition of Fate

Rational Individuality:

- (a) The Cities as Spiritual Animals (Athena etc.)
- (b) The Natural and the Human Law (The Gods as *pathe*)
- (c) The Civic Testing of Laws

True Spirit from God's Side:

- (a) The Epic World of Recognition
- (b) The Tragedy of Ethical Action (reconciled in ethical forgetting)
- (c) Aesthetic Status⁸⁰

Notes

1. In giving this honor to Sparta I am following Herodotus (as I assume Hegel would). See especially *Histories* VII, 139, where Herodotus clearly says that it was the decision of the Athenians to resist that turned the scales for the Greek victory, but that the Spartans never had a decision to make about this; they always knew that they must fight as long as resistance was possible at all.

2. The definition of “*synthetic* laboring” here shows us why Hegel did not want to use the Kantian terminology for his own logical procedure. A Kantian “synthesis” is “the *mingling* of the heterogeneous forms of thought and the natural.”

3. S. Bungay (1984, 31–34) argues that Hegel’s *psychological* categorization of Art, Religion and Philosophy (in his mature system) as intuitive, representative and thoughtful respectively, is a logical error. But in the perspective of the *Phenomenology* we can see why it is necessary. (Of course, Bungay’s logical-systematic categorization—Art universal, Religion particular, and Philosophy individual—is also correct, and equally full of paradoxes.)

4. For a valuable comparison of chapter VII B with Hegel’s other discussions of the “Art-Religion” and the “political work of art,” see D. Janicaud (1975, Part 2, chapter IV). The critical contrastive use of “Reason” (in the “spiritual kingdom of animals” and “the Enlightenment”) is where Reason is an *attribute* that certain beings “have.” In the Hegelian reconciliatory sense, Reason is the self-recognizing capacity of philosophical consciousness, which unites the rational subject with “the whole” by grasping how every aspect of the whole is “necessary” (in different senses, which are the dialectical *levels* of objective rationality) to the “being” of the thinking subject, and every aspect of its own subjective activity is necessary to the thoughtful rationality of the whole. This sense of “Reason” is Christian-theological rather than Greek in origin (though we can recognize something like it in the pre-Socratics). But Hegel does not use the concept “theologically” (i.e. in reference to a whole

that is eternally self-completed and independent). He uses the theologically developed concept in the typical Greek way, to characterize what is uniquely (and distinctively) human. To call the Art-Religion “the religion of Reason” is an obvious paradox. But the historic monotheism within which the “theological concept” was developed is only “the religion of Reason” in a paradoxical sense likewise; it encourages us to *worship* “Reason” contemplatively instead of actualizing it. The true “religion of Reason” is the actualizing of the theological concept in a human life of thoughtful activity that develops from the foundation achieved in the Art-Religion. That (not any orthodox tradition of Christianity) is what Hegel calls “the Manifest Religion.”

5. *Politics* I, 2 (1252b).

6. *Politics* I, 2 (1253a).

7. There is no reference to the triumph of the Understanding in the Hindu settlement created by the “laws of Manu” here. That settlement has no place in the historical sequence of the argument. The “semblance of the organization of a completed whole” must be looked for in the Herodotean account of the caste-system in Egypt (echoed in various places by Plato). The *Egyptian* “order of spiritual nature” is the one that Hegel’s argument needs (both logically and empirically).

8. It is only when he reaches “the spiritual work of art” (at par. 727) that Hegel makes it clear that the free *Volk* has to be a free community within a nation of such communities. He uses the word *Volk* ambiguously, to refer both to the “free community” and to the *national* community of these communities.

9. Hegel’s use of *Unwandelbarkeit* (emphasized) gives us a clear indication that, before it takes “shape,” the Unchangeable Consciousness is for its Changeable side a *lawgiving*. But in True Spirit the “relation to the Unchangeable” is “boundless rejoicing and the freest enjoyment of self.” Whereas Reason and Spirit appear first “negatively,” the first station on the line of Unhappy Consciousness is positive. That line begins “happily” in the “earthly paradise” of the Art-Religion. But of course, the “infinite grief” will not be sublated altogether even there. That is why “Tragedy” is the high point of Greek religious experience.

10. Hegel speaks of “the distribution into the masses of the estates and their particular activities.” This clearly indicates his willingness to speak of the “social estates” as “masses.” So it may be that I have gone too far in trying to avoid this interpretation in Hegel’s discussion of the Ancien Régime above.

11. For the views of Thrasymachus see Plato, *Republic* I; those of Critias were expressed in plays ascribed to (and perhaps actually written by) Euripides—see D.-K., 88 B 25 (the “Satyr-play” *Sisyphus*).

12. *Jedes Volk hätte ihm*, Nohl, 216; Knox, 147–148.

13. Euripides, *Hippolytus*, line 612 (produced in 428 B.C.); Aristophanes, *Clouds*, lines 366ff (produced in 425 B.C.).

14. In applying this concept to the case of Egypt, there is no need to assume that any actual Pharaoh was as much an actual “craftsman of society” as Napoleon (say)—though the scholars do sometimes write as if the important Pharaohs were Napoleonic. The actual craftsmen were surely the priests (or some subset of them). Pharaoh was, for the most part, a *symbol*. This is demonstrated by the speedy failure of Ikhnaton (who certainly personified the attitude of the free craftsman, but wanted to break free from the sublated heritage of tradition).

15. I did not dare to write “she” for the Greek sculptor (in commenting on par. 698); but it is certainly legitimate to write “she” in other artistic spheres. For in the early career of the

Ethical Substance, at least, women were not penned up as breeding stock; and Sappho is unique only with respect to her survival. We have the names of some other major poetesses. Plato dramatized the ideal of True Spirit accurately in his proposal for a universal education; and it is logically appropriate that the great voices of Greek *tragedy* are perhaps more of them feminine than masculine. Antigone has many sisters.

16. When we formulate these two “tragedies” under the image of the “death of Art,” we must say that Art “dies” twice. First it dies “naturally” (as the religion of the community) when it has completely comprehended the tragedy of “the good life”; then it dies “spiritually” (like God) when it has completely comprehended *its own* tragedy—the necessary impossibility of a perfect “portrayal” of the incarnation of God in man. But this second death, like the “death of God,” carries a final (or properly absolute) resurrection with it. It does not matter how categorically Hegel may have spoken about this second “death” in his Berlin lectures (for which our evidence is at present very inadequate). Like the “death of God” the “death of Art” logically involves resurrection. Art can only “die” in the same sense (or senses) in which Religion and Philosophy can “die.” To worship a work of art now, would be idolatry; but we could say this now, even in the mistaken conviction that there is no higher form of divinity than Beauty. To *think* that a work of art expresses truth as absolute knowing is idolatry of a different sort (Plato’s Cave consciousness). But then, to worship the *Science of Logic* is idolatry also (and there are some who practise it); while to deny the very *possibility* of a “science of logic” is to worship our own rational intuition—an “atheism” that coincides with the most barbaric form of religion. Many (mistaken) interpreters of *Nietzsche’s* “death of God” seem to stand in danger of *this* judgment and hell-fire—which Dostoevsky characterized correctly as a world in which “everything is permitted.”

17. D. P. Jamros (1994, 152–155) takes the sense of “abstraction” to be “abstracted from life.” This is valid for the statue, but needs careful modification for the Hymn. (There is obvious equivocation in his discussion.)

18. This concept of “God in his House” brings to light the implicit significance of “here is a house” as the first example of Sense-Certainty in space.

19. It looks rather as if Hegel’s conception of the Animal-Religion arises from the retrojection of a Greek interpretation into Egyptian religion and its hypothetical origins. As far as Hegel’s understanding of the cultural history of Egypt is concerned this was probably inevitable; and we may well be sceptical that there ever were communities that recognized their own religious identity in this or that animal. This need not affect the validity of the underlying cultural analysis, if I am right in thinking that “symbolic” expression is quite arbitrary.

20. Compare the interpretation of Homer in the *System of Ethical Life* (Lasson, 499; Harris and Knox, 177); and for the views of Prodicus, D.-K., 84 B 5.

21. Plutarch, *Pericles* (Everyman, I, 255). According to Plutarch Pheidias died in prison, possibly by poison. The prosecution was part of a political campaign against Pericles by the aristocratic opposition. But what is interesting is the fact that conservative religious opinion regarded the self-representation of the artist as impious. (Hegel certainly knew this source and the story.)

22. This separation of joy from effort, is one aspect of the “abstraction” of this work of art.

23. André Bonnard (*Greek Civilization*, New York, Macmillan, 1959, II, 52) ascribes this to Pausanias. But I cannot find it in the *Description of Greece*. (T. Pinkard claims that the word “inspire” in 709 is misleading, but this shows that he is mistaken.)

24. G. Shapiro (1976, 25, col. 2) falls into the error of identifying the *abstract* with the *symbolic*. It is true that nothing can be “symbolic” without being “abstract” in the relevant sense. But it is precisely the linguistic Hymn that is the key to what “abstract” means as *distinct* from “symbolic.”

25. See *Laws*, II, 656d, 660a-c; and VII, 799a.

26. In paragraph 712 Hegel mentions “birds or trees or the yeasty earth.” The latter two refer to Dodona and Delphi. Augury by bird flight (and by the entrails of sacrificial chickens) was more typically Roman.

27. In paragraph 697 Hegel characterized the *Egyptian* oracle as “breaking out in the speech of a deep wisdom that is hard to understand.” Apparently he thought of oracular speech as a “unity of opposites” which went in a circle from (Zarathustra’s) revelation of common sense, through obscure speech, back to (Mosaic) common sense again. (Almost certainly he has “the Law and the Prophets” of Judaism in mind as paradigms.)

28. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 454, 456–457. Hegel now writes *Gesetz*, where he wrote *Recht* before (par. 437). Antigone said *nomima* (plural). It is probable that Hegel is paraphrasing his own translation from memory at this point. His emphasis shows that he intends this to be a quotation. But neither the words nor the word-order are as precise as they were the first time.

29. The way that Hegel deliberately *avoids* naming Socrates here, shows that his sparing use of names is a calculated policy. He wants the created figure of Antigone as his emblem here. I have referred to Socrates’ conversation with “the Laws” (in the *Crito*) because it seems to be the clearest expression of the “unwritten Law” of the public or daylight world. The critical editors think that Hegel’s description of what Socrates learned from the voice of the *daimonion* is based on *Theaetetus* 151a. (Their reference to 186a is a mistake or misprint.) *Theaetetus* 151a is where Socrates speaks of the *daimonion* telling him whether to associate with this or that person. But see also *Apology* 31c-d and 40a-c; and there is an important passage in *Phaedrus* 242c where he speaks of being his own “seer” for the interpretation of the “sign.” (The *Phaedrus* is perhaps the most important dialogue concerning “what is good and beautiful”.) The operation of the sign for or against a *friend’s* going on a journey is quite inconsistent with everything said about his “sign” by the *Platonic* “Socrates.” (This seems to be based on *Xenophon’s* account of the “sign.” I have not found the exact instance, but see *Memorabilia* I, i, 4. In *Memorabilia* IV, iii, 11–12, Socrates distinguishes between “reasoning” and “divination” as gifts of the Gods to humanity in much the same spirit that Hegel does here.)

30. *Republic* IV, 427bc.

31. The Cult should be seen as the “comprehensive inversion” of the Hymn, and the Hymn as the “simple inversion” of the Statue in its Temple.

32. The Beautiful Soul is another “consciousness that does not distinguish its object from itself.” But the “object” with which it is united is God, not the living body.

33. The original image was that of Jesus going “to prepare a place for us” (John, 14, 2–3).

34. It is perfectly appropriate therefore that She is the Earth-Mother, and the resurrected Spirit is the Daughter in the Underworld. The sex-bias that is evident in the Christian “Mysteries” would have to be completely sublated in a Manifest Religion that properly comprehends all of its “stations.”

35. The myth of how Prometheus *deceived* Zeus into choosing the outwardly *larger* share is in Hesiod, *Theogony*, 535–560.

36. Dionysus keeps company with Demeter and Kore. Herodotus identifies him with Osiris (II, 42, 49, 123, 144); this is consistent with his part in the Mysteries. But the “abstract underworldly essence” who receives the first libation is Hades himself (or Death). We should note that the piety of the “plant-religion” survives. But it is now a universal reverence for what must be *sacrificed* in its natural living shape.

37. Here again we encounter the enlightened rationalism that is common to Hegel and Prodicus the Sophist.

38. The obvious sources to consult, for “lingering” purposes here, are Plutarch’s *Pericles* and the great Funeral Oration in Thucydides II, 34–47. (The “dramatic date” of the *Republic* is quite indefinite, but it is certainly during the War, and after the death of Pericles.)

39. See especially paragraph 176 for the three moments distinguished here.

40. This is the *second* reason why the *Lichtwesen* should not be taken to refer directly to Mosaic Judaism (as W. Jaeschke argues—1990, 198–204). First the God of Moses is not a Nature God; and secondly “Israel” is a “self.” But Judaism belongs *logically* with the Hellenes. The Jews have made the transition of *abstraction*. Yahweh cannot get into the Phenomenology properly, because he is “invisible.” But Hegel indicates clearly where he belongs. (F. Guibal [1975, 108] remarks that both Judaism and the Reformation are astonishingly absent from Hegel’s phenomenology of religion. The view defended here is that both are present in the way appropriate to their essential inwardness, or *non-appearance*. Luther is the *Gestalt* of the transition from Unhappy Consciousness to Faith.)

41. As I see it, Hegel is conscientiously *obliged* to give an accurate rendering of how the Jewish heritage has been interpreted in the Christian tradition. Otherwise, he has not fulfilled his recollective task properly. But the “determining” moment of that *heritage*, cannot itself determine how Judaism (and the Jews) are to be received into the newly dawning community of “absolute religion.” Lessing’s *Nathan* is a more appropriate *Vorstellung* for that. (For Jewish-Hegelian theological critiques of Hegel’s philosophy of history see S. Avineri [1984—on Nachman Krochmal]; F. Rosenzweig [1971]; and E. Fackenheim [1973]. It should be clear that from the standpoint of the present commentary all such reactions arise partly from a misinterpretation of Hegel’s own theological language.)

42. This confirms our interpretation of the Abstract Work as “Satisfied Desire.”

43. See the *Frogs*, lines 324–413. Much is parody, but the underlying truth seems clear.

44. F. Guibal (1975, 77n.) points out that Hegel anticipated Nietzsche in opposing the Apollonian and Dionysiac sides of Greek religion. And there is, perhaps, an object lesson in the *Bacchae* for the society that makes war on “drugs” indiscriminately. Certainly our culture now has many devotees of the “mystery” of “life.” All of my own sympathies are with Pentheus; but we might be wiser to evaluate this devotion as a form of *religious* experience. It seems that Pentheus, who refuses to surrender to the “inspiration” of Life, is the figure of Phrenology—the self-confident finite Reason that discovers itself in the skull.

45. Even the philosophical amusement with which many of us regard the sporting “Halls of Fame,” was first ironically expressed by Socrates when he proposed to the jury at his trial, that he should be treated like an Olympic victor.

46. We can fairly infer that the Hymn of which Hegel is speaking is not *long*, and is learned by joining in with those who know it already; it grows and wavers in form, like the popular ballads that the educated world of Hegel’s generation had only recently begun to recover from their own past.

47. The athlete is a “beautiful fighter” but not (as both Baillie and Miller put it) a “beautiful warrior.” The athletic contest is the “reconciled shape” of warfare.

48. *Histories*, II, 53. (Herodotus was convinced that the Olympian religion originated in Egypt—see especially II, 50. This probably influenced Hegel’s religious anthropology.)

49. The reader of the *Phenomenology* will know by this time that both Understanding and Reason occur in several “shapes.” The engineering skill of the Egyptians is the *naïve* form of Understanding, which becomes *reflective* in Platonic mathematics, and *critical* in Kant. The “Reason” of chapter V is “estranged” from True Spirit (and is first “instinctive” empirical reasoning, and then Kantian critical “Reason” as opposed to Kantian “Understanding”). Before this we find the intuitively self-conscious Reason that is communally embodied (in True Spirit) and aesthetically expressed; after it we shall arrive at speculative Reason, which is communally embodied, philosophically self-conscious, and discursively expressed in a dialectically logical form.

50. See especially the “Tübingen fragment” (1793, Nohl, 10; *Sunlight*, 488); and the *Verfassungsschrift* (1801, Lasson, 135–136; Knox-Pelczynski, 241). The documentary evidence is somewhat slender; but when it is read in the context of the other manuscripts of this decade, and with an informed consciousness of Hegel’s sources (Plutarch, Thucydides), I do not think that my interpretation will be seriously disputed.

51. In all modern governments, the principle of “representation” is a mediating principle; and it is a necessary truth of politics that how “representation” can best be achieved must remain a contentious issue.

52. This is only a statement of “ontological logic.” “Achilles” is the “individuality” of the Myrmidons as far as participation in political and strategic decisions is concerned. But it is Patroclus, the *single* individual, who dies in Achilles’ armour, and Achilles the single individual who is shot by Paris. (When Hector is killed, the Myrmidons and Hector’s Trojans are presumably involved in the battle, but it is a singular corpse that Achilles first dishonors, and then surrenders to Priam).

53. At the level of the “hymn in praise of the singular God” each of the Gods can be identical with her *Volk*. But if we rationalize the action of the Epic in that sense, then all of the Olympians will lose their “particular” aspect. Aphrodite will represent a regiment of warriors just as much as her paramour Ares does. (*Ares* should not be identified with any *one* band of warriors in any case.)

54. *Republic* III, 388e–389a.

55. “Ethical” motives are by no means the same as “moral” or “immoral” ones. They are “passions” recognized as capable of determining the direction of human lives. Thus Hippolytus cares for nothing but hunting, and Phaedra becomes sexually obsessed about him. Both of them understand the ethical context which determines how they ought to deal with the *pathos* that they “suffer.” And both are transgressors because the bastard status of Hippolytus makes his reaction both to Phaedra, and to Aphrodite generally, unduly violent. It is this violence that provokes Phaedra’s transgression. The way that Hippolytus keeps her secret when she is dead, shows that his notorious claim that his oath was not binding upon him was only intended to prevent any renewal of adulterous proposals. But his threat was superfluous, because Phaedra was already resolved on suicide; and the lie with which she countered that threat was tragically superfluous likewise. The *Hippolytus* is a drama in which the interaction of ethical ideals with the “selbstische Natur” is made marvellously explicit.

56. None of the translations with which I am familiar has caught the reference to Homer's beginning *in medias res*; and all of them mistranslate the sentence in some measure. Baillie wrote "some hero," as if he did not even recognize who was meant; and he attached *losgebunden für sich* to *Mitte*. Miller follows him with respect to *für sich*. De Negri translates everything with exact literalness except *spielt*. This he renders *atteggia* (which means "poses [like an artist's model]"). Hyppolite leaves out *für sich* altogether, and reads in "middle [term]". Hegel intends a reference to the "free play of forces"; and *losgebunden* compares the motion of Homer's epic world to that of the planets round the Sun. Achilles is the Sun of this world of freely moving "individuals." This conception of the *Iliad* shows up the illusory aspect of the tradition that Homer begins *in medias res*, by underlining the fact that the "middle" of the *motion* is the true *beginning* of the action. The world of the *Vorstellung* has the "Wrath," not the War, as its "content."

57. In Tragedy the extremes "draw nearer" but they do not become properly identical. Hegel's insistence that it is the extremes of "singularity" that must "draw near to the content" incites us to go beyond the tragic hero, and beyond the world of *Vorstellung* altogether. The tragic hero is an "individuality." That is to say that she is a "concrete universal," or a unity of the universal with the singular. But this "individuality" is achieved synthetically through the singular *Vorstellung*, which "sets forth" a universal meaning. It is the same "part" that is played, whatever (properly *singular*) actor plays it. Thus, for instance, we *watch* Oedipus come to his death at Colonus. The poet has lived more than eighty years with this story—which he must have learned as a small child, because the popular imagination had arbitrarily fixed the death of Oedipus in his own native village, the place of Colonus the Horseman. Sophocles clearly wants us to see his drama as the consciously self-made "destiny" of a man whose "fate" fell upon him earlier as a direct result of his own actions, but like a blind Necessity, an incomprehensible "happening." But when all is said and done this hero of Sophocles' making is still not yet a "*within itself fixed and actual singularity*." The singularity belongs rather to an actor who portrays the universally significant "shape of consciousness." The extremes of singularity *proper* (Fate and the bard) will "draw near to the content" properly only when every ordinary, singular consciousness becomes a child of God with a destiny to forge for herself that is of "infinite" significance. (In that world the "heroes of myth become the "world-historical individuals.") Achilles must finally become Alexander (an identity which would, one feels, have delighted them both) or, more tragically, Julius Caesar (an identity which would, perhaps, have pleased neither). But that story we have already dealt with. The "biography of God" is concerned with the "salvation" of "everything human."

58. This is unusual, and requires a sophisticated dialectical interpretation to relate it logically to Hegel's view. But I do not agree with the view of O. Pöggeler (1973, 91) and C. Jamme (1983, 223) that the *Antigone* "replaces" the *Eumenides* as Hegel's paradigm of tragic collision. The two climactic tragedies are complementary; and an interpretation of the *Eumenides*' Chorus is possible that produces some insights. The Furies are pursuing Orestes and he has come to Athens to escape from them. Thus they are important *agents* in the drama. Far from being "powerless" they require divine agents to stand against them—but as against Athena they are "powerless" (compare the remarks of the Twins in Euripides' *Electra*, lines 1253–1257). Since they are essentially a community of spirits, they can only come on stage at all as the Chorus. From the Hegelian point of view this expresses two things: first, the fact that they are not agents in the ordinary sense; and secondly, the fact that they represent the community, which has been outraged at its most primitive level of being. No Greek audience could identify directly with the Furies; but they would feel very strongly

the sense of horror and outrage that the Furies represent. This horror can quite properly be called the “general soil” of the action.

59. What Hegel says about the occasional choruses of praise for particular Gods provides us with another source for his conception of the Hymn.

60. I am bound to say, however, that in the reexaminations of Greek tragedy that the exposition and testing of Hegel’s views has led to, I seem always to find that the dramatists preserve the harmony and self-consistency of the Olympians far better than Homer did. The Chorus does often *say* that the Gods are beyond its comprehension; but they are quite right to stand by their loyalty to the Gods as conceived by the poets.

61. See *Oedipus Tyrannus*, lines 1329–1333; and *Antigone* lines 916–928.

62. As far as I can see the aim of Euripides is to show us the human reality (and the human responsibility) behind the divine mask. Compare note 55 above on the *Hippolytus*. Through the use of the God from the Machine, Euripides made this main lesson fairly plain. His view of the Gods is very Hegelian, but his drama is often not “tragic” in Hegel’s sense.

63. *Poetics* 1452a–1453b. Bonsiepen and Heede note that Hegel uses Lessing’s rendering *Furcht* for *phobos*. I am not sure that this is significant, but I have no doubt that Hegel read Lessing’s discussion (*Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (*Werke*, ed. K. Balser, 5 vols., Berlin, Aufbau Verlag, 1978, IV, 358–367).

64. See the Choral Ode in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, lines 863–910.

65. If we let the Chorus be simply an agent, and regard the theatre audience as the real Chorus, then we can see the *Eumenides* as the enactment of the fundamental *collision* of the Laws at the *divine* level. (But the “doubled” perspective is even better.)

66. The *Hippolytus*, for example, seems to be about a conflict of the hero’s *natural* passions (hunting and sex). But the family-political problem is essential to it. A more general conflict of political and universal “ethical relations” is visible in the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles. I should very much like to have seen Hegel’s analysis of that (because he maintains that recognition of the living “person” is beyond the range of the ethical substance). The conflict should be conceived perhaps as one between the justice owed to another child of Zeus, and loyalty to the common cause. (It is not to be framed in Kantian terms as a matter of simple truth-telling.)

67. All of the crucial data about the mythic history of the Oracle (except for the actual *slaying* of Python) are given in the Pythia’s opening prologue to the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus.

68. We have Orestes dramas from all three of the major dramatists. But in the *Electra* of Sophocles, Orestes seems untouched by the horror of matricide, because Electra sent him away while he was still a child, and he has been educated to think of nothing but his duty to avenge his father. In the *Electra* of Euripides, on the other hand, the standpoint is “moral” rather than ethical. The solution of Aeschylus is accepted, but neither Electra nor Orestes is seen as worthy of salvation; so far as anyone is “justified” at all, it is Clytaemnestra, who represents herself as a martyr for female equality. Hegel’s view seems, as usual, to owe most to Sophocles.

69. *Eumenides*, lines 36–93. This is not a case where we can legitimately suspect Hegel of forgetting anything, since he refers to the final outcome of the play himself in the next paragraph. His oversimplification (or exaggeration) is deliberate. He means us to “linger” with the moment, by studying the play again. Bonsiepen and Heede are so cautious that they do not commit themselves about the identity of *der kindlich Vertrauende*. This characterization of Orestes seems to be based on his astonishing first speech in Sophocles’ *Electra*—see especially lines 32–36 and 59–72.

70. This is Hegel's best piece of *Hamlet* interpretation. It goes far deeper than any of the comments in the Berlin lectures on *Aesthetics* (at least with respect to what has so far been published).

71. Euripides accepts the traditional solution (at least in the main). But his Castor will not allow Orestes to return to Argos as King. Both he and Electra must go into exile permanently. Orestes becomes king of a settlement in Arcadia.

72. *Eumenides*, lines 613–617. Hegel is philosophically sentimental about Apollo. In the *Philosophy of History* lectures he remarked that “Apollo has no wife, but only a sister, and is not involved in as many ugly stories as the other Gods” (Lasson, 1923 [1976], 585). Karl Hegel printed “. . . in many ugly stories like Zeus” (*T.W.-A.* XII, 300–301; Sibree, 245–246). Apollo does not deserve this whitewash—see Graves, *Greek Myths*, chapter 21. But on the one hand, Hegel wants to idealize the God into the individuated shape of the Light-Essence; and on the other, to make his twin-relation with Artemis into an anticipation of the philosophical kingdom of Heaven. (I see no sign in Hegel's own sexual relations that his idealization of the brother-sister relation has a psychological origin. Of course, the modern disciples of Lavater will continue to “know better”; and as long as we can all see whose knowledge it is that they share, there is no harm in that.)

73. Euripides has brought the Gods onto the stage to speak for themselves again, so the identity of the “inner essence” is fully explicit.

74. One reason for the references to *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* is probably to draw attention to the fact that the spirits driven out of Heaven must still be *philosophically* laid to rest, even in the Christian world.

75. Euripides, *Alcestis*, lines 302–378 and 177–182. Euripides gives no clear indication of how the part of Heracles in bringing Alcestis back by wrestling with death at the grave is to be interpreted. But until Heracles' captive is unveiled, Admetus regards her as the new wife whom he has promised not to take. I have tried to interpret what Euripides signifies by the requirement that the restored Alcestis must remain silent until the third day after the funeral. See lines 1019–1148; on this reading the moral drawn by the Chorus “Many are the shapes of the spirits,/ And many things unhopd for do the Gods fulfil” (1159–1160) is an ironic escape from the promise made at 463–465. (If these lines are genuine both in this place, and the others in which they occur, then Euripides used them regularly as his “(un)happily ever after” formula—compare especially the end of the *Bacchae*.)

76. This “Necessity” is the same power that Antigone and Creon met in paragraph 472. D. Janicaud (1975, 238) is wrong to say that the Greek spirit is “dominated” by this “absolute negative” and “fears” it. The tragic heroes have neither of these “modern” attitudes. They learn to “reverence” *Schicksal* (cf. especially the change of Oedipus' attitude in the *Colonus* play). But it is precisely because they meet it *fearlessly*, that it reveals itself as the negativity of *thought*. “True” *Sittlichkeit* perishes, and the self-assertive singular thinking will emerge.

77. O. Pöggeler (1964, 296) remarks on the contrast between the evaluation of Comedy here and in the *Natural Law* essay. We shall soon see (par. 749) that the two texts would not be hard to reconcile; but Pöggeler is quite right about the *development* in Hegel's systematic concept. What Hegel's logic shows is that Comedy is the most *self-conscious* form of artistic expression. In the context of the Art-Religion, we can say that the Old Comedy is the *philosophical* mode of Art. Even that ceases to be true as a proposition about the New Comedy of Menander; and in any case it does not make Comedy the “best or highest” form of Art. Among the *literary* forms it is clear that Hegel regards Tragedy as the “highest” (the *noblest* or most *beautiful* expression of human nature). The evocation of Jesus at the beginning, and

Socrates at the end of the discussion shows this. But it is *Sculpture* that is the “absolute” art—the one that creates the *Gods*. Painting and Sculpture first show us what Art (and Art alone) can do in our experience. C. A. Tsakiridou (1991, 17) is right in saying that “It is the individual art object that verifies our thinking of the Concept”—but she would not accuse Hegel of having two irreconcilable philosophies of art, if she understood how limited that positive doctrine is. G. Shapiro (1976, 31, col. 2)—like many others—is simply *wrong* in thinking that the *culminating* position of Comedy makes it “supreme” (cf. Shapiro, 1986, 171).

78. Hegel clearly means to conclude the Art-Religion with the communal identity of audience and comedian as vulgar humanity. So it is possible that he does not intend any transition to Socrates in the *Crito* and *Phaedo*. My defence is *positively* that he has already used the *daimonion* of Socrates as the final shape of the Oracle; and that he uses *Platonic* language to characterize the action and argument of the *Clouds*. So I think we are justified in taking Socrates as the “destiny” of the Art-Religion. *Negatively*, however, I will add that the example does no harm. The voluntary death of Socrates is only an “anticipation” of God’s Passion; but the “mission” of Socrates illustrates the interpretation of Old Comedy as *we* are supposed to observe it. His life is the proof that what we have read into the Old Comedy, is indeed there to be observed.

79. W. Desmond (1989 in 1992a, 335) says Hegel is “laughing at the wrong thing.” But I suspect this is the wisdom of hindsight. If so, it is also a mistake, because Hegel is only laughing at the Hellenistic culture that has not recognized its “unhappiness.” In Comedy “religion” dies, and we reach a purely “secular” rational awareness of the “whole.” Many students feel that *leaving* the religious realm in order to return is not necessary (or alternatively, with a reader like Kojève, that the *return* is not really necessary). Flay’s notes (1984, 392–393, nn. 9–10) provide a vivid illustration—with Hyppolite as the “middle” who gets Hegel right. We have to understand that the *Phenomenology* comprehends the actual history of *our* religious consciousness. (G. Shapiro [1986, 178] says that Hegel’s *Phenomenology* is “absolute Comedy.” This is true in the sense that it replaces Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. Plato’s dialogues are the “absolute Comedy” of the classical world. Compare *Pilgrimage*, Introduction, note 91.)

80. In the comedy of Terence it is a *slave* who says: “I am a man, I count nothing human alien.” This is the true climax of blessedness in “the Art-Religion.” For this reason, we should not borrow “*free* status” from the finite political sphere; the Spiritual Work of Art is the *reconciliation* of “Dependence and Independence” in Freedom. Gillian Rose (1994, 14) asks whether the happy consciousness of Comedy is “attained by effort or by grace.” The answer is “not by effort certainly. By *grace* initially perhaps; and certainly by *Divine* grace in the salvation of the Unhappy Consciousness.” But what is important to Hegel is the *loss* of “happy consciousness”; and that is through the movement of political life.

Chapter 12

The Divine Self-Concept

VII C: The Manifest Religion

It is a mistake to call this final phase of Religion “revealed” (as the English translators both do). It is not geoffenbart but offenbar—not “revealed” but “out in the open” or “manifest.” The Christian Spirit has come out into the open, so that it is now “manifest.” The history of its “revelation” has already been dealt with in the evolution of finite spirit; and as we shall see in the review of the earlier stages here, the offenbare Religion is beyond the stages that were “revealed.”¹

Of course, it is right to say that the “result” should not be separated from the process; but the process from which the Manifest Religion must not be separated is that of Natural Religion and the Art-Religion. If we think of Manifest Religion as the Christian religion, the temptation to separate it becomes very strong. For the Christian attitude toward the pagans was very different from that of Herodotus (let us say) toward the Egyptian priests. The Christians thought of their “revelation” as cutting them off from the heathen, and as marking a new beginning in God’s relations with mankind. Only in the Jews did they recognize true forerunners, because their concept of “revelation” came from the Jewish Scriptures.

Hegel’s concept of Offenbarung is quite different and has no Jewish roots. He regards all religious experience—and particularly the experience of the Gentiles—as the self-manifestation of God. What distinguishes Christianity is the fact that God is now “manifest” as He is in Himself, i.e. as “Spirit.” But to manifest Himself is his essence. Not only does He speak; He is His “speech,” His Word. This sounds like orthodox Christian doctrine; but Hegel’s interpretation is not orthodox. For Christian orthodoxy says that God creates by speaking. Hegel reads this as meaning that God’s speech is the creation; and further that His speech is His self-creation. “God is Spirit” means that He is what He makes Himself into. Only what creates itself is “Spirit.” Hegel has already taken the first sentence of Genesis as the beginning of God’s biography: “Let God be manifest as Light.” Seen in this light the first sentence of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God” takes the Christian revelation completely out of its Jewish background, and puts it into a Gentile tradition that begins with Zarathustra. The Unhappy Consciousness and Faith are only the phases of “estrangement” which the universal Gospel had to go through before it could repossess its own true cultural heritage—the experience of the despised heathen.

(a) *The Hellenistic Weltgeist*

- 1./748. Spirit has become subject now. It has gone over to this extreme through the motion of the Art-Religion from divine statue to human comedian. The substance has become its “predicate.” It is self-conscious, but it has lost its world of consciousness: “The Self is absolute Essence.”

The Religion of Art is the story of God’s manifestation as “natural man.” In other words, it is the world-historical manifestation of what the myth in the second chapter of Genesis means. Athena, Antigone and Lysistrata (in that order) replace Eve, and it is Orestes and Oedipus, Demos and Socrates who eat the apple. But the concepts of sin and disobedience, though not entirely absent, are successfully sublated. The *effective* “sinners” in the biography of the World-Spirit are the Romans. Obviously the Romans carry the experience of Greek culture forward with them; and as we move forward towards the conversion of Constantine—which is the moment where God first becomes “manifest” as *Spirit*—we must do likewise. Hegel himself makes sure that we do not forget the Persian and Egyptian heritage of Greece. All of it is essential to the “Absolute Religion” that passes over into Absolute Knowledge.

We can say that what is signified by the Natural Religions is the general proposition: “Substance is the absolute Essence.” But in these religions there is no “absolute Subject” who asserts this “proposition.” Even in the religion of the *Werkmeister*, it cannot be asserted.² Here, we have a human community that willingly accepts and affirms its own merely instrumental and obedient status. It dissolves itself back into the abiding substance of Nature as a whole: “the action or the self-consciousness [of the worshipping community] only disappears.” The worshippers think of their God as the supreme “Self”; but since they are not “actual selves,” their “absolute essence” is not an actual self either (par. 684). If God could *really* speak (in their terms) there would have to be some relation between his “I” and theirs; and his substantial being would no longer be “the whole”: Self-Consciousness remains implicit on both sides, and does not *do* anything. There is no solid relation of “trust” in which God and his community grasp one another. There is an immediate sense of “identity” (in which the finite selves are swallowed up). But there is no self-conscious *assertion*, that needs (or merits) a “proposition.”

Antigone seeks to give this absolute Substance a voice. But it is only her voice, and it fades away into her death. The incarnation of the “divine essence” through which the Absolute Spirit advances from this substantial status towards full subjectivity, begins with the statue. The sculptor is a worshipper who *brings forth* the divine shape, and *posits* the action, or the *self-consciousness* of the human maker (the emphases are all Hegel’s) in the sculpted shape. The great cycle of nature revered in the older piety was an awful Substance, in which self-consciousness was lost. That moment too is acknowledged in the Art-Religion; but trust (*Vertrauen*) now includes self-recognition, which was not present before.

The statue gives only an externally human shape to God. God’s immortality is expressed by the inorganic and alien stone. But the aesthetic community incarnates

its *living* God in the Hymn; and from that point onwards the incarnation of God in language proceeds steadily to the point where we recognize the actor behind the mask as the reality of the absolute essence. In tragedy it was the mask that represented the Substance, and the actor was still accidental. But in Comedy this accidental subject assumes its proper place in the sentence. The “essence” becomes a “predicate” of this subject.

Thus, in the Art-Religion “Self-Consciousness” has become “the absolute essence.” This is the final (and comprehensive) appearance of the immediate (or “natural”) Self-Consciousness in the phenomenology of Religion. In the Roman Cult of the Emperor as the Lord of the World, we have the moment when the serpent’s prophecy comes true: “Ye shall be even as Gods.” At that stage there is absolutely *no* essence in the objective world of Consciousness; the Spirit has lost its world of “consciousness.” The natural world is a realm of political expedencies and utilities—just as it will become once more in the Enlightenment. The Gods have gone to Cloudcuckooland; and the absolute Spirit lies in the tomb.

- 2./749. “The Self is absolute Essence” is a secular not a religious proposition. It will contain its own inversion which reduces the self to a predicate. This inversion will not make Substance into Subject directly; but it begins a long process of development for the observed consciousness—the process of the estranged Self. In the first substantiality the Subject disappeared in Substance; in the second proposition, the Substance becomes a predicate only. But finally Substance and Subject will now unite perfectly.

Antigone tried to give the absolute Substance a voice. But her attempt to make it speak was contradicted by the whole evolution of the Art-Religion in the daylight world. This evolution brought out the significance of the equal recognition relation involved in Antigone’s speech. It is not a religious consciousness like hers that can speak the truth of Comedy. It may be a philosopher consciously pursuing death like Socrates; or it may be one like Protagoras, who is sceptical about the Gods, but quite at home in the actual political world (and with his eyes wide open about its “ethics”). The experience of the secular self-consciousness that has reduced the objective order of consciousness and nature from a “substance” (ethical and natural) to a “predicate” of its own subjectivity—so that there is nothing divine left except that naturally embodied subjectivity—will be to discover how its definition of truth *inverts* itself.

From “The Self is the Absolute Essence” we shall pass over to “The Absolute Essence is the Self.” This “conversion,” which is a valid immediate inference in formal logic, signifies the transition from the world of the Happy Consciousness of Comedy—which is *sceptical*, because it knows the Gods have flown, and laughs at the folly of the Stoic who still thinks that life is a serious tragedy with a happy ending—to the Unhappy Consciousness which knows that God, the absolutely Unchangeable Essence, is the only *true* Self. In the Unhappy Consciousness, “the Self is downward-determined to the predicate, and the Substance raised up into the subject.”

But first the secular world passes under the control of a comically finite self who

is recognized as "God." This is the shape of Comedy as Religion. It was never very "funny," but Gibbon thought it was *happy*.³ In Hegel's view, this period of peaceful world-security guaranteed by the Roman Law was merely "boring." It becomes interesting only when the dialectic of despair begins. Politically speaking, the Absolute Self of the Emperor has no peers; all other selves are bondsmen subject to his life and death power. In its religious aspect, this is the universal relation of the World-Spirit to Mephistopheles the Comedian, as the Judge who "says ever nay."

The establishment of the Roman Imperial religion of Emperor-worship is the "movement" of the proposition "the Self is the absolute essence" from the sphere of the non-religious actual spirit into religion. But this movement is soon revealed as the first moment of its *Umkehrung*, or of the conversion of the proposition into the form "the Absolute Essence is the self." This converted form is the proposition of the Unhappy Consciousness; and Emperor-worship is "the first relation" of the Unhappy Consciousness for the World-Spirit. Hence, we find in the Imperial Religion, the "infinite" expression of all the moments that are sublated in the Unhappy Consciousness in chapter IV. Also, the Imperial Religion is an infinite shape of Sense-Certainty because God is present for Sense-Certainty in the Emperor (but the certainty is radically uncertain because he may die or be dethroned at any time).

This first direct inversion of the Happy Consciousness into Unhappiness does not make Substance into Subject "*in itself or for us*." We do not return from the climax of Greek Religion in Comedy to the beginning of Natural Religion with the Light of Day recognized as the absolute Lord.⁴ Instead we now enter a new non-natural world, the world of pure thought. The Absolute Essence—which was a kind of "law of nature" in "the first Substantiality"—has appeared as a positive law imposed by an alien self called "the Emperor." The Substance is personified by this alien other, whom we know to be another natural self. We, who surrender to the alien authority, know perfectly well that "selfhood" is the essence of this pretended Substance, and that both the Lord of the World, and we who are in bondage to him, are equal selves. *Justice* is "the Absolute Essence"; but the "selfhood" which we now recognize to belong to it necessarily, has departed into the realm of pure thought. The experience of Self-Consciousness is gone through now as a relationship between Reason and Nature. The Ethical Substance becomes a *doubled* world; and Self-Consciousness has to go through its spiritual evolution in the world of Thought. It must bring about the conversion of the proposition for itself. "Through offering itself up it *brings forth* the Substance as Subject." So in this process of *Bildung* "the Subject remains its own self." We shall see, very soon, that in the experience of the Absolute Spirit, this is the self-making of Spirit "out of nothing."

The Art-Religion is *explicitly* the Religion of "True Spirit," i.e., the religion of the Spirit that makes itself within (or in harmonious identity with) Nature. So before we can observe the Manifest Religion of Reason we shall have to follow the evolution of Absolute Spirit through the stages of Self-Estrangement and Self-Certainty. In this evolution "the two natures"—i.e. the absolute Nature of the Natural Religion and the self-made human nature of the Art-Religion—will be equalized in the complete mutual penetration of a perfect union.

In the Manifest Religion the two propositions—that “the Substance is the absolute essence” (which logically *cannot* assert itself absolutely) and that “the Self is the absolute essence” (which the comic consciousness asserts *finitely*, but which becomes a blasphemous absurdity when asserted absolutely)—both reappear. But they take on a new sense, such that they can *both* be asserted absolutely. “In the first substantiality,” says Hegel (repeating the point made in the opening sentence of par. 748) “the Subject only disappears.” But in the Manifest Religion, its disappearance into the grave is only the prelude to a spiritual “resurrection.” Similarly “in the second proposition,” (as Hegel carelessly puts it, without regard for syntactic consistency)⁵ “the Substance is only predicate.” This equal and opposite inequality of value (for as a mere “predicate” of human activity, the substance of nature equally “disappears”) will be done away with when the Substance is finally manifest as the absolute community of “resurrected” subjects. In the Roman Empire the substance of Religion becomes a predicate of Imperial policy. This is the first phase of the “motion” of the “the second proposition” as it emerged in the Art-Religion. During the following “cultural” dominance of the Roman Church, the second phase of the motion takes place, and the proposition of “substantiality” returns. It is only now that it is properly *asserted*; and the result is an opposite contradiction. The whole motion of the “return” is only possible because in *both* of its moments the Subject “remains the subject of Substance,” and “the subject remains its own self.” This is just what was not the case in “the first substantiality” (i.e. in “Natural Religion”); at that earlier stage there was no proper “subject” at all.

The “compensation” of the two natures (Divine Subject and human subject) is experienced in the “third relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness (or, speaking with the rather rough accuracy that is appropriate for the sphere of World History, in the Reformed Church). But we have to realize that the final stage—where “the uniting and compensation of both natures [Divine Substantial Subject and finite or human subject] is produced, in which both with equal value are just as much *essential* as they are only *moments* too”—actually comes to pass only after the Revolution. The “equalization of Substance and Subject” happens only in the Napoleonic order which is still being born, and in Hegel’s own book. It is the *Phenomenology* that enables us to comprehend for the first time how the Absolute can be *just as much* Subject as Substance.

- 3./750. The Greek *self* is the fulfilled universality of the *Volk*. But now the *Volk*-spirits are emptied and gathered into a Pantheon of abstract thought, and the singular self emerges as the legal person.

The Art-Religion dissolved its own religious essence in the comic recognition that the imagination of the natural self had created the Gods. The Ethical Substance could maintain itself, with Comedy as an ironic moment of happy self-possession, only until the armies of Alexander arrived. With the triumph of the Romans and their Law, the “truth” of Comedy was asserted absolutely as a comprehensive inversion of the immediate truth of the Ethical Order.

In Roman Law there are only singular (i.e. *comic*) selves, recognized as legal persons (with different legally defined statuses); and communities are artificial constructions out of these legal atoms. There is no possibility now of a properly ethical identification with any community, or with some structure or activity of the community such as we find in Greek Tragedy.⁶ “Public spirit” could (and indeed did) continue to be an important motive in life, but it was now confined within finite (i.e. *bourgeois*) limits. The Jewish *Volk* was smashed and scattered, but then left in peace to be exceptional; the proselytizing of the early Christians—who wanted the same “exception”—drew the attention of their neighbors more actively, so that they got persecuted whenever some natural or social crisis made religious conformity crucially important. Organized persecution itself was one indication that religion had become a matter for legal regulation.

In religious life, the living spirits of the ethical communities have all fled from the Earth; what remains with us are philosophical abstractions (like the “Clouds”) and fictional pictures of the Gods who have departed. These, too, the law can easily recognize and define. The Gods could and did migrate freely between cultural worlds that were previously independent. Isis is worshipped in Rome. The great temple of Artemis at Ephesus (already a coincidence of opposites between the Moon as Virgin Huntress, and the Moon as the All-Mother) becomes the temple of Diana of the Ephesians in the New Testament. Pilgrims now came from everywhere with a bag of bull’s balls to offer to her. But the transformation of Artemis is nothing in comparison with the many identities of Zeus and Apollo. In the century before Constantine we find cults of Zeus-Helios-Serapis. Apollo is Helios, Horus, Osiris and so on. There were no cults of the “Clouds,” but the Aion (Eternity) was worshipped, as well as the god called “nameless,” and the “All-seeing Aether” (which would have delighted Hölderlin).⁷ So Hegel’s conception of the Imperial “Pantheon” is an oversimplification; but the crucial fact, from his point of view, is the cult of the Emperor. It is this which, in principle, makes human thought the explicitly acknowledged arbiter of the God’s existence, and so reduces all divinities—no matter how vividly they continue to be imagined and experienced as *Vorstellungen*—into a “pantheon of abstract universality or of pure thought.”

The difference between the Pantheon of the Art-Religion and the Roman Pantheon of “pure thought” deserves comment. The real “content” of the Greek Gods was the ethical devotion of their communities; and that is gone. No one dies for the City’s Gods in battle now; and the independent way of life that they portrayed is lost. Apart from that “content” the “form” of their unity was always completely free, imaginative and plastic.

But in the Pantheon of the Empire, the Gods have something approximating to legally-recognized status. Cults are defined and regulated; and some of the new universalist or monotheist cults are visibly the work of the theoretical Understanding. Much of what happens in the field of intellectual organization began spontaneously before the arrival of the Roman Peace. But from Alexander’s time onward religious *regulation* was a necessary function of government; and one crucial reason for this was that the ruler himself became the object of a cult. This changed the

character of intellectual speculation by giving it a necessary aspect of ideological bias (for or against some social authority or other). The innocence, the aesthetic freedom of the religious imagination was compromised, and the situation of “powerless Beauty which hates the Understanding” arose (par. 32).⁸

- 4./751. But this self is empty. It is an abstraction created by general recognition. Its own way of being is Stoic self-possession in thought. This passes through Scepticism to the Unhappy Consciousness.

The Roman Emperor was, on the whole, an “empty Self” in religion. He let the content go free. Only those who refused to make formal acts of recognition (either of the Emperor’s own divinity, or of some other God(s) of whom their neighbors were seriously afraid)⁹ were persecuted: that is to say only the Jews and the Christians—especially the latter, because they were new, and they were eager missionaries. Anyone (even Caligula’s horse), and any group could be a legal person; and equally, anything could be a God (as long as the God had no imperial ambitions, and the worshippers were not stiff-necked towards other Gods).

Thought was “free” in the sense that it was self-contained; it let reality go where it would. This was the Stoic attitude—the Stoics insisted that we were all children of one Zeus, but conceded that he is “called by many a name.”¹⁰ Agnosticism (or, in philosophical parlance, Scepticism) is the proper name for this “freedom of religion.” According to Hegel’s logical analysis, this luxuriant mingling and multiplication of cults becomes the Unhappy Consciousness, because the Unknowable is literally unbearable. But it was mainly the fact that “anything was permitted” for those in pursuit of the Imperial Power that made it unbearable.

- 5./752. As self-consciousness the Unhappy Consciousness knows just how completely emptied out it is. This is the final fulfilment of the happy consciousness of Comedy. It is the tragic consciousness of the self-certainty that has lost all essence—the painful knowledge that “God is dead.”

The Unhappy Consciousness of the World-Spirit has the political chaos and religious anarchy of the pagan world as its conceptual context, not the sin-consciousness of Judaism. It arises from the experienced impossibility of knowing the “unknown God” without faith, or of doing what is right without charity. Paul and Barnabas were shocked by the “barbarians” who mistook them for Hermes and Zeus.¹¹ They were building the Unhappy Consciousness when they denied the identification.

The Sceptical consciousness, which is content to be the absolute criterion of truth, and to receive all “divine essence” in the shape of that subjective confidence, is still happy. But it becomes tragically unhappy when it reflects upon its condition of absolute alienation from all positive truth (i.e. from all *substance*). In this reflection it loses not only all “essentiality,” but even the certainty of its negative essence. What sort of certainty is this sceptical certainty that we know *nothing* for certain? This is the puzzle that turns into the awareness that “God is dead.”¹² Hegel calls it

“the opposite side and the complete fulfilling” of the Comic Consciousness. He will now explain how this is the case.

- 6./753. The Unhappy Consciousness is the knowledge of what is *lost* in the happiness of the Comic Consciousness. Legal personality and Stoic independence are worthless, and all objective values are lost. The impulse that created great art is destroyed, and the art itself is fruit plucked from the Tree [of Knowledge], offered us by a maiden [Mary]. They are now the subject of scholarly reconstruction. But the girl who will be mother of Destiny is a higher mode of being than the fruit was when it was on the tree. For we can recover what is gone only by recollecting (inwardizing) it; and it was only an outward presence originally.

For the Unhappy Consciousness at its birth, the experience of alienated loneliness has become absolute. The happiness of this life does not satisfy the religious need; so legal recognition is worthless, but the Stoic freedom of thought is of no value either. Epictetus still expresses the Comic Consciousness, but the Emperor Marcus has gone far along the road to unhappiness. Trust in the ethical order (Antigone’s “eternal laws of the Gods”) has failed; the Oracles are silent. The divine statues are stone idols, the hymns are pretty poems; sacrificial feasts have lost their spiritual meaning. No one can create new poems or dramas, and the classical heritage is just that—a heritage of art.

This has to be taken as a characterization of how the late pagans themselves experienced their world. No one who was already a Christian could be in this “first relationship” or primitive condition of the Unhappy Consciousness. How can the silence of the Oracles be a “loss” to any Christian? It was in his Plutarch that Hegel found the pagan sense of this loss.¹³ But the “death of the gods” into mere “literature” was a contemporary experience for Hegel himself, as his own remarks show. We can find it movingly expressed in the first generation of Romantic poets everywhere—in Keats and Shelley for instance. For Hegel himself, the expression of it that was closest at hand was in Hölderlin’s *Hyperion*. We can never turn back to worship Zeus, Apollo and Athena; and our study of Greek religion and life is pure scholarship.

The most interesting problem here is the interpretation of the girl who offers us the fruit from this Tree of Knowledge. Mythically, she is the Virgin-Mother of us all, the second Eve. The poets received their inspiration from living Memory (Mnemosyne). But now they and their divine mother of the Muses are reduced to the vegetable level; they are a fruit-tree. The poetic truth grew on the tree of Greek Civilization; and now it has been plucked, and it is presented to us by the spirit called *Erinnerung*. This is not the orthodox “Holy Spirit,” but the Spirit of Hegel’s *Phenomenology* itself. The little myth in this paragraph states the relation of Hegel’s “art of the Concept” to the “glory that was Greece.”

Hegel’s Science of Experience puts the Incarnation and Pentecost of the Spirit back into the Graeco-Roman context of our political and cultural history; but his “art of *Erinnerung*” gives to that classical heritage the deeper spiritual meaning that it assumes within the total concept of the human community as “the body of

Christ.” Our own pantheon—the one that we are assembling in Hegel’s seventh chapter—is a community of living Gods once more. We do not, and we cannot, worship Zeus and Apollo; but we still have a share in the lives of those who did. A later Romantic poet, the Italian Carducci, wrote “Jove dies, and the poet’s hymn remains.” This expresses perfectly the early romantic nostalgia. But Gentile—a philosopher with deeper Hegelian insight—commented rightly: “The truth is that if the hymn remains, then Jove does too, for he lives in the hymn.” That life is what historical *knowledge* actually *is*; and the greatest achievement of the *Phenomenology* is to have mediated the philosophical comprehension of this truth successfully.¹⁴

- 7./754. For self-conscious spirit both the Greek achievement in the Art-Religion, and the Roman law (including the struggle for the Imperial Purple) in the real world were necessary; also the philosophical achievements of Stoicism and Scepticism. All of them meet around the cradle of spirit as human self-consciousness.

The spirit of the tragic destiny that offers us the erratically plucked, and generally chance-preserved, works of Greek Art and literature is, in the first instance, the imperial spirit of Rome and Byzantium. But that spirit of alien authority is only the first stage of the long process of the “inwardizing” of what was originally “uttered” (i.e. embodied in an outward form) by the Greeks themselves. Hegel refers to the sculpture, the Mysteries and the Games; but it is essentially Greek poetry that is the “uttering” of Spirit. The “spirit that is self-consciously aware of itself as spirit” needed to have the whole circle of the aesthetic religious experience present in the world of its “consciousness.” It is clear that Greek philosophy is included under the “expansion of the *Vorstellung*” created by “pure speech” into a “world that finally gathers itself together into universality.”

The Manifest Religion is not simply a Gospel that came forth from Judaea; it is a gospel about the “inwardizing” of the Pantheon that the Romans established. The “coming forth” of the absolute Spirit that is self-consciously aware of itself as Spirit is identical with the “inwardizing” of the pagan world. Greek Art, comprehended as a “circle of producings,” is the “absolute thinghood” of Spirit. It is the literary remains that are most essential, because *language* is that form of being (or of objectivity) which cannot be sundered from the Self, or from self-consciousness in its logically inevitable singularity, without ceasing to be the thing that it is.

From being language the literary remains sink down into mere marks, if they are not read and understood. The understanding may of course be a misunderstanding; what is said may not be comprehended. The pagan world did not comprehend the Christian gospel for a long time; and that was only a mirror-image of the fact that the Christians, with their Galilean Gospel, could not comprehend the pagans. One could hardly make this last point more graphically than Hegel does when he enumerates the “shapes waiting anxiously in a circle round the birthplace of Spirit that is coming into being as self-consciousness.” This is a transparent reference to the manger at Bethlehem. But the shepherds in the Christian myth are replaced by Plato’s hymn-singing peasants (the “sense-consciousness” of spirit as language); and by the athletes (“beautiful *self-like corporeality*”), the actors of tragedy and

comedy, Roman citizens (“the *world* of the *person* and of Right”), the Roman legionaries and the barbarian invaders (“the devastating wildness of the elements of the content let loose”), and the Stoic and Sceptic professors. The three Kings, present only as *Vorstellungen*, are Achilles, Orestes, and Oedipus. But the Stoics provide a flesh and blood Emperor in Marcus; and in Marcus we do find a touch of the “penetrating grief and yearning” of the Unhappy Consciousness which is the “midpoint” of the circle assembled round the Manger. We can also say that the communal “birth-pangs” of this new Nativity are best represented by two more emperors: Constantine and Julian. So we can put three real kings beside the three tragic masks if we want to.

(b) *The Incarnation*

- 8./755. Spirit presupposes both that substance empties itself out to become self-consciousness, and that self-consciousness is emptied out into thinghood or universal self. The first movement is from unconscious necessity to consciousness. Then consciousness must move to absolute consciousness (spirit). It must recognize that unconscious necessity as the same self-consciousness that it is itself. As actual *living* self-consciousness it has a *mother* [the Memory-Maiden] but its Father is unknown.

The two propositions that were derived from the “result” of the Art-Religion earlier, are restated in paragraph 755. We should remember that in paragraph 749 Hegel derived the “two propositions” from the single proposition “the Self is the absolute Essence.” In Natural Religion there was no “proposition” because there was no “acting or Self-Consciousness” that could properly assert any absolute truth. We can only have two equal “propositions” when the fearful Substance *reasserts* itself, and when the secular proposition “the self is the absolute essence” has converted itself into the religious proposition (of the Unhappy Consciousness) “the absolute essence is the self.” Then we have two equal and opposite propositions in which the object and the subject of the active self-consciousness are each in turn reduced to a “predicate.” These two “propositions”—the proposition of the Human Comedy, and that of the Divine Comedy respectively—must now be transformed by historic mediation into a perfect equality of recognition, and so into “identity.” In other words, the World-Spirit which passed *immediately* from the Happy Consciousness to the Unhappy Consciousness must now make its way forward out of that contradiction, and achieve a form of Happy Consciousness in which the validity of the experience of “unhappiness” is still acknowledged; and the reconciliation must be achieved at the *religious* level—the level of the universal community of “thought”—not at the level of the finite community of “life” that was reconciled with the tragedy of existence in its art. The absolute shape of Destiny, Fate or Necessity (in which the artist’s Gods were engulfed) must be transformed into the “Providence” of a Self that is at home with itself (*beisichselbst, chez soi*) in its “opposite,” the necessary order of Nature.

The first proposition is now formulated as “The Substance alienates itself from itself and comes to be Self-Consciousness.” This has happened in the comic self-

consciousness of the Art-Religion. The experience of the classical civilizations now provides Hegel with his interpretation for the traditional theological dogma of God's self-emptying or *kenosis*. To use the terminology of paragraph 749, the "absolute essence" becomes *a* self; and to "become a self" is to become an *embodied* self-consciousness. *Recognition* of the singular embodied self is the middle through which "thinghood" as such becomes identical with "the universal self." The acceptance of "legal status" is the "emptying out" of the Comic Consciousness into "thinghood," and at the same time the establishment of singular human selfhood as the strictly *formal* universality of the Law.

In the new Gospel, that *secular* transformation receives its *religious* expression. The meaning of the Incarnation is that God and the finite self become identical as the categorical selfhood of the substantial world of human existence. In this way the secularization of the religious self-consciousness achieved in Comedy is transposed back into religious terms; and the singular self-consciousness takes on a *concretely* universal (or "infinite") significance. But in this renewal of spiritual concreteness, the structure of self-alienation (*Entäusserung*) is preserved. The Self is still emptied out into "thinghood" in this present world; the concreteness of spiritual union with God is all in the "other world."

At this stage God has not really alienated himself. He took human shape upon himself in a *Vorstellung*; but he returned to his own Kingdom, and the *Vorstellung* remains as the guarantee of what is true "in itself." In this world the divine Substance is present only as the harsh necessity of Nature, and as a legal authority that is ultimately only "the will of the stronger." But our conscious relation to Nature, is one of "freedom" (since we know we are "saved"); and the will of the stronger in this world itself is a human will. This is what it means to say that "substance is *an sich* self-consciousness" and "self-consciousness is in itself the absolute essence." God is Spirit for this self-alienated consciousness because the Divine Substance is its own true community. The "happiness" of Comic Consciousness is emptied out into the Beyond; the "unhappiness" of "necessity" is our experience here.

Thus the Unhappy Consciousness in its second relation succeeds to the directly paradoxical identity of Stoicism and Scepticism with the Emperor and the legions. As ethical substance, the Greek world became properly singular self-consciousness through the transition into a blind "necessity." That necessity took the shape of a universal tyrant, because "in itself" it was the necessity of universal self-consciousness. The relation of inequality between Substance and Subject is not changed by the shift from the Imperial authority (Substance as emptied into a subjectively incarnate Necessity) to Papal authority (Self-Consciousness as the thinghood of bondage to the body in this world, and to the universal Divine Self in the other world). But instead of a Law enforced by the "will of the stronger," we do now have a free self who recognizes the divine Will as what it is "in itself"; and it does this through the mediation of *another* self. This is what Hegel means when he says that "the alienation [*Entäusserung*] of self-consciousness expresses this: that it is the universal essence *in itself*. Or since the self is the pure being-for-itself that remains at home with itself in its counterpart [it expresses] this: that, for it, it is the

case that the Substance is self-consciousness, and is *ipso facto* Spirit.” God, the substance into which self-consciousness “utters” itself, speaks to it through the priest—who is truly a *Gegenteil* in which it “remains at home.”

So we do now have an “actual Mother” (the community of the Church Militant, here in this world delivering the absolution of our sins) and a “potential Father” (the Divine Will in the other world, for which the Church authority speaks).¹⁵ But the Spirit born of this curious reading of the Virgin Birth story takes a long time to grow up, and to recover the absoluteness of “Self-Consciousness” that resulted from the Art-Religion, so that the converted proposition “the absolute essence is the self” can finally be converted back again without either contradiction or loss. At the moment the whole world of the Art-Religion—the world of human action and self-expression—has become a mere “predicate” of the Church Militant. The selfhood of every human has an absolute value; but it will only achieve its proper status in the “resurrected” body of the Church Triumphant.

This “inequality” of the two sides (and of the two propositions) will be negatively “equalized” in the revolutionary process of Enlightenment and Terror and positively comprehended in the community that possesses the Science of Experience. “Absolute Knowing” is the true “resurrection of the body.”¹⁶

- 9./756. The alienated self-consciousness knows that its world is all spiritual in essence. But until it knows that the divine substance has alienated itself into a self-consciousness, it can only produce a subjective reinterpretation of all religious experience [as in the Gnostics]. This is just a subjective rapture in the sleep of Reason.

The *conversion* of the Comic proposition (“the Self is Absolute Essence”) happens first subjectively—as it must, because the absoluteness of the human self as the creator of all meaning is the point that we (and the World-Spirit) have just now reached. There must be a conversion that takes place in consciousness only; when the real world of its secular happiness is forcibly taken from it, the free imaginative power of Greek culture must, perforce, seek asylum in the world of thought where God can still be found. It knows (now) that God is Spirit (another self-consciousness like itself) and that all objective *Dasein* is God’s expression, just as the art and literature, which have lost their public, substantial significance, are its own free expression. But it can only *imagine* the selfhood of this absolute Spirit.

This is the world of Gnostic mythmaking, the world that is *ready* to receive the Gospel. It will accept the “good news” of God’s coming to earth and dying as a man, because that news confirms its own imaginings. Not everyone can be a Stoic, and think conceptually about the Absolute Mind of which we are all “divine sparks.” But even an illiterate serf can imagine God’s humbling himself to the human lot, and returning to his own place after rising from the dead. The Empire has created one world, in which all the stories, all the traditions, have been dislodged from their substantial moorings, and thrown into a disorderly whirling mass. Salvation stories are told everywhere, because salvation is now so badly needed. Everything in the actual world is just a sign or symbol of some esoteric

“spiritual” meaning. Only in this cultural melée of Gnostic fantasies could the Gospel take hold.

The Spirit that *appears* in the *Phenomenology* is the “true Gnosis”—the “absolute knowing” of the true meaning of human existence. All of our actual world, and of our cultural heritage, is a mass of *signs*, the empirical aspect of which is quite unimportant and “unreal.” Without its methodic commitment to the *historical* “actuality of the Rational” the *Phenomenology* itself would be just another Gnostic fantasy.¹⁷ There were, inevitably, many systems of Gnosis. However much it preyed upon them, and borrowed from them, Christianity differed from these fantasies, because it was fastened down by the historical origin and setting of its Gospel. But that was a matter of “faith.” It is only right for Hegel to emphasize that it was the Gnostic attitude toward the world that provided the “element” for the reception of the Christian message. He has to take the new religion as a work of the creative imagination, because God as Spirit must create himself “out of nothing”; so the Gospel story is historic, only because the faithful *believe* that it actually happened.

The religious imagination establishes the realm of “pure thought” in which all *spiritual* truth has its being. But this is only the “night” of the natural self-consciousness *projected* into a universally shared world. The Gnostic interpretation of the world and of its traditions is a rapture, an ecstasy without any observable foundation. It is not controlled by any reference to the *actual* world of finite life.¹⁸

- 10./757. The objective significance of the record must come forth from the Concept as necessary. That is how self-knowing spirit has come forth from immediate consciousness for us; it followed the same path by which Consciousness alienated itself and became the Ego. But what has come to be for us now is the self-cognition of Necessity: both a Necessity that is intuited as being, and one that comprehends itself. The success of the Gospel indicates the arrival of the World-Spirit at this moment of self-knowledge. We have seen how it got there.

This is an appallingly difficult paragraph to analyse in a summary way, because Hegel is seeking to correlate the phenomenology of Religion with that of finite spirit. We have reached the moment when the independent self-creation of Spirit begins; and Hegel has to explain the difference between our entry into “the native land of truth” as free self-generating Spirit (chapter IV, par. 167), and our entry into it as natural Reason when we arrived at the Art-Religion (pars. 699–700).

The Greek world and the Greek experience puts before us what Spirit is as an object of Consciousness (or as Spirit in immediate harmony with Nature). But the Greek Spirit did not know that it must create itself “out of Nothing” (i.e. out of purely spiritual materials, or out of “pure thought”). The *free* self-production of Spirit must begin in a cultural world in which thought has been set free, and in which it is freely busying itself with the completely arbitrary and capricious attaching of spiritual meanings to the cultural record. In this element, and against this background of accidental free choice, a *necessary* process of conceptual self-manifestation can and does unfold.

This necessity must first of all be *in itself*, i.e. the historical record must be there “for us” as an immediate fact of consciousness. We have seen the empirical self-consciousness of the comedian, and his audience, emerge as the immediate shape of “Necessity” for the whole world of consciousness constituted by the Ethical Substance. Hegel claims here that this emergence of the Concept took place “according to the same necessity as [that by which] *being*, or the *immediacy* that is the contentless object of sensible consciousness, empties itself out from itself and becomes Ego for consciousness.” But the dialectical movement of Religion is so much more complicated than that of finite consciousness, that the direct parallel is not easy to see.

We should begin by noting the direct parallel between Nature-Religion and Consciousness. But that was only the previous stage in which the “self-knowing Spirit” of the Art-Religion “arose for us through the cognition of the *immediate consciousness*, or of the consciousness of the object *in being*.” (It is clear that Hegel means to refer to our observation of Natural Religion, and not just to our observation of Consciousness in chapters I–III, because it is the Self-Knowing Spirit that arises through its necessary movement here, and not the finite self-consciousness.)

But then “*Secondly*, this Concept, which as immediate, also had the shape of immediacy for its consciousness, has given itself the shape of self-consciousness *an sich*, i.e. according to the very same necessity of the Concept.” So a direct parallel has to be sought in the Art-Religion also. The Abstract Work of Art is to be interpreted as the “sensible certainty” of identity with God; the Living Work of Art is the “Perception” of that identity; and the Spiritual Work of Art is to be seen as the “Understanding” of it. The singular self-consciousness of the artist as Comedian is the “result” of the whole movement.

The religious “Understanding” of Art is the self-understanding of the artist (shared with his audience). This absolute consciousness of Comedy must now go through the “experience” of finite self-consciousness in chapter IV in order for us to reach the true “Religion of Reason.” In the “phenomenology” of the Manifest Religion, therefore, we must expect to find a repetition of the moments of mortality, servitude, formal freedom, scepticism, despair and absolution. By this path of development, the physical necessity that simply exists must empty itself out (*sich entäussern*) into the cognitive necessity of rational thinking. The fate of being finitely human and mortal which the comedian proclaims when she peeps out from behind the mask and says: “It is all a joke! There are no Gods and heroes really, there is only someone here who is just like yourselves” must become the “intuited necessity” of a conceptual consciousness that is “at home with itself in necessity, and knows and comprehends it.” The “actual World-Spirit” of the Empire has become this “comprehended necessity” *an sich*, or logically. Now it must unfold as the actual process of the self-creation of the Absolute Spirit “out of nothing.”

Since the *being* of the Absolute Spirit is the same natural *necessity* that is the object of Understanding in the phenomenology of simple Consciousness, the “unity of being and thinking” requires that the self-production of Absolute Spirit must be a parallel evolution of physical and logical necessity. What necessarily happens historically, must come to know itself in the mode that *we* can see to be

logically “necessary”; and since the parallel is with the motion of the singular self-consciousness, the very first “necessity” that we can recognize in this connection, is that Spirit must visibly come to be as a mode of intuition which has left sense-consciousness *behind* it. Not only that, but the whole phenomenology of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and True Spirit, must *all* be behind it. They are what is now buried in the unconscious treasury of spiritual life which the community that knows itself in the Religion of Absolute Spirit has to have.

The last moment to go into the darkness of that treasury was the Protagorean Self-Consciousness of the Comedy that knew itself (with infinite sadness, for it is the consciousness of what is lost that makes Aristophanes great) to be the absolute criterion of what is, and what is not. That memory therefore is the first moment to be converted by the Spirit; the new world-religion begins with the *memory* of a creative genius who was a “Man of Sorrows.” The Man of Sorrows is united with the Substance that has been “lost.” He is recovered in memory only. The sensible event of his appearing, is buried in the “night” of the past. The Hegelian Manifest Religion is not in any respect the religion of the primitive Church.

The crucial point is that to “remember” something is different from the conscious knowledge that you are imagining it. What is remembered now is that God was sensibly present with us and died among us. It is *remembered* (rather than dreamed) because the world has come to the point where the memory is necessary. We do not *know* what happened historically, but our faith tells us that we are remembering a “Gospel.” The necessity of this Gospel is what we have already comprehended; and it has nothing to do with empirical truth, because no empirical event could be “necessary” in this conceptual way. In a world full of saving fantasies, a story that is reported as history emerges; and the world must *believe* it, because its truth is what is logically needed.

- 11./758. How it happens is that the belief appears universally that the Spirit is incarnate for sense. This experience is not imaginary [as in Gnosticism] but is actually the case.¹⁹ We do not have to go out of consciousness to find God; we are immediately aware of God as this man of flesh and blood. This is the *positive* religious self that complements the negative self-consciousness of the actual world.

What is “remembered” is the work of the same imaginative power which in its *free* activity we are bound to recognize as “making things up”; or (as Hegel puts it in par. 756) the imagination is adding a quite gratuitous and unjustifiable interpretation to remembered material. Thus it is perfectly plain to the Understanding that the story of Mary’s pregnancy and of the manger at Bethlehem is an imaginative embroidery upon the biography of the man Jesus, whose birth was later *believed* to mark the advent of the Absolute Spirit in human form. The Virgin Birth story is a Gnostic fantasy if ever there was one; yet this was the first aspect of the “memory” that Hegel himself alluded to, and it is evident enough that no objective historian could call it “a borrowed significance, and a garment that does not cover the nakedness of the appearance and earns neither belief nor reverence.” The reverence for

the Virgin Mother, is second only to that felt towards the Child who appears by magic, as if coming from fairyland in a folk-tale.

Hegel says: "the fact that the absolute Spirit has given itself the shape of Self-Consciousness *in itself*, and hence also for its *consciousness*, appears now in this way that it is the *belief of the world* that the Spirit *is there* as a self-consciousness, i.e. as an actual man."²⁰ By the time that "the belief of the world" actually appears, the Nativity story is just as firmly (and as generally) believed to be an actual fact, as the other boundary of the *thereness*, the "Crucifixion under Pontius Pilate." Both articles found their way into the Creeds in due course (and not too long after the appearance of the Spirit as the "belief of the world").

We cannot cleanly separate the Pontius Pilate story which (as far as our historical evidence goes) is worthy of empirical credence, from the Nativity myth which never was, and cannot ever be worthy of such credence. The presence side by side of the myth that we *cannot* believe, and the story that we generally accept (though with all the controversies that must arise about evidential sources of the Gospel type), highlights for us the fact that the decision to believe either of them, was and still is a *free* one; and further that the free decision to believe something (to accept it as historical not imaginary) does not establish its objective validity. Just as we no longer believe the Bethlehem story, so we might come to regard the Pilate story as a fiction. *It is of the essence of memory that it may be imaginary.* This is a logical fact that is vital to Hegel's doctrine of Spirit as self-creative "out of nothing" (i.e. out of the creative imagination).

Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and True Spirit all lie behind Spirit at the moment when its "self-creation" begins; they are available to it, but it is *free* of them. Its self-creation begins with an *act of faith* that takes a "Divine Man" story of the Gnostic type to be *historical*. This is an absurd—an *irrational*—act, the act of a "faith" that knows itself to be "beyond Reason." Many of those who became Christians by conversion—Constantine, for example, since I take him to be the actual *Gestalt* of "the world's belief"—were philosophically educated persons, who knew quite well what they were doing in this respect. It was precisely these thoughtful educated men (and probably an at least equal number of educated women, too) who *made* the Christian faith.

The supposed founder certainly did not make it. Given that he was a historical person, he could not make it, because he was the object of it, and it was principally concerned with the significance of his *death*. Even Paul did not make the faith, though he made an important contribution to it. Constantine himself only facilitated its "appearance." The "appearance" itself (in the full panoply of the Condition of Right) was at the councils of Constantinople and Nicaea.

The "belief of the world" canonized certain written *accounts* (*logoi*) as historical. Men and women, whose names were still remembered, Joseph and Mary, Peter and John, and the rest, had *seen*, *touched*, and *heard* the Divine Man. But if this was the canonized faith, why does Hegel here state the "belief of the world" *in the present tense*? Why does he speak of the Divine Man's *being there* as a sensible certainty *for the world*, and of his presence not as remembered, but as "an actual fact"?

Even if we could credit—in spite of all the historically later “shapes” which Hegel has already claimed were ranged in a ring round the Manger—that he really does mean to assert that the “belief of the world” appeared when an unlettered Galilean fisherman supposedly said “Thou art the Christ, the son of the Most High,” how *can* he say that “the believing consciousness,” *in general*, “sees, touches and hears” this Godhead?

This is the “intuited necessity of the Concept that is at home with itself.” Hegel endows every Christian from Peter onwards (and specifically Constantine and the Councils) with the philosophical capacity to use the “eternal present.” The man Jesus is “the shaped Unchangeable.” This is what is logically entailed by the fact that the Absolute Spirit is believed to have given itself the shape of Self-Consciousness *an sich*. Moreover, Jesus said “Whoso believeth in me, shall never die”; so Peter still *does* “see, touch and hear him” at this moment; and I (Constantine or Athanasius) see, touch and hear him likewise in my faith—specifically when I receive the Sacrament, and hear his words read in the Gospel. Otherwise it would only be a Gnostic fantasy that God ever was incarnate in just *this* man. Hegel is describing the second relation of the Unhappy Consciousness in its saved aspect *philosophically*. This is the condition of absolute dependence upon *the singular shape* of the Unchangeable (par. 210). If it is physically necessary that *this* self-consciousness is a thing that can be sensibly seen, touched, heard, then it is logically necessary that the Absolute as self-consciousness is *eternally* seen, touched, heard; and to know God in this “shape” is to be able to see, touch, hear Him. The “faith” of the Christian is knowledge *an sich* (just as the embodied self is spiritual self-consciousness *an sich*).

We may be tempted to adopt the standpoint of Spirit *an und für sich*, and hence to say that this “faith” is *not yet* knowledge, *not yet* spiritual self-consciousness. But when we observe a Religion, we are observing the true infinite perfection or completeness of a *Gestalt* of Consciousness. The orthodox position has always been that “faith” is a *kind* of knowledge; in its “faith,” the Church of the Nicene Creed does know itself in God. The Church Militant knows itself to be one with the Church Triumphant; and Hegel knows how to express that knowledge for them philosophically. That (and only that) is “our contribution.”

That we are, indeed, speaking of the religion of the Unhappy Consciousness in its relation to the “shaped Unchangeable”—i.e., of the consciousness of being saved in Christ, as *this* historic Divine Man—is clear from Hegel’s remark about the Unhappy Consciousness of “actuality” being a negative consciousness of “loss.” In this time of “immediate” conversion, the saved Christian, loses the world. One who has not come to have the consciousness that the actual world is empty of all life and hope can hardly make the Christian leap of faith. The paradigm case here is Augustine. The unhappy consciousness of the actual world is the negative aspect of this immediate birth of Absolute Spirit as “Sense-Certainty”; religious life is bound to be (as it was for Augustine) a perpetual struggle not to fall back into spiritual despair. One has to recover, at every moment, the Pauline consciousness of the voice and the blinding light on the road to Damascus. That

Pauline consciousness is something that Augustine certainly had, and he founded a “Christian philosophy” upon it. *This actual man*, the Savior, is always there—even when I, here, am looking the wrong way.

This is the only way in which what Hegel says about “the belief of the world” can be reconciled with the present tense statement *of* the belief. Anyone who takes the present tense to refer simply to the Apostolic community must explain both why their actual sense-experience is called the “belief of the *world*,” and why the Nativity *needs* (and how it can have) such a remarkable audience in eager attendance upon it (in par. 754).²¹

(c) *Rational Revelation*

12./759. This incarnation of the divine essence is the simple content of the absolute religion. In it God is known as Spirit (and knows himself as such). Spirit is knowing oneself in one’s absolute otherness; it is knowing ourselves in God as our substance. So in this religion God is *revealed* as the absolute self in whom all selves know themselves. If there is true knowing this is how it must reveal itself. Orthodox theology is a mass of predicates that depend on this, and on the withdrawal into thought; but the concept of Spirit begins from the self-certainty of the self for whom it exists. It is the full self-consciousness of this self. *This* is the identity of divine and human nature.

That God is incarnate in humanity and “has essentially and immediately the shape of Self-Consciousness, is the simple content of the Absolute Religion.” This “simple content” is the concept of Absolute Spirit that must travel all the way from a sensible certainty which necessarily comes and goes like the Sun, to fully comprehensive self-possession. But the use of “immediately” in the company of “essentially” has an important implication which should be stated at once. “Self-Consciousness” has to travel all the way from the life and death struggle to the community of forgiveness; but in its immediacy it is the kind of self-awareness that the living man Jesus had; and it appears to me to be a rigorously necessary inference from what Hegel says that “the divine essence” has no other “self-consciousness” than this. The humanly “embodied shape” can say, as the Jesus of our record did, “I and the Father are one.” It will be a very naïve historian who says confidently that *this* record (in John) is “historic”; but only in the “oneness” that is here asserted (which our science seeks to explicate) can “the Father” properly be said to have “self-consciousness” at all. We, the observing readers, are the absolute authority concerning what “self-consciousness” is; and if “absolute religion” or “absolute knowledge” is even possible, then it does not use language in an analogical way, since no analogy is knowably “absolute.” The presence of God is a matter of Sense-Certainty because I too can say that “I and the Father are one.”²²

The religious encounter of two selves, which is the immediate shape of Absolute Spirit, is the complement of their encounter in the world. The self in whom God is actually recognized, refused to fight, and accepted the certainty of death willingly, rather than put the life of another self at risk. His God, in whom he knew himself

and all other selves, was a Substance whose accidents were all precious and essential. In the religious metaphor, this God sees the fall of every sparrow. He is Spinoza's "God or Nature," because Nature has already been recognized as the divine "Substance" that sustains all finite selves as its accidental aspect.

It is the structure of Consciousness (as the intentional awareness of an "object") that requires this universal Spirit to be known as *other*. There is not, and cannot be, anything hidden by its otherness; properly speaking, the Other is "the Father," i.e., the world of the reconciled community of all selves. It can become another "self," the object of an inward encounter, only as my own higher self, the embodiment of the perfectly reconciled community in me. Only in this way can I know God as a self, who is both other, and my own self. From the first moment that I have claimed to know anything, from the first moment of theoretical sense-certain consciousness, when I could say "It *is*," though I found it impossible to say what "it" was ("the contentless object of sensuous consciousness"—par. 757) my own selfhood has had this universal dimension. Now, through the mediation of a direct encounter with the Risen Savior, I can say that this universal dimension is God—that it is "I that is We and We that is I" (par. 177). My Sense-Certainty that "*It is*" has become the certainty that God is, as the absolute Spirit.

We must not forget the essentially communal character of Spirit when we read that "the absolute essence has the form of Self" or that "the Self is now the object of consciousness." God is *other* than I because he is "We"—and not any finite "We" but the Church Triumphant, including Zarathustra and Aristophanes and all the others whom we have recognized as we journeyed. But as Spirit I am other than myself, because I am this "We" also. Spirit is the whole *Begriff*, the "being-for-self" which necessarily is "for-another," yet "at home with itself" and "returned into itself" in this otherness. The "certainty" of self is the Cartesian certainty of "pure thinking"; but by showing it to be a religious, communally shared and maintained certainty, Hegel turns that "pure insight" into the strongest psychological *security* that selfhood can have. The "God" of the Manifest Religion is Jesus, the other self who is completely exposed, not hidden, yet whose "Mystic Body" is all the selves there are who have ever tried (or will ever try) to be properly human.

The God of the traditional theology has a mass of "predicates" attached to His subjectivity. He is the Good, the Holy, Creator of all things visible and invisible, and so on. But these "attributes" are not his essence; they belong to God as a thought-object. If we want to conceive Him as the Subject to whom these predicates attach, we must first manage to conceive Him consistently as a Subject at all (in terms of our own reflective awareness of what it is to be a "subject"). Only the spiritual concept of "subjectivity" makes it possible to do this at all; and God's being "the Creator of all things visible and invisible"²³—which comprehends most of the other "attributes" fairly adequately—will only be interpretable if we can first grasp how the Spirit creates *itself* "out of nothing."

13./760. Here the shape of consciousness (as the essence or truth) coincides with the self-consciousness whose object it is. The object in being signifies pure thought or absolute

essence. God seems thereby to have *come down*, but actually he has *gone up* to his true essence. For now he truly embraces the whole range of being. God as a sensible human mortal seems superficial, but it is now that He is at his deepest.

Here the objective shape of the “essence” as consciousness—i.e. the person of the Savior, or the “Shaped Unchangeable”—coincides with Self-Consciousness as Spirit. This man Jesus, who comprehends his world thoughtfully and is reconciled with it in action, is conscious of his union with the Most High (as the Understanding put it in the abstract theological tradition in which Jesus himself was educated). To all of the theologians coming from a pagan philosophical background—as much as to the Jews, or to a hybrid mind like Paul’s—this incarnation of God appeared to be self-humiliation on the most sublime and awe-inspiring scale.

Hegel himself needs the theological formula of *kenosis*, “self-emptying,” to express the transition from Substance to Subject. But he introduced his comments on the abstract thinking of the theologians in paragraph 759, because he means to have nothing to do with the language of “humiliation” as far as living self-consciousness is concerned. The actor is higher than his mask, even if he is not a hero; and the maid is higher than the fruit, even if she is no virgin. Similarly, the All-Highest is higher, as a *man*, than He was as the whole treasury of ideally intuited thoughts in the transfigured night of Gnostic Wisdom. For in the adequate concept of self-consciousness—present in a single person only *an sich*—everything will be logically comprehended and known for what it is. This includes such “pure thoughts” as “the All-Highest.”

The fact that death, too, is involved, that God has “humbled” Himself unto death in *this* man, is also crucially important to Hegel’s speculative theology. But we have not come to that yet. For the moment we are only saying that for Jesus to know himself in “the Father” was the greatest advance that “the Light-Essence” (or Hölderlin’s “Father Aether”) has yet made. Only in John 8:58, not in Exodus 3:14, does God properly say “I am.” Moses only heard a voice in a rapture of the imagination; Jesus said the words as God (and those who heard him were minded to stone him there and then). The sense-certainty of the embodied self is where all *spiritual* being is founded. Compared with it, the starry heavens (which filled Kant with awe) are only—as Hegel rudely said—a kind of sky-leprosy.²⁴

- 14./761. This consciousness is consciousness of God, not just of man. The manifest religion knows that the human being is God (essence). Self-consciousness involves both God and man at once. God is there in the spirit as my absolute self-consciousness. This is pure speculative knowledge, for that is what “spirit” is, and it is only in speculative knowing that God is. Speculative knowing is the identity of *this* self with the universal self. This was the truth of manifest religion, and that is why it is welcomed with joy.

In this seventh chapter of the *Phenomenology* we have followed the story of the manifestation of “the Lord” to the point where the structure of Self-Consciousness as Spirit has been grasped. In the Roman World the “Lord is come” indeed. The respectable North African peasant who had not the foggiest idea *who* the Lord of the

World was, was perfectly certain that he was somewhere out there, because his tax-gatherer arrived every year without fail.²⁵ For him, the illiterate fisherman recognizing Jesus as God was an easy model to follow. For a literate consciousness it was not so easy; for the absurdity of worshipping the living Lord of the World was patent.

Paragraph 761 shows us how and why the second position of the Unhappy Consciousness—the dependence of all finite consciousness upon the Shaped Unchangeable—has to transform itself into the third. Hegel spoke of the birth of the Manifest Religion in paragraph 758. He will return to the story of its development in paragraph 762. In these three intervening paragraphs he has been expounding the speculative Concept of it—the logically implicit goal of its development as we comprehend it. In its mature shape, the relation of *unequal* recognition is sublated, and the Concept is speculatively comprehended. The recognition of the Eternal Logos in the man Jesus, does away with the absolute gulf between the finite and the Infinite.

Even Peter's words "Thou art the Christ, the *Son* of the Most High" are, in themselves, a way of avoiding the evident absurdity of identifying the Unchangeable with a changeable "shape." It is only in the memory of a later age, when the doctrine of God's Tri-unity has been formulated, that Peter's declaration takes on the status of the paradigmatic leap. For Peter, the man who was there before him in the flesh, was the "mediator" between himself and God. It is only in the experience of receiving God's forgiveness through the words that this man speaks, that the three terms coincide for Peter, so that "God is here *manifest* in the way that He *is*; He is *there* in just the way that He *is*; He is *there* in just the way that He is *in Himself*; He is there as Spirit." The sense in which the theological doctrine is *not* a falsification of Peter's recognition-moment, is the key to the sense in which the absolved Unhappy Consciousness is a *Vorstellung* of Reason. But for the remembering consciousness the *Vorstellung* shows its religious meaning directly. The "belief of the World" takes Peter's words in their eternal sense, so that it also can say: "Thou art . . . the Son." In both cases, there is an identity of the mediated thought of the Divine, with the immediate (sensible) knowledge. But for the remembering consciousness, the immediate knowledge is that of an "inner sense."

Thus the Faith of the Manifest Religion is properly the third relationship of the Unhappy Consciousness with the Unchangeable. The Christ is *here*, now, as the reconciling word of forgiveness in His community. This is Reason in its immediacy; it appears to be the very opposite of rational, because it is immediate, and it involves the "eternity" of a transiently spoken word of forgiveness. It is also a sensible encounter, in an embodied community; the man to whom Peter spoke is *there now* immediately in the reconciling consciousness of mutual absolution (compare par. 671).

Only "speculative knowing," the observation that views both what moves and what abides in its eternal aspect, can see what happens here at all. So the object of our observation is now a consciousness only one step removed from our own. It is safe to say that Constantine's troops did not see their new God in this way at all; but Paul knew "God in the form of pure knowledge" already, in his conversion

experience. In Luther the thought, or the mediated knowledge, is fully explicit; and so it is, too, in Augustine's doctrine of the Inner Teacher.

Starting from the side of "immediate knowledge" we can easily recognize the speculative identity of opposites in the Johannine Jesus. "*Dasein* as the negativity of itself, and hence as self, *this* self and the universal one" translates "I and the Father are One," or "Whosoever has seen me has *seen* the Father." But the important sense of "immediate knowledge"—what really establishes the "*Wissen* of the manifest Religion" as "*pure* speculative *Wissen*"—is the fact that in the Pauline doctrine *all* of the faithful see Christ: "For now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20; cf. John 14:9–11 etc.). This incorporation of the *remembered* Savior into "pure speculative Wissen" is God as Spirit. Questions about the historical accuracy of the Johannine record (or any record) of the man Jesus, fall away completely. There is no empirical doubt that could affect this experience; even the conviction that Paul was lying about his "conversion" would not touch it. We have to concede (abstractly) that anyone might be a "whited sepulchre"; but it is only an experience that is true *in itself*, an experience that we recognize because we have had it, we do have it, or we know (in the mode of "faith") that we *could* have it, that can be successfully "faked" for us by someone else.²⁶ It is only because we know what the "real" experience is, that we can distinguish it from a pretence.

This "speculative knowing," this recognition of ourselves in the *speculum*, the mirror, of the actual Savior who "is there"; or, more comprehensively, this recognition of the universal truth in the mirror of our concretely embodied, uniquely singular, and thoughtfully reflective, experience of ourselves as *selves*—this is the experience towards which "all the hopes and expectations of the preceding world were impelled." As we can see from paragraph 754, the "world" is that of the Unhappy Consciousness, the Hellenized world dominated by Rome. Unhappy Consciousness is swallowed up in the joy of the whole world over its "beholding itself in the absolute essence." Manifest Religion makes one point explicit, a point about that "*pure* self-recognition in absolute otherness" (par. 26) which was the definition of Spirit (and the Aether of Science) in the Preface. This can only come to birth through self-recognition in another self. For there to be this world of dawning philosophic science that Hegel lives in (and we also), it was therefore necessary that the "absolute essence" should be intuited first as an *immediate* self-consciousness. But for the immediacy to be "spiritual" it has to be the immediacy of memory, not that of sense. The Greek spirit could not be "absolute spirit," in any but a tragic sense of absolute striving, because the immediacy in which it recognized itself was a sensible one (cf. par. 27).

(d) *Evolution of the Rational Revelation*

- 15./762. This is the absolute self-concept of Spirit; but it has still to develop. It begins with the opposition of singular and universal self. It is the living man Jesus—who finds that the world does not recognize him. The Concept does not yet exist as Concept; and first Jesus must become the *image* of all selves. This will be the perceptual stage between the sensation and the understanding of spiritual selfhood.

Unless the manifestation of the actual concept of Spirit begins at the level of immediate sensibility, we shall have only a Gnostic fantasy. The memory of the eternally Risen Lord is the memory of an embodied human being who made a “living work of art” out of his active life (and death), and a “spiritual work of art” out of his speech. Memory now makes the “abstract work of art” out of the record. The whole “art” of this self was a peculiarly unHellenic (even anti-Hellenic) one. But he was a Beautiful Soul; and in its inward self-sufficiency, this “beauty” is *evil*. For that very reason the Passion of Christ was the *necessary* shape through which the “immediacy” of the finite living consciousness had to display itself as the “pure mediation or thinking.” Jesus was the martyr of an ideal of pure thought. He walked, talked, ate and slept like the rest of us; but always with the consciousness of being “One with the Father.” Unless he could manifest this “oneness” adequately, all of his living with it, but merely talking about it, would be hypocritical.²⁷

For those who heard his call and “followed” him in life, Jesus was “the Master”; the followers knew him as a model, as the athletic champion of a new life, but as another sensibly present human being. He was not present to them, or even to himself, as “spirit”; for there was no community of equals—except in the dream (like that of Novalis) which Hegel ascribed to Jesus in *The Spirit of Christianity*. The Spirit is still not there in the way that it is “*singular* self, just as much as it is universal, or as All Self.” “The Holy Spirit, the comforter” could come only when Jesus was dead; and then, as the Spirit of the Resurrected Lord, on whom all believers are dependent, this Spirit has only flipped over from the display of its singular side to the display of its universality. The Risen Lord is “the universality of actuality, the allness of the Self, and the exaltation of *Dasein* into representation.”

The dead Savior is a “*sublated sensible this*.” But that does not yet make him the truly universal Spirit. In order to reach the true universality of Understanding, Spirit must pass through a stage analogous to the “thinghood” of Perception. The spiritual “thinghood” of God comes about through the “exaltation of *Dasein*” in the Resurrection story. The identity of Jesus with “the Father” is here *pictured*. But in this picture he is far *less* like us, less equal with us, more remote, than he was when he walked the earth. The *Vorstellung* of the Risen Christ is the “Shaped Unchangeable.” This brings us to the “second relation” of Unhappy Consciousness (in par. 210), but not yet to the “universal joy” of paragraph 761. The symbol (i.e. the *Vorstellung*) for that is the “descent of the Spirit” at Pentecost.

- 16./763. Jesus must die, because it is the essence of sensible being to be transient; only as a memory is he spiritual. This is his *resurrection*. He is resurrected *in us* and thus we know ourselves as spirit, as a community whose substance is God, and which is the subjectivity of God. Thus the unity of the singular with the community is achieved.

We can begin to appreciate properly at this stage why Phrenology is so important for the phenomenology of Spirit. In order to become the *thinghood* of God, the Savior must die; like Yorick, he must lie in the grave as a set of bones. Hegel’s consistent emphasis on the symbol of the “skull,” the “Skull-place” (Golgotha,

Calvary), and so on, is in itself an explicit reflection upon the impossibility of the Resurrection as a physical event. But for the faithful in the “second relation” of Unhappy Consciousness the Resurrection of “the body” was a historic occurrence; and when Jesus returned to “the Father,” their human Savior took his ordinary perceptible body with him.

This has an important symbolic significance, but it is completely transformed in the “third relationship.” In the Faith that becomes speculative Reason, the “Body of Christ” is the religious community;²⁸ and the actual or *remembering* community, which knows itself in the religious totality of the Church Triumphant, must of necessity be embodied in flesh and blood. So, whereas the Crusaders (in the second relationship) fought for an empty Sepulchre, the Hegelian Christians (in the third relationship) know quite well that the natural body of Jesus had to be left in the grave where it long ago crumbled into dust, in order for the Christ to be resurrected in his spiritual body. The symbol of the “Ascension” does have a place in Hegel’s Christology, because the sensible body of the Church Militant rejoices precisely in its spiritual membership in the Church Triumphant. But the Ascension, like the Resurrection, was not a historical event. The Resurrection symbolizes the transition from a singular mortal body to a communal, and hence a perpetual or substantial, one; and the Ascension symbolizes the transition from a spiritually substantial community to the absolute spirit of communal subjectivity—the true immortality, or “Heaven,” of the Spirit that has left all the falsity of sensible being behind. Pentecost (the Descent of the Spirit) closes the circle and ties everything together, by admitting the equality of Subject and Substance and restoring to the “false” moment of natural, finite, sensible presence its permanently necessary place in the self-founding of the absolutely free Spirit.

Jesus dies; this changes his logical status. We are not at the moment interested in *how* he died, but only in how his “being dead” affects his relationship to the “belief of the world.” Having lain in the grave, he “rose” and was seen and touched again. Having “ascended,” he is now imaginatively *one* with the Father, because he has become “deathless.” All who “believe on him” can follow him through the gate of death into this deathless union with the Father. Thus, even in the second relationship—the “belief of the World” in Christ as Savior—the significance of the Resurrection, as a supposed historic event, is communal. But in the third relationship, the Body of which Jesus is the “head” becomes a present spiritual community. This changes the logical status of “the Father”; God is now clearly seen to be “the universal self-consciousness of the community.” Some who participated in “the belief of the World” at its birth, knew this already. The third relationship existed, in Paul’s conversion experience (and in those who understood it) from the time of Pentecost. But the nascent “belief of the world” was not generally on this Pauline level; the stage of spiritual “perception” was essential.

17./764. Temporal/spatial distance are an incomplete form of mediation for the immediate mode of spirit. Memory is only a formal baptism of sensible being in the water of the intellect.

The Risen and Ascended Lord is just a *Vorstellung* in the memory of the faithful. This is the stage at which the actual “belief of the world” appears. The *Dasein* of the absolute essence as an actual man is perfectly bounded. His life is over, and it ended far away, and a long time ago. We can have him with us now as an image (like the Greek statue); but the essential mode of his presence is that we read the records of his life (as in the “*spiritual* work of art”). How this *history*—this synthetic combination of sensible fact and intellectual meaning—can have the significance claimed for it by Faith, we still have to discover. “Remembering the story” is only a halfway house.

- 18./765. This form of *imagining* is the way in which Spirit is aware of itself in the religious *Gemeine*. The community’s consciousness is split into Here and Now and There and Then. The elements are all present but scattered. Consciousness must culturally develop its intuition of absolute substance into the fully self-conscious Concept that we have.

The “belief of the World” is all *Vorstellung*. Hegel said in paragraph 761 that “the joy of beholding itself in the absolute essence grips the whole world.” But it is a strange grip, even when the “whole world” of the Western Empire does become involved in it, for the “joy” of the *Gemeine* (commune) is essentially postponed.²⁹ “Unhappy Consciousness” and the “Joy of Salvation” are alienated “sides” of the actual world of Spirit’s Culture. The problem of how the historically singular *Vorstellung* can have a universal spiritual meaning is solved by *doubling* the world of experience into the world of fact and the world of thought. The world of thought is taken to be a real world of experience beyond death. Like the perceptual consciousness, the believing consciousness does not put the moments of its world together. It skips back and forth between “this world” and the “kingdom of God.” The moments of the historic *Vorstellung* that mediates this division are the Nativity, the Mission, the Passion, the Resurrection and the Ascension. They lie there in a string. It is clear that the ends of this string are very strange historic events indeed. But the imaginative interpretation of the thought here is that the Resurrection and Ascension are two stages of the entry into “eternal life” in another world. The ends of the string have still to be bent back to meet one another, so as to produce an intelligible whole with a meaning for Reason (which knows no “other world”). How this can be done we already know. But a long process of *Bildung* is required for it—fifteen hundred years if we reckon from the Conversion of Constantine to the appearance of Hegel’s book.

- 19./766. In this consciousness absolute spirit is the content as *truth*. But it must not be just a substance that is objectively imaged, but self-consciousness as an actual subject. This is its evolution in the community. We cannot discover what it means by going back to the life of the early Church, or to the words of the Savior. The historical *origin* of the concept is not the same as its logical simplicity.

Paragraph 766 explains the “cultural” transition from religious Perception to religious Understanding. The image of the Shaped Unchangeable, as a Savior who

has gone ahead to guide the faithful to eternal life, shows us how the Church as the Thinghood of Reason (the universal community of mankind) is necessarily constituted. The Church Triumphant is "Absolute Spirit as the content" because it is united with God, and the union is one of self-recognition in the other, or perfect self-knowledge. But this is a substance, the Heavenly City of Augustine, or the Ethical Substance with all of its tragic conflicts sublated. The Eumenides really do *become* the "Kindly Ones"; but this is only a picture of "pie in the sky." It must be translated into the experience of the community here, a real *subject*.

That was the problem of the Reformation; and ever since Luther (indeed even before him) there have been religious movements which sought to return to the condition of the first Christian community, the Apostolic community, in one way or another. But the problem cannot be solved in that way, because it belongs to the World-Spirit. Jesus himself withdrew from the world and formed his own community; but now that separated community has become the universal community. We have to imitate Jesus by "ascending into Heaven"; but that ascent must at the same time be the descent of the Spirit back to Earth. Hegel himself has "unravelling the rich life of Spirit in the community" in his book. But the goal of his memory-journey was not to return to the beginning, but to comprehend the whole that has sprung from that beginning. In this comprehension, everything is logically ordered; hence the Concept becomes "simple" in the sense that it is completely *transparent*; we can see why everything is now the way it is, or why it had to be the way it was. The beginning was "simple" only with the brute necessity of a natural fact: "He was crucified, dead and buried." That is simple enough. But then comes: "on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father." That is a mass of puzzles; and the community that took it for simple fact is not the one we want to go back to.

In so far as the "instinct to go to the Concept" leads the Christian follower to the ideal of a direct "imitation of Christ," this mistake is actually pernicious, because it leads to the "discarding of the *Vorstellung* of the community." This is the "evil" of the Beautiful Soul, in which even Jesus himself was involved. Instead of trying to go forward to Understanding, we try to get back from Perception to Sense-Certainty. The result is the death of religious consciousness altogether; *scholarship* takes the place of life.³⁰ Life must be lived in the community; instead of restricting the community and impoverishing life, a properly religious consciousness must enlarge and enrich it.

- 20./767. Spirit is initially *pure substance*. As thinking this descends into singularity, and passes into otherness (perceptual universality), in order to return to itself finally as self-consciousness. Perceptual determinacy is the necessary middle between pure thought and self-conscious subjectivity; but Spirit must spread out over all three moments.

Paragraph 767 lays out the conceptual pattern for the "understanding" of Spirit's manifestation. This is the maturity of the Manifest Religion. But since the standpoint should be that of the Belief of the World itself we must interpret the logical terminology in a way appropriate to that standpoint.

First, says Hegel, "Spirit is content of its consciousness in the form of *pure substance*." This "pure substance" is the God of scholastic theology, for surely the theologians are the "thinkers" of this community. "This element of thinking is the motion to descend into *Dasein* or singularity." It was Descartes, the scholastically educated "pure thinker," who discovered and demonstrated this "descent"; and it is Spinoza for whose consciousness this Substance is the content.

No theologian of the Schools taught the identity of God and Nature; but Hegel interpreted both the Trinity and the Mass in this way. His warrant for ascribing the view that God logically had to create the world and become incarnate in it, to the consciousness that we are observing is probably to be found in Boehme. Boehme is certainly Hegel's main model of theological thought in the mode of *Vorstellung*.³¹ He truly thinks in images, and every act of his God is creatively *imagined*.

"The third [moment] is the return out of *Vorstellung* and otherness, or the element of self-consciousness itself." This is the theological conception of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit "proceeds from the Father, and from the Son." So it is the result of the motion, the result which cannot be separated from the motion that is its self-production. The Incarnation of the Logos in the *Vorstellung* of the God-Man is only one of the moments of the religion of the Spirit—vitally necessary, but not sufficient by itself, to complete its cyclic process. The community of the Spirit will give quite a different interpretation to it than that which was given by the Belief of the World (for which it had simple historic truth).

Each of these moments constitutes a world. To the Unhappy Consciousness belongs the world of "pure thought"; to Faith belongs the world of *Vorstellung*; and to Religious Self-Consciousness belongs the world of Spirit proper. They are a moving cycle and each contains its predecessor(s), so it is not surprising that they flow into one another, and that any periodization is artificial.

- 21./768. We have met this content partially in the shapes of the *Unhappy Consciousness* and *Faith*. But in the former it was brought forth only as an ideal for consciousness to yearn after; and in *Faith* the content is the imaged essence of the world, but without a self, and without actuality, hence without self-certainty (which is sundered from it partly as a vanity of knowing [cf. pars. 525–526?] and partly as pure insight [cf. pars. 541ff.]).

From the way that Hegel has spoken about them previously, we might well think that Unhappy Consciousness and Faith are identical by continuity. It is the Unhappy Consciousness that comes to Faith, we might say; and it is distinct from the Faithful Consciousness only in its "first relationship." But Hegel devotes paragraph 768 to clarifying the distinction between them. The fact that Unhappy Consciousness appears among the singular *Gestalten* of consciousness is crucial. It is a subjective yearning towards a Kingdom brought forth from "pure" consciousness, which remains completely beyond all empirical consciousness. Thus the salvation of Unhappy Consciousness is a matter of "grace," because it is not yet "Reason"; it is not yet "its own content *an sich*, or as its *Substance*." Reason knows itself to be identical with its actual world; and Faith is a mode of Reason. The world is its substance.

The Unhappy Consciousness is also an *actual* world-condition; but as a shape of Religion it is only subjective not objective. The Unhappy Consciousness can never be at home (as Faith can) in the actual world in which it finds itself. It achieves salvation only authoritatively, by a final act of self-alienation, the alienation of its own powers of speech, decision and will. Faith, on the other hand, knows that its duty and destiny is in this world. The content is for it “the selfless *essence* of the world”; it is quite “objective.” It appears to me to follow that for Faith, salvation is *by works*; and if we take that to be Hegel’s meaning, then it is easy to see how Faith is a mode of Reason. “The Faith of the world”—Hegel used the word for “Faith” in paragraph 758—begins as the Unhappy Consciousness saved, and only publicly arrives at Faith (in Hegel’s technical sense) with the Reformation. Paul, and no doubt many readers after him, were already “faithful”; while, on the other hand, much of Luther’s theological doctrine is essentially “unhappy” (he was a great doer of God’s work, but no believer in “salvation by works”). But for the *Weltgeist* itself, Constantine and Luther seem to be the best markers of the saved Unhappy Consciousness, and of Faith. With Constantine again, it may seem paradoxical that he conquers and rules the world, but does not have it as his “substance” *an sich*. But logically he was only an atomic singular self in the Condition of Right (like the madmen Caligula and Elagabalus, or the blood-stained tyrant Caracalla); and empirically it is not our concern whether his sights were set on Heaven as “beyond” or as “within.”

But Faith is also said by Hegel to be a *Vorstellung*, an imagining, which “escapes from actuality altogether, and hence is without the *certainty of Self-Consciousness*.” At this point, Hegel himself is caught up in the essentially contradictory character of all *Vorstellen*. Faith’s “objective content” is not a community in this world, but only in the eternal world of pure thought. Faith encounters God (as Spirit) “within”; but in the actual world there is only the cultural labor of self-reformation. In the struggle between Faith and Insight, it is Insight that has Reason’s self-certainty. Yet Faith knows that the Enlightened picture of it as superstition is only a travesty of its content. It is defeated by Insight, because it does not properly recognize its own rationality. It can only formulate its content as a *Vorstellung*. Thus, the paradox of Constantine ruling the world, while having no intellectual place in it, and that of Luther emptying the monasteries and proclaiming the “witness of the Spirit” now and here, while still *yearning* for a Heaven of promise—these paradoxes do express the contradictory character of both Unhappy Consciousness and Faith as modes of *Vorstellung*.

Vorstellen is an incompetent, and hence a contradictory, mode of thinking. It achieves competence and clarity only in the “shattered” language of Young Rameau. Pure Insight, which has the self-certainty of Reason, gets involved in contradiction just as Faith does, because it too can only think in pictures. It pictures a Heaven on Earth, and it creates Hell. Reason operates in Concepts, but as Pure Insight it has no content; it distinguishes itself from Faith by its this-worldliness. Finite Reason thinks it can dispense with Religion, but this is only the “vanity of knowing.” As a singular *Gestalt* Reason has no “substance”; and whether as theoretical observation,

or as self-actualizing, or as self-sufficiently real, it discovers only its own vanity. Only in the self-conscious community of Spirit, the community from which the transition to Religion was made, and to which Religion will return at its climax, are Self-Certainty and Substance properly reconciled.

(e) *The Manifest Religion of Reason i: Logic*

- 22./769. Spirit as substance is imaged as eternal essence, but with the meaning of spirit. But spirit is essentially actual, i.e. it must express itself, *utter* itself. Simple essence (truth) as abstraction is essentially self-negating thought, i.e. it is the self-concept. Imagining grasps this necessary transition as a *begetting*.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the logical expression in a *Vorstellung* of the concept of Spirit as self-actualizing self-knowledge.³² As an abstract concept it is an identical eternal essence (the Unchangeable, as Augustine called it). But this essence is the essence of Spirit. This is portrayed by calling it “Father”; but all that it can be “the father” of, is itself as other—so the name designates the necessity of its self-actualization. It “begets” itself as “the Son.”

This is just an imaginative portrayal of the speculative that constitutes its own *being*. I think “pure Being”; but as my thinking, it is only for me; as pure Being however, it means what is not a mere object of thinking; it must be a self-thinking Being, i.e., self-negative or a *pure* thinking that is universal, one that comprehends all otherness. In other words, Pure Being thinks *itself* as the totality. But it cannot think itself simply as itself. It is for itself; and without being for itself *really*, i.e. as another self, it cannot think truly at all. So by the same token, the other self is identical with the “Father.” Hence both the Father and the Son are “returned into themselves in this otherness.” This is the fulfilment of selfhood in the “procession of the Spirit.”

One cannot say any more than this about the Trinity as “thought,” except to warn that the doctrine is not meant to be deep or difficult. It is philosophical logic at the level of immediate inference; but no one practices it in formal abstraction. What “Selfhood” is, we learn in experience; and even when we have learned empirically that we are “members one of another,” it seems to us paradoxical rather than “logical.” So it is a long time before we can see that the Trinity is just the logic of it.

- 23./770. But what is begotten also knows and is known as the Father. Thus we have three moments, Father (Essence), Son (Being-for-itself), Spirit (Consciousness of being for self as being for other, and vice versa). The relation of Father/Son is that of Speaker/Word. The Speaker is emptied into the Word; but it is only there because the Word is *heard* as spoken.

The elementary logic lesson continues. The concept of free spirit as “self-realization out of nothing” has three moments: the definition itself, as *essence*; self-positing, as what is real *for* the essential self; and self-recognition in the reality posited. As an abstract thought, this conception of God as “pure thinking” lacks all the multiplicity and variety of the other consciousnesses, the distinctions that enable us

to recognize (both in the others, and in ourselves) the complex union of sameness and difference. We are unique individuals, because we are both absolutely the same as, and infinitely different from, one another. There is nothing that we cannot share, but also we cannot come to the end of what is not shared.

In order to be *concrete*, the Divine Spirit must comprehend this multiplicity also; hence the Incarnation is a necessary doctrine. God (as the unity of Essence) must be emptied out into the multiplicity of consciousnesses. The “otherness” of the Son must be the otherness of the language in which we express ourselves, and through which we comprehend others. When I *utter* my truth as well as I can, I am, for the moment, *emptied*. I may already be thinking of something new to say; but I am prepared to defend or amplify what I have already said, because it is *me*. This is the experience upon which Hegel’s concept of “creation” is founded; and the Creation is, for him, the begetting of the Logos, and the beginning of the Incarnation. Like the Light-Essence (or the Theban Saga) the Christian Creed is important only because it provides the forms in which our community expresses its absolute convictions; and the task of the philosopher is to lay out the rational structure of the actual world in which she lives and thinks. This structure is embedded in the universally shared commitments of religious belief. Where there are serious differences of commitment, some philosophical problems may arise. But one can be completely “irreligious” (in the sense of being without “Faith”) and still follow Hegel’s argument with full agreement (or sometimes with critical disagreement). “Faith” is belief in the *Vorstellung* as a *Vorstellung*. Hegel is (or at least he aspires to be) completely beyond Faith in that sense; he does not believe in Father, Son, Spirit, Creation or Incarnation, except as logical moments of the rational community, for whom he is interpreting these traditions. The logical moments, and the community, he does not *need* to believe in; for in so far as he aims to do, and thinks that he is successfully doing, the *logic* of rational experience, he *knows* these concepts to be “true.” They are the logical concepts that realize and confirm themselves in a fully coherent conception of experience; and one can be as “enlightened” as D’Holbach and Voltaire (or Marx)—holding firmly to the precept “Ecrasez l’infame”—and still agree with what Hegel found in the *Vorstellungen* of Christian faith.

- 24./771. So the absolute essence is properly *Spirit*. But for imagination the moments are distinct, and are known to us only by revelation from elsewhere. This externality of presentation must be overcome. The instinctive attitude of Reason is one of simple rejection, but this impulse must not finally triumph [cf. par. 766 for the instinct of faith]. Speculative truth must not be mistaken for history, when the merely historic is thrown out.

Hegel’s interpretation of the Spirit shows why there logically have to be “three Persons in one Substance.” We can now see that his proclamations about the final comprehensiveness of the concept of God as “Spirit” involves the doctrine of the Trinity as a whole. Unless the moments of the Trinity are conceived as “this motion circling within itself [or into itself]”—and “grasped in their purity, as the

restless concepts whose being is only to be in themselves their own counterpart”—we shall have only the “Supreme Essence” of the Enlightenment on one side, and the edifying but empty word “Spirit” on the other.

Vorstellung, or the thoughtfully imaginative capacity of the religious community, cannot cope with this dialectical identity of opposites in the comprehensive concept of Spirit adequately. It represents the conceptual necessity and order of the terms: pure thinking, sensible representation, speculative self-consciousness (see par. 767) as a relation of natural production and dependence (Father/Son). The spiritual community of the two is an addition superimposed upon this image; and it contradicts the implied dependence-relation.

Early Christian communities disputed whether the Spirit “proceeded” from the Son, or only from the Father; and it is certainly difficult, in any case, to find the equality-structure of the three “Persons” in the New Testament at all. Yet the whole doctrine was accepted as a “revelation,” (in the transcendent, supra-rational sense which belongs to “Unhappy Consciousness,” and which Hegel hardly ever employs) in spite of the evident fact that it had to be thoughtfully constructed. It had to be accepted as a “revelation” because it is a mass of formal contradictions, and it has always been taught (or rather, imposed upon the minds of the faithful as a verbal formula) as an incomprehensible mystery. Abelard’s attempt to explicate it brought him to public humiliation in the twelfth century; and it was involved in the downfall of those philosophical heretics Bruno and Campanella five centuries later. Catholic philosophers and dogmatists may be interested in Hegel’s interpretation *now*; and some were sympathetically inclined in his own day. But the Church has always been, and still is, suspicious of rationalizing interpretations.

What Hegel says about the “instinctive compulsion [*Drängen*]” of the *Begriff* needs to be studied carefully. One aspect of the “instinct of Reason” is the compulsion to trust our own “insight,” even when the only available formalization of our “reasoning” is visibly invalid. Thus the observer says “All crows are black” and “All swans are white”; and even when we find that we were actually mistaken about the swans, we do not lose our faith in the blackness of all crows. But the instinct to trust “insight” which can cause us to accept what is *not* logical, must equally cause us to reject what is illogical in the strong sense of being contradictory. We also have an instinct, however, which tells us that both sides of a contradiction can contain truth. This is the instinct to “go to the Concept” mentioned in paragraph 766. It is not an instinct to go against “insight,” but an instinct to avoid choosing between the contradictory “sides.” In paragraph 766 Faith was seeking to avoid all the contradictions of modern life, by turning away from it like the primitive Church. This example shows that Faith is just as fallible as Insight; but the instinct to go to the Concept is the *real* “instinct of Reason.” We have to understand the need speculatively, by comprehending how the Concept unites both sides of the contradiction. Thus the speculative instinct contains the logical instinct of “Insight” to reject contradiction, but it tells us that the avoidance must not be by a simple choice of one side. Reason in all its forms rejects the imposed acceptance of contradiction by social authority.

Hegel does not have to worry about the shadow of the Inquisition. He has to be concerned more with the determination of the Enlighteners to wipe out “superstition”; and his position is that the dogma of a transcendent “mystery” is unquestionably superstitious, but that speculative Reason can find here the most fundamental of all religious truths, as soon as the garb of an authoritative “mystery” is torn off. The attitude of D’Holbach is more misguided than that of Faith; but his attack was needed in order to make Faith properly “thoughtful,” and eventually “self-conscious.” Hegel’s own interpretation responds to the *Drängen*, the compelling drive, of the Concept, in order to produce this result.³³

- 25./772. Absolute spirit, imagined as pure essence, has the defect of being an object, or an “other.” But Spirit is the motion of self-othering, so this “otherness” is a distinction without difference. God as spirit is God as *love*.

“Imagined in its pure essence,” says Hegel, “the absolute Spirit is not, of course, the *abstract* pure essence.” The *abstract* pure essence is the simple power of thought to express itself as *Vorstellung*—i.e. it is the creative imagination dealt with in paragraph 756. But “absolute Spirit” is not an “abstract” essence, because the belief of the world is that in the Birth, Mission, Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, and finally in the Descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, the absolute Spirit appeared. Out of these events the dogma of the Trinity has been constructed.

Hegel now wants us to consider the “unity” of this Trinity. The simple “oneness” of the Father and the Son in the Spirit is a union of *Love*. This Love is an immediate mode of Self-Consciousness in which there is identity without difference. Christ in Heaven is directly identical with the Father. He is the Logos “by which all things were made”; but that does not set up any antithesis between the two Persons. It is the nature of the Father (as pure thinking) to be expressed in Creation (as *Vorstellung*).

Again we should underline the fact that Hegel’s theology is strictly a matter of conceptual reasoning, and hence it is not orthodox. The supposed “freedom” of God not to manifest Himself in Creation, and His supposed “self-sufficiency” in independence of what He has created, are dialectical illusions generated by the logical contingency that is inevitable in the presentation of thought as *Vorstellung*. Because of the radical contingency of the “othering” of free thinking, the order of Nature must have an aspect of brutally irrational “thereness.” This is part of the philosophical meaning of the assertion that it is “created.” “The Idea *resolves* to let itself go as Nature”; it is *real* difference, the radical antithesis between Infinity and the finite.

To suppose that this contingency could attach to the self-actualizing of the Concept would be absurd: “Without the world, God is not God.”³⁴ The world in its finite multiplicity is certainly other than God; but the human consciousness of it is the “appearing” of God as “essence.” This appearing is a conceptually necessary moment of the “essence”; as the “Word” of Creation, the human “spirit” is the self-othering of God himself. The relation between them is that of concrete

cognition, i.e. of a “beholding” that is recognition. This self-recognition is “the intellectual love of God.” In the mode of *Vorstellung* it is pictured as “the Spirit proceeding from both Father and Son,” and so bringing them back to their essential unity.

(f) *The Religion of Reason ii: Creation*

- 26./773. This otherness of pure thought must pass over into otherness of existence. Against Heaven there must be Earth—the realm of *Vorstellung*.

The purely logical distinction between Being and Knowing, which is religiously expressed as the identity of Divine Love, must be an *actual* distinction if there is to be actual love, real knowledge and an actual spirit proceeding between the two ideal terms. Until he reached the last sentence of paragraph 772 Hegel was still expounding the Trinity “in itself.” This is the “kingdom of the Father”: Logic, or the life of God as eternal. It is conceptually necessary that there must be otherness sublated in loving recognition, if God is to be “Spirit” even in thought. But the actuality of Spirit involves a more radical kind of otherness; against the simplicity of pure thinking there must now be set the multiplicity of the world of *Vorstellung*; the world of singular things, actual and possible, is itself *necessary*—even though nothing in it, except lawfulness, is absolutely predictable. The theological distinction between Heaven and Earth expresses the real “otherness” of Father and Son. The “Son” is incarnated in his community; and in this way both he and the Father become really independent “Subjects.” The dogma of “Creation” spells out the logical consequences of this real differentiation, in a theological *Vorstellung*.³⁵

- 27./774. So God must “create” the world. This is a way of *imagining* the logic of self-othering, and of expressing the fact that the world can only exist *for* the self.

The speculative interpretation of “Creation” is that it is an imaginative way of expressing the logical necessity that pure thinking has to find itself *mirrored* in a world of communicating selves, if there is to be any self-conscious rationality. In this sense “Creation” is necessary, even though nothing that is known as *created* can be logically necessary. From the logical point of view, “Creation” is an arbitrary “resolve.” The “resolution” of the Idea to “let itself go as Nature” is just as *eternal* as the logical Idea itself, being a necessary moment of the Idea itself.³⁶ To call it a “free resolve” is only to say that there is no “reason why things are the way they are, and not otherwise” except for the extremely general necessity that the empirical order must be such that self-consciousness can securely subsist in it. Self-Consciousness must have a *world* in which to be self-conscious. Self-consciousness exists; therefore, speaking theologically, God had to create the world.

It helps here to remember that “God,” or the Divine, is just the name for the categorical structure of self-consciousness that is communally recognized to be necessary. In its “religion,” the community *knows* (portrays to itself) its own basic

interpretation of life in the world, and of its relation to the world; so the whole perspective of “theological” language is upside down. The “manifest” religion is the shape of world-consciousness in which that inversion is finally in the process of being corrected. The dogma of “Creation” is a “mythical” way of describing the freedom that we have in the interpretation of the world—which would not be a “world” at all if it did not have a *necessary* structure. The concept of “Reason” as the universally self-conscious (or “scientific”) community interpreting the world rationally, is what all of Hegel’s interpretations of religious *Vorstellungen* are derived from. Christianity is for him the “absolute” or “manifest” religion, precisely because the dogma of the Incarnation provides the foundation for an interpretation of religious language that is coherent with our scientific uncovering of what religious experience is.

No matter what the Christian theologians may continue to *say* about the transcendence of God, about His freedom in Creation, and about His merciful grace in choosing to “reveal” Himself, their Creed contains the essential admissions through which we can show that it is the logical necessity of the Christian God’s nature to manifest Himself to His “creatures.” Unless He creates finite beings and manifests Himself to them He cannot be the Christian God—the God who is “Love”—at all. Once we get to the point of admitting this, it is also plain that the “nature” of God is logically dictated by the community that worships Him. We have now reached a mode of religious experience that is self-consciously aware of what we have scientifically shown “Religion” itself to be. We can now invert all of the dogmas of the Creed by reading them as the self-definitive knowledge of the community. Thus, in the ordinary sense of “create,” it is not God who “creates the world”; it is *we* who create the scientific *interpretation* of it.³⁷

- 28./775. In this created world finite spirit is present as the singular self—hence not yet as spirit. It is “innocent,” and must withdraw itself from this natural existence by knowing itself, by thinking. As determinately selfish this immediate knowing is evil as opposed to good. This necessary Fall is pictured as an accident of choice.

Just as Creation was not a gratuitous act, or an arbitrarily free choice, so the Fall of Man did not result from a sinful act of disobedience or pride. The story of the Fall is a *myth* that expresses the logical necessity of the Spirit’s turning away from the natural world within which it comes to birth, and leaving it behind. Spirit must assert its absolute freedom as finite self-assertion, in order to return to itself as Absolute Spirit. So we can say, if we want to, that “without Adam’s sin, God would not be God.” But I trust that, by now, the repetition of that sort of paradox is superfluous.

The human being as she comes into the physical world is simply a middle-sized mammal. Whether the healthy baby, protesting lustily against the world, is ever really “innocent” I shall leave the empirical interpreters of depth psychology to argue about. Hegel has earlier concerned himself with the “innocence” of the natural community; and any student of the Greek myths knows how *metaphysical* that “innocence” was. Now he speaks of the “singular” spirit; and we know that the

“first experience” of that natural self is a battle to the death. But before it can enter upon that test, self-consciousness has to gather itself out of the dreamy dispersal of sensible contemplation into the Baconian knowledge of the practical Understanding. It is hard to find “sin” in this self-gathering. But it is, by definition, *selfish* and self-assertive; that was the dialectical Nemesis of Enlightened utilitarianism. The Enlighteners could not create an Earthly Paradise; and the Terror was the manifestation of the “angel with a fiery sword.”

Hegel is very conscious of the moral dimension of the myth. The Tree bears the “knowledge of Good and Evil” as its fruit. In another context he compared Eve’s apple with that of Newton.³⁸ The comparison was to the detriment of Newton’s experimental philosophy. There is no knowledge of “the Good” in that. The Baconian knowledge that is power is selfish (and hence evil). The proper (*ethical*) temptation referred to in the Eden myth, depends upon the experience of the community of “True Spirit” as the Good; and the full speculative exposition of it belongs to the moment where the individual emerges from the wreck of Greek political life as a military conqueror. At that point, “Eve” was only a speculative *symbol* for the family, and for the dynastic interest that any such conqueror must have. The initiative of selfish imperialism is clearly *masculine*. So, in my opinion, it is a logical improvement, to leave Eve out of the story altogether, as Hegel does here. In the Greek myth both Creon and Antigone are “innocent sinners”; and it is their community that gains “knowledge” (so far as the knowledge of good and evil is possible for them). But if we imagine both Antigone and Creon to be endowed with a living awareness of the *opposed* “law” we can see why the primitive condition of human spiritual self-consciousness is a fall from innocence into the unhappy consciousness of “good and evil.” Tragic conflict is inescapable. We have seen why it must arise.

- 29./776. Evil is necessarily the *first* state of self-knowledge; but the Good is still present in thought. So the necessity of this opposition is imaged as a fall in Heaven itself. [Boehme’s] Son of Light fell (and another son was begotten in his place). But “fell” and “Son of” do not belong to conceptual thought; the image of a community of angels (as the otherness of the Concept) is appropriate; so the fall can start there. Thus instead of a Trinity we could have a theological quaternity or quinity if we liked. It is *all* one anyway, so counting is silly. One/Many says all.

The consciousness that is primitively aware of itself as *evil* (or “sinful”) is the Unhappy Consciousness. The Christian universalization of Adam’s sin, and the corresponding doctrine of the universal need of God’s grace, was what made the Gospel into the perfectly apt response to the stage that the World-Spirit had reached. The Gods had “flown” from the world, and a completely “gracious” God must be found in the newly independent realm of pure thought.

The evolution of thought as an independent realm is bound to begin with the awareness of “nature” as *essentially* fallen. For as long as there is a *good* “state of nature” which we can achieve (or to which we can return) that is what we are logically obliged to think about. We can only be faced with the fact that natural harmony

is not for us, when we know that the true Good is something else altogether; and then we are bound to be “fallen” in our own thought, if the true Good is present in our thought as well. So one result of the polarization of Being and Thought, and the abandonment of the aesthetic or intuitive conception of thinking as the creation of beautiful being, was that the Christian preachers invented a spirit who had never existed before: the Spirit of Evil.³⁹ The Greek gods (and the gods of Hellenistic paganism) were jealous and easily offended (like Yahweh). But none of them was essentially malevolent or *evil*. Apollo denounces the Furies in highly moral terms; but Athena gives them their place under the throne of Zeus as agents of divine justice. In the Jewish tradition even Satan is a servant of God. Dante’s Satan (or Boehme’s Lucifer) is a different being altogether.

As I have both said and shown, “the knowledge of Good and Evil” is directly constitutive of the Unhappy Consciousness. But we must here look at the actual world of that consciousness; that actual world is “fallen.” In the “second relationship” the evolution of “Faith” begins. In the *Denken* of Faith, spiritual beings are projected *immediately*; they are imagined as beings like the ones who “are there” in our sensible world. The supreme master of this projective thinking is Dante. But in his Religion chapter, Hegel offers us Boehme as the paradigm for it. This is appropriate both because it is the German Lutheran religious consciousness that he wants to transform; and because we can recognize the movement towards “self-consciousness” in Boehme. His theology is truly prepared for, and apt to Hegel’s interpretation of it.⁴⁰

It is Boehme’s myth that Lucifer was the First Born Son, that he fell because he was self-obsessed, and he was replaced by Jesus Christ.⁴¹ Hegel’s speculative conception of the creative Incarnation of the Logos requires the reconciliation of the “evil” principle of self-assertion with the “good” principle of duty and sacrifice. We have seen how this reconciliation is achieved in “Evil and Forgiveness” (pars. 660–671). Boehme’s conception of God as moving from the “dark centre” to the “light centre” was a theological *Vorstellung* for this. The Christian God could not be “Love,” and the absolute fount of mercy and forgiveness, if He did not comprehend “evil” as a necessary moment of his own being. Even the authoritative “absolution” of the Unhappy Consciousness depends upon this. But it cannot be represented at the level of *Vorstellung* without the emergence of some appalling paradoxes.

For the moment Hegel merely insists that multiplication and plurality will not solve the problem of evil. The NeoPlatonists tried to solve the problem of the One and the Many by imagining the metaphysical “Fall” as a series of *lower spheres*, ending in our sublunar world of perishable matter. These spheres were controlled by angelic intelligences. Dante made a consistent use of this schema. But it does not help anything—any more than the simpler *Vorstellung* of a community of “fallen angels” does. Only the idea of “community” is speculatively relevant and must be retained.

The Logos is incarnated in a world that does not comprehend him. The Passion is an image of “reconciliation with evil.” Inasmuch as the principles of “Heaven” and “Earth” must be opposed, one can count *four* necessary moments in the pro-

cess of the Spirit (Father, Son, Spirit, Evil Spirit); and inasmuch as there are those who “hear the Word” even on earth one can count five. But it is interesting to see that Hegel is not concerned with how many distinguishable moments there are. His logical triad is a categorical *order*. There is the One Being; and secondly, there are (natural) essences; and thirdly there are (spiritual) relationships. In the sphere of *Vorstellung* there might be any number of beings and spirits. Boehme’s “theosophy” has several sacred numbers; and all that this shows is that numbers are not sacred. It is the whole sphere of *Vorstellung* (as *one* thought-determination) that is logically necessary; and that is the sphere of “number” as indefinite (i.e., the sphere of the “bad infinite”).

- 30./777. Thus man is a helpless battleground of the good and evil powers. But the self is their actuality, so Good must appear as a self too; according to the image God humbles himself willingly. That “evil” is God’s own pride or His “wrath,” is the hardest thing to image; and the effort is fruitless without the achievement of the Concept.

We have to go back to paragraph 775 to discover and confirm the proposition that “*Good* and *Evil* were the determinate distinctions of thought that emerged.”⁴² In paragraph 775 the “Creation” is treated as the “external casting out” of the Spirit into “completeness and its outward order”; and the self is present as the natural consciousness of the rational organism in its environment. The withdrawal into self-consciousness is the birth of self-assertion, the birth of the ambition for lordship. Thus the first purely conceptual knowledge (as opposed, for example, to the aesthetically realized cognition that is symbolized by Adam’s “naming of the animals”) is the knowledge of the “evil” self, as opposed to the aesthetic harmony of life that is “good.” To be self-consciously independent of nature is the “original sin.”

The Christian consciousness has been expelled from the paradise of nature for this “sin.” The Unhappy Consciousness of being cast out into a natural order that is a world of servitude and toil, and of being “sinful” in seeking happiness there, is the primitive field or “element” of Christian religious experience. “Good” and “Evil” are ideals of thought now, whereas they were concrete realities for Creon and Antigone. Evil is *imagined* as Adam who *fell*, and Good as Christ the Savior who freely came down from Heaven. The evils of the world which are the “wrath of God” and the punishment for our sins are all done away, because the Savior, God Himself, has taken the original sin upon Himself, and is reconciled with evil. The reconciliation is imaginatively logical: God becomes a Self (the original sin), and suffers the extreme of the “wrath” by which that sin was punished.

This is a *Vorstellung*, a thought-image of why evil, as aggression and passion, is necessary for the achievement of rational self-consciousness. Evil is the blind movement of singular self-assertion, which finally recognizes its own *spiritual* character as the self that is born from, lives in and returns to, the rational community. If the cycle did not begin in a natural organism, with its exclusive needs, and its selfish urge for dominance and “independence,” the human community could never come to be a community of “individuals”; or in other words it could not come to be

as a self-conscious community, since the individual is the “concrete universal,” the self-consciousness that is both singular and communal.

This necessity of “evil” cannot be successfully *vorgestellt*. The figures in Dante’s *Paradise* are marvellously individuated; but no one can say what that individuation means when we reach the true Paradise of the Rose. We can visualize well enough what it means to be a “sundered self” in Hell; but not what it means to be united with God. The “result” is separated from the “process” (as it must be in a *Vorstellung*). Boehme made the supreme effort, but once God and Satan have been *pictured*, their identity is impossible to accept.⁴³

- 31./778. Thus the estrangement of God is posited in its two forms: finite selfhood, and infinity of thought. The sides are unequal. First God is what counts and man and nature should be sublated; then man is what counts, and simple divinity is unessential. “Thereness” (as what is common) is their still empty middle.

God Himself must be reconciled with His finite human creature. That is the *theological* proposition. But the necessity is a logical one; it exists in the thought of the “creature.” It is the finite mortal whose self-consciousness is logically the first moment. God is a thought; He becomes a self only through Incarnation. In this there are two moments. The first is *vorgestellt* in the Passion of Christ (which the Unhappy Consciousness seeks to imitate or emulate, but without actually *dying*). Here the finite self sacrifices itself for the sake of “union with the Father.”

Then comes the reverse movement. God sacrifices *Himself* for the deification of the finite self. This is symbolized in the Resurrection and Ascension; but it is the Crucifixion that is the crucial moment in Hegel’s doctrine of the Incarnation. On the Cross, man and God both die; they give themselves up to one another; this is how the *real* “Incarnation of God” begins. The carpenter’s son is an ordinary human being; the Bethlehem myth means the opposite of what it seems to say, for it is the *death* of this man, not his birth, that is the moment of God’s self-emptying.

“Their still empty middle is *thereness* in general, the bare communality of their two moments.” If we take the theological reference to be to the moment when Jesus said “It is finished” on Calvary, then the *middle* is certainly empty. What God and Man share is death; we should recall the empty climax of the mortal struggle of natural self-consciousness, where only death can successfully demonstrate *freedom*. That moment can be filled with a spiritual meaning because it is *remembered* by the community that observes the battle. Now the whole world is the remembering audience for the reciprocal sacrifice on Calvary.

It is rather difficult, however, to decide just how the “content” of the social “remembering” should be located and described. The two moments are so abstract that we can interpret them in many ways. Thus, for instance (in the perspective of “the world’s belief” itself) we can think of the “first” and the “second” Adam (the second being Christ himself). Calvary divides the “Kingdom of the Father”—the period of the “divine Right” of God’s law—from the “Kingdom of the Son”—the period of the “absolute Right” of the human self.

This is how Faith (as “the belief of the World”) sees things; and perhaps, in this present, rather abstractly theological context, we should look no further. But I cannot help feeling that a more dialectical interpretation (one in which the moments are not simply separated) is in Hegel’s mind. His “Science of Experience” is concerned with the world of the “second Adam” rather than with that of the first. So we should probably confine ourselves to that, and take the Reformation as our dividing marker. The world from Constantine to the Crusades used the imitation of the Passion as a kind of guiding star. As Hegel points out, the moment of God’s sacrifice for the use and enjoyment of the independent *self* was not absent then (see par. 220); but it was rather under a cloud.

On the other hand, the Insight that attacks Faith as superstition reduces the “absolute essence” of thought to a merely instrumental status. The Baconian gospel that “Human knowledge and human power meet in one” proclaims our return to the Garden of Eden, or the establishment of Heaven on Earth. First, the Age of Faith and the Age of Reason succeed one another in the field of “*Dasein* in general” which they share. But in the Age of Reason the two moments share the field of *Dasein* visibly. They are the poles of “the World of Spirit in Self-Estrangement.” If I am not mistaken paragraph 778 about “die Entfremdung des göttlichen Wesens” in Religion refers and corresponds most directly to the “sich entfremdete Geist” of Culture’s “actual world.” It is “Faith and Pure Insight” that *simultaneously* make the opposite evaluations of the “divine *Wesen*” and of “being-for-self.”

- 32./779. The resolution is a conceptual one (and hence the purification of the moments from their subsistent aspect is what is needed). Until this happens they remain in separate realms. In the image God surrenders, dies and is reborn as the spirit of the community. But this movement is itself the reconciliation of pure thought with sensible being.

Paragraph 779 supports our double interpretation of paragraph 778. The two moments—of Man and God surrendering to one another—are logically involved in the Concept of Spirit. “The battle first has its place where both [essences] cease to be these mixtures of thought and independent thereness.” The use of the word *Kampf* should be noticed, because it reminds us both of the hopeless *Kampf* of the Unhappy Consciousness (par. 209), and of the “*Kampf* of Enlightenment with Superstition” (par. 541). It is in this second battle that the conceptual clarification takes place; and Hegel is anxious to separate the logical dialectic from the actual struggle. But the eternal perspective pushes us towards the most general view of history that we can encompass. Finite actuality and its historical process we have already dealt with. We are concerned now with the logical—or eternally necessary—aspect of what happened in the world of *Bildung*. In the theological perspective it is God, the moment that has “Being-in-itself,” who must initiate the movement towards Being-for-Self. His motion is imagined theologically as a gratuitously free act (*ein freiwilliges Thun*). God moves of His own grace to save the lost creature.

What is *imaged* here is just the arbitrariness of our human historical freedom. God moves only when his lost creatures recognize Him as essentially gracious; He must die, in order to achieve Being-for-Self. By dying God displays His true nature as Spirit; but it is in the man who died that the world's belief recognizes God. Faith *says* that God voluntarily uttered (or emptied) Himself as that man. That was the first negation for God, the otherness of *Vorstellung*—His sensible *presence*. But it was only in the Passion that this “utterance” became visible; and the Passion was the second negation, the “othering” of the first othering. It is the Risen Christ who is God; and only in that identity is God the Absolute Spirit. The *Vorstellung* gets the truth backwards, because God's Death is *necessary*. It was the man Jesus who went to death *voluntarily* for the sake of his “community”; only after his death could the Spirit come. It is in the coming of the Spirit, that the *Vorstellung* obtains its justification: Faith dies voluntarily, whereas Pure Insight goes to the guillotine under judgment. From this fully equalized death of the “moments” the “spirit of speculative Reason” is resurrected.⁴⁴

(g) *The Religion of Reason iii: The Community*

- 33./780. The Risen Lord thus becomes the spirit of a community that knows him as its spirit *now* (not just in a picture-world beyond). How is this advance beyond imaging imaged? “God takes human nature on himself.” That he always was man, and he “fell,” implies that evil is *not* alien to God. But the image cannot comprehend this, so only the later moment of redemptive identity appears; and that incarnation is particular, so it is only as *dead* that God is Spirit. That Evil is “in itself” a good potential, that “God is Nature,” that “finite nature is nothing,” these are misleading ways to express the truth. Evil is selfish, Good selfless. If we insist on this, the coincidence of the opposites can be seen, for Evil is the losing of its self, and selflessness is the gaining of self. Good and Evil are the same *and* not the same. The mistake is in thinking that “sameness” and “difference” are stable essences. Each turns into its opposite. This is the truth about “God and Nature” (especially *human* nature). Spirit is this dialectic. This is what the imagining consciousness finally realizes.

Hegel is now ready to move from the level of *Vorstellung* to that of rational “self-consciousness.” As we shall soon see, the difference between Religion and Absolute Knowing is marked by Religion's dependence on *Vorstellung*. But there is such a thing as “fully self-conscious Faith”—i.e., a religious consciousness that still uses the *Vorstellungen*, but knows what they mean, and does not count upon *any* Beyond. As we saw in the battle over the Truth of Enlightenment, however, it is very difficult for this kind of Faith to defend itself—or even to understand itself clearly—until speculative thought has arisen. So the fully “manifest Religion” goes hand in hand with “absolute knowing.”

From the first, the Risen Lord was a purely spiritual being. He existed for the community as their “Spirit.” The story of Doubting Thomas is the last of the *Vorstellungen* in which everything is backwards. Paul's encounter with Christ Risen on

the road to Damascus is an experience which we can understand quite straightforwardly as “psychological.” Paul hears the Spirit of the *community* that he is persecuting ask “Why persecutest thou *Me*?” He is the first Christian to stand explicitly in the “third relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness, the relationship of “Faith.” Faith knows that Christ is the spirit of the community existing here and now. This knowledge is the “element of self-consciousness.”

Having reached this turning point, Hegel reviews our interpretation of the Incarnation doctrine. He only tells us what we have said already. First, God became man. This means that human nature is implicitly divine (or absolute); and the dogma that the Logos incarnated itself in the world from the beginning expresses that. This world, with all its evils, is not in itself estranged (*ein Fremdes*) from the divine essence. This is where Hegel’s theology becomes unorthodox. We can see very clearly that he is *interpreting* the religious tradition according to his rational concept of Self-Consciousness. Certainly he is not following the tradition as authoritative, and still less is he apologizing for it. “Evil,” he argues, does not come about through any “fall” from an original perfection. It is a necessary moment in the self-actualization of God as Spirit.

This truth is recognized by Faith in its *Vorstellung* of “the Word made flesh.” “But that comes later,” says Hegel. In the orthodox view, evil was no part of God’s creative work. He only had to take the burden of it upon Himself, because of Man’s fall from his God-given shape. But, like the *singularity* of the Divine Man who intervenes at the later time, this cannot be accepted in logic. The *Vorstellung* of the Incarnation itself is “*immediate*, and therefore not spiritual” as long as we think that what it means was fulfilled in the actual life of Jesus.

The speculative truth portrayed in the symbol of the “Word made flesh” as this historic man Jesus, is the logical reconciliation of God with Evil; and Hegel is anxious that we should not take this in a Neoplatonic sense. “Evil” is not simply “non-being”; it is not simply the absence of the Good, but the active negative of the Good—the actual negativity that is revealed in all action as self-assertion. The freedom of the Self is the Good; but it is just as necessarily and emphatically Evil—and the two propositions are not saying the same thing. It is only *self-knowledge* (as the *knowledge* of Good and Evil) that is identically Good.

The Enlightenment drives this lesson home. If we identify God with “Nature” (like Spinoza) and insist that “man is naturally good” (the faith of virtually all of the Enlighteners before Kant) we can only create Hell on Earth. We must cling firmly to the contradiction that self-consciousness is *both* Evil and Good. This is where the dialectic starts, from which only the philosophical concept of Spirit can rescue us. The “distinctions” needed are easy to make in principle. But (as we have seen, and as history shows) putting them together into a speculative concept is not so easy. We have to learn to think *conceptually* (or without *Vorstellungen*).⁴⁵

The Spinozist identity of God and Nature had been revived by Schelling (especially in the *Bruno*); and the neo-Platonic doctrine of Evil is also his. But it is only in the attack on the metaphor of the “fall,” that Hegel’s critique strikes at Schelling directly.⁴⁶

- 34./781. So finally, Spirit is realized in the element of self-consciousness. The divine Man is the shared self-consciousness of his community. Now it is the turn of the finite self to raise itself into this spiritual community.

The review of the Incarnation doctrine in paragraph 780 was occasioned by the transition to the third moment: Absolute Spirit proper, or the religious Self-Consciousness of the rational community (cf. par. 671). The community now “brings forth” what is only *imaged* in the theological presentation as self-conscious experience. The “fallen” or “evil” Self-Consciousness redeems *itself*—or as Hegel says “it has to raise itself in and for itself to Spirit.” This is not so unorthodox as it sounds, for we know from our previous encounter with this moment (at the end of chapter VI) that the self of Conscience cannot save itself “by works,” but only by confessing its own “evil” character. In the reconciliation of the community, it is the spirit of forgiveness, the mutual forgiveness of the agent and the judging consciousness, that saves both of them. This is the actually present spirit of the Risen Christ. The transcending of the whole standpoint of “morality” is by an act of pardon (or “grace”), which is legitimated by the fact that it is mutual. It is seen to be necessary on both sides.

There is one respect in which the orthodoxy of this “transcendental suspension of the moral” is ambiguous. The self-consciously saved (or Hegelian) Christian is not a “Christian” at all (in the *particular* sense), any more than Jesus himself was. For certainly the one-sidedness of adhering to another religious tradition must be “forgiven” by anyone who is as self-consciously human as the slave in Terence. Jesus proclaimed to adherents of all the ethical traditions in his world that “their sins were forgiven.” Hegel’s self-conscious “Christian” must offer forgiveness to non-Christians (just as Dante evidently hoped God would forgive the virtuous pagans); but she must also accept forgiveness for being a “Christian” as well. For what is “manifest” in the Manifest Religion is that God is revealed in all of the “Shapes” of Religion.⁴⁷

In my analysis of paragraph 780 I interpreted the “particular” (*besondere*) character of the “*incarnate* shape” of God in terms of the only “particularity” that is visible in the “immediate shape.” It is the Shape of the *dead* Savior that is “particular not yet universal.” But now that the Shape has *become* universal, we can see a deeper sense in which it was “particular” before. In becoming “universal” the Incarnation becomes universally *singular*; before that happened Christianity was a “particular” faith. The Manifest Religion is not a “particular” faith; if it is a “faith” at all, it is one that recognizes itself wherever the forgiving of finitude can be found. Lessing’s Nathan is a model of it—and of course, he is *not* a Christian. Salvation “in the *name* of Jesus” (or any *other* “name”) belongs to the phase of “religious perception.”⁴⁸

- 35./782. Man begins as “the natural spirit” and he must fall from this innocence and know it as evil. This is how imagination takes the world. But for self-conscious spirit the wickedness of the world is a sublated moment; in the unity of the moments for self-consciousness each gets the opposite meaning to what it had in the image. Every moment becomes dialectical (as it has done for us already).

The self has to break with Nature, and become the Unhappy Consciousness. We should interpret this now as the betrayal and loss of the *Greek* Garden of Eden, the Paradise of True Spirit. The Self-Consciousness of Comedy is evil *an sich*; it must “convince itself of this” and repent of it. Then its path of salvation can be presented to it as a *Vorstellung*.

But all of this has happened and is completed. Now that the Spirit has arrived at the point of *understanding* itself completely, the whole process must be inverted in a second negation which preserves it all at the higher level of self-conscious rationality. We are moving now from Faith to Knowledge; the mysterious fact of God’s forgiveness of human finitude—what Hegel calls the “*daseiende* reconciliation of the absolute essence”—must now be conceptually comprehended.

This involves the comprehensive inversion of the plain meaning of every moment in the *Vorstellung*. In other words, the *Vorstellung* does not lose its primitive significance, but it gains this opposite significance in addition. Through this completion it becomes “spiritual.” We have already seen how this is implicitly the case; and I have tried to bring it out clearly at every stage. But now it is to become the experience of the religious consciousness that we are observing.

Kojève marks paragraph paragraph 786 in his analysis (which is a very good one, and full of insights) as “The ‘truth’ of Christianity: Christian theology is Hegelian anthropology”; and he calls paragraph 787 “Transition to atheist wisdom.”⁴⁹ It is easy to see that at the level of *names* we cannot quarrel with the label given to paragraph 786. The interpretation of “Christian theology” does turn it into “Hegelian anthropology.” But here in paragraph 782 we can see why the immediately following interpretation of “Hegelian anthropology” as “atheist wisdom” is invalid. Hegel insists here that the humanist interpretation is *added* to the orthodox theological one. The meaning of “faith” is comprehensively inverted—that is why the characterization “anthropology” is justified. But the conceptual ground of faith—its claim to be a kind of “knowledge”—is preserved. What Hegel asserts is that the “Father” of whom the Johannine Jesus spoke, is identical with the human community from Altamira to Nagasaki (and however long it may last after that). That this community—with the Earth on which it lives as its “body”—should be a *real* “universal self” makes no sense to Kojève. His “anthropology” has a Kantian “form” as its conceptual ground. Human “self-cognition in religion” is the same “futile passion” for Kojève that it is for Sartre. Futile effort is certainly part of human experience; and it is “futile” in my opinion to think that one can move an enlightened sceptic from his scepticism. But it is legitimate to say that the “Truth of Enlightenment” is not the Truth either of the Manifest Religion or of “absolute knowing.”⁵⁰

- 36./783. Thus what appears in the image, as our fallen condition, is now the freedom that is the *an sich* in being. This is the first moment of reconciliation. I can now “die to sin” without actually dying. This is a *different kind* of “withdrawal into self.” But this “withdrawal” is the same motion as that of natural selfishness. So this simple self-concept still has to go through a cycle of othering and return.

The consciousness of original sin as ineradicable—which tormented the Unhappy Consciousness and could only be overcome through reliance on the “absolution” declared by another self—can now be recognized to be the necessary condition of that “*knowledge* of Good and Evil” which comprehends why we cannot have or achieve any good, without the presence of evil as its dark side. This speculative comprehension is the foundation of what will eventually become our ability to forgive each other and ourselves. But that is still well beyond this stage.

The first step on that road is to see that asserting oneself against “life” is evil; but knowing that the world is “fallen,” and withdrawing into oneself in order to seek God is the first step on the path of salvation. The world is now recognized as evil (and the Christian consciousness is, in its first position, the *judging* consciousness). The world from which the Christian consciousness withdraws is the “Earthly City,” or the sphere of the universally competitive pursuit of happiness. This natural world has already withdrawn into selfishness, and so it deserves condemnation as evil. But (as we know already from the analysis of Conscience) the two withdrawals are exactly equal. So this first movement is the *immediate* one, the appearance of the Concept as simple (or direct) contradiction. The Christian community sets God (and itself) up as the *Absolute Judge*. This is the social position of the Church in the universal constitution of the Unhappy Consciousness as *Bildung*.

- 37./784. To differentiate the “withdrawals” the mediating of the image is necessary. In the image the withdrawal from nature as my false self is a higher state represented by the Savior. *God* saved me by dying for me. Self-conscious spirit must grasp the Resurrection as a communal experience here and now. God’s death and resurrection as a single man becomes the universal experience of every day in all of us.

The contradiction is mediated, by transferring the function of judgment to the Christ of the religious *Vorstellung*. It is he who has the knowledge of Nature as the untrue mode of being of the Spirit, *his* consciousness is “the universality of the self that has come to be within itself.” For this is “*an sich* . . . the reconciliation of the Spirit with itself”; and it is the Risen Lord who is the image of what Spirit is *an sich*. God reconciled Himself with the world in Christ. Salvation is not something logical, but something that God *did*, something that happened.

This *Vorstellung* is now inwardized, but not yet rationalized. The religious consciousness does not realize that it is facing a necessary truth about human consciousness generally; but it does know that the Resurrection is a universal, or communal experience. The Savior is resurrected in his community here and now. It is not a historic event of far away and long ago.

Thus in the “divine Man” his death is identical with his Resurrection as (and in) the Spirit.⁵¹ Death is no longer just the end of life (“abstract negativity”) and the return of the body to the organic universality of the Earth. It is that, but it is now the moment of spiritual Resurrection as well. Christ is crucified afresh every day in my sins, failures, and imperfections, but he is reborn every day in the universal forgiving consciousness of the community.

38./785. Thus there are not *two species* of mankind (“embodied” and “risen”), but a dying and a rising again for me now. My specificity is dissolved in my knowing that the Last Judgment is superseded in actual experience. The Good has become Subject; Christ rises in me as my actual forgiving Judge. This means that the eternal God has become self-conscious in me. So the death and resurrection of Jesus coincides with the *death of God*. Jesus (as a man) was just the one-sided insistence that only “the Kingdom of God” matters; only the Risen Lord is really equal to the Father. But now both are dead together, and the Unhappy Consciousness is justified in claiming that all is darkness. This night is the breath of Pentecost (not historically but now).

As the mediator of the community, the Risen Christ is the *particular* moment between the “singularity” of the repentant sinner and the “universality” of the Father. The “universality” of the Father is God as our Judge. The Church assumed the function of judgment “on earth” because Jesus assigned it to Peter (Matthew 16:19). Through the moment of Unhappy Consciousness which makes each of us a singular soul in the Beyond, the *finality* of any earthly judgment is avoided. But the “Shaped Unchangeable” received this function from the Father and particularized it into the “judgment of the quick” and the “judgment of the dead.” Now, through the speculative understanding of death and resurrection, this “particularity” is sublated in a “singularity” that is “universal.” The meaning of it is transformed by the internalization of Christ in the worshipper (as Augustine’s Inner Judge, or Inner Teacher). Every one of us “dies” as sinful, and is “quickened” by forgiveness. The shape of the *Vorstellung* (in which “Earth” and “Heaven” are divided) is sublated. The “particularity” of the Judge—who being a man like ourselves is a “mediator”—“perishes in his knowing universality, i.e., in his knowing, which is the essence that reconciles itself with itself.” The Mediator is himself perfectly good; but this “perfection” consists (as it logically must) in his “forgiving evil.” This is logically necessary because he comprehends the evil involved in the judging posture. One cannot *be* “good” if one judges. Thus the historic Jesus enjoined upon us: “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1).

The absolution of the Unhappy Consciousness depended upon an authoritative assurance. But now, when the Savior who forgave those who crucified him is internalized, the rationality of the “will of God” is fully appreciated.⁵² It is *me* who see that the repentant sinner must be forgiven, because judgment is as much a sin as the act repented for. Whether as agent or as judge, the self is “particular.” The *wholeness* of self-consciousness, the union or reconciliation of self and world, is found only in the attitude of forgiveness. Jesus himself, in life, was obliged continually both to act and to judge. When, in his death, he forgave even those who could not be repentant, because they had no consciousness of doing wrong, he finally achieved and expressed the standpoint of “absolute knowing,” the complete supersession of the moral valet.

Of course, we are not speaking here of what is “illegal” or “unethical.” Every healthy community deals with “crimes” and “transgressions of the code” in accordance with the law, or the code, itself. Moral considerations (of “intention” and so on) enter into those judgments only in an ancillary way. The social imperative of

Objective Spirit is that “Justice must be done (and must be seen to be done).” Our concern now is only with the judgment that a rational Conscience has to pass upon itself. In this connection, we have already seen how (and why) the standpoint of Religion transcends that of Morality; morality is sublated because moral disagreement is recognized as “the will of God.” In the world of free self-consciousness, every act must be the subject of opposite assessments as “selfish” and “unselfish.” Every act is (and must be) both. The standpoint of “absolute knowing” is that which comprehends why the act had to be the way it was, instead of judging it as right or wrong, and the agent as saved or damned. The religious community knows that even those who do not repent must be loved and understood; and that only through the recognition of the loving effort of comprehension on the side of the observer, can the agent come to appreciate (perhaps) what there is to repent for. This is the truth misrepresented by the judgment of William James, that the Hegelian Absolute is a “moral holiday.”⁵³

The *actual* death of Jesus united him with the Father in pure thought. It was the option for the Beyond, the option for Faith’s realm of “pure consciousness” in preference to the cultural realm of “actuality.” But the Resurrection, Ascension and Descent of the Spirit inverts this option into a comprehensive identity of Heaven with Earth, God with Man. God, as pure Thought, is “dead”; it is in the Descent of the Spirit that He dies properly. But all of the spiritual (Heavenly) half of the circle is now concretely contained in the Crucifixion. The Descent into Hell, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and Pentecost are *Vorstellungen* of the great conceptual change in the significance of death. The Crucifixion is the real experience in which God and Man both die (in their separateness) in order to become one, not merely in thought (the Ascended Lord sitting at the right hand of God in Heaven) but in actuality (at the Pentecost of this day’s forgiveness). Earlier, Hegel identified the Crucifixion with the Resurrection (par. 779 last sentence). Now, when he is insisting most emphatically that the Crucifixion expresses the “truth” of Unhappy Consciousness (that *Gott selbst gestorben ist*),⁵⁴ he identifies the *knowledge of God’s having died* with the “*Begeisterung* whereby Substance has become Subject . . . *actual* and simple and universal Self-Consciousness.” In other words, he identifies it with his own interpretation of the Descent of the Spirit. “We” (who do, after all, want to be cultural historians) have a better theoretical grasp of how “substance” is sublated here than the (wo)man in the street. But the experience of the “sublation”—the experience of being at peace with oneself, because one is at peace with the world, is not primarily a theoretical one at all. It can happen to anyone (in the shape of a “feeling” that has no awareness of being thoughtfully mediated). Our way of experiencing it is only important because the “objectivity” of all “Science” is founded upon it.

39./786. Thus Spirit is *self-knowing* absolute Spirit. It unites the three moments; it is the mover, the movement, and the medium (substance) in which the moving happens. We have come back to the concept of absolute Spirit that we had reached when we embarked on this chapter. For the act is a judgment that forgives and so abandons its primitive “unchangeableness” to become the *Yes* of freedom.

The community for which the whole cycle from Crucifixion to Pentecost is an inner experience of everyday is “the Spirit knowing itself.” Its object, the remembered Savior, is the “true absolute *content*.” But this *Vorstellung* is only the image of the community’s own actual experience. The community “runs through the three elements of its nature.” These elements are the (1) pure thought of God’s judgment, (2) the *Vorstellung* of the Mediator, and (3) self-conscious forgiveness. In the movement, Spirit is *what moves itself*, throughout the process. As it moves through the three elements, it becomes three moments. In the element of pure thought, it appears as the self-moving *natural self*, and hence as “condemned” or evil; in the *Vorstellung* it appears as the dependent self which is moved towards the saving image; and in self-consciousness it is the Spirit that moves itself rationally. From being “nothing,” it becomes “I who am saved by faith,” and finally “I that is We, and We that is I.”

The motion goes through the *Substance*. This “Substance” is both the thought-substance of God, and the actual substance of the world: the “estrangement” between them (which is absolute for the Unhappy Consciousness) is gradually overcome (and the progressive disappearance of the Unhappy Consciousness is the index of this). The “element” of *Vorstellung* is where these “estranged substances” (thought and being, God and the World) stand side by side—and hence this “element” of objectivity (or Substance) is where the motion really happens. The motion is the same motion of “Conscience, the Beautiful Soul, Evil and Forgiveness” that we have already observed in the sphere of actuality. We have observed it now in the sphere of “pure thought”—or as the motion of God the Father, through Incarnation and Death as the Son, to Resurrection, Ascension, and Descent as the Spirit. The motion in this absolute perspective is God’s “forgiveness” of evil, comprehended as His necessary reconciliation with finitude, His manifestation of Himself in His truest and highest shape (as Spirit), through the acceptance of finitude (and of the resultant “evil” of selfishness). But Hegel does not speak of our “forgiving” God, or of God’s “forgiving” Himself,⁵⁵ because he wants to use “forgiveness” only as a practical relation between the finite selves. “God” is simply the “law of righteousness” that becomes the “reconciling Yes” and does away with the “particularity” (or onesidedness) of the “extremes” of judgment. This motion establishes the wholeness of integral Self-Consciousness as the *Sache selbst* (the subject who is also Substance). We can quite properly call this the translation of theology into anthropology (as Kojève does). But we must not lose sight of the fact that the embodied “subject”—who is still just as mortal as the Comic Consciousness—comprehends “everything human” spread out in the temporal “substantiality of thought” and the spatial “substantiality of being.”

40./787. But the content still exists as images for the community of forgiveness. It has transcended the natural meaning of the images but it still uses them. For this reason the community of self-consciousness is not *presently* self-conscious. God becomes self-consciousness in it, but it does not recognize what that means: that its own self-consciousness is *identical* with the substance. It takes the descent of the spirit as a work of grace from above. It does not grasp that God has now *risen again* as self-consciousness

through its own devotion. It thinks that the substance of things moves by itself, and does not think of this movement as something that the self accomplishes. So although it experiences union it still looks to fulfilment in the future of this world. Jesus had a mother and no present father. The religious community has a father (its own activity) but no present mother (only a love that remains inward). Its world is disrupted into what is "now" and what is "to come." The immediate sense of God's presence has still to spell itself out in a reconciliation of the world with itself.

The "Self-Consciousness" that the community has achieved is still a *Vorstellung*. The community "knows itself in God" without comprehending what that means. It does not yet have the concept of self-consciousness, the concept which it is (or incarnates). It has not objectified the concept for itself as a *Concept*, but only as a *Vorstellung*, an instantiated concept in which the "movement" is grasped as transcendence. The "other" posited by this *Vorstellung* is completely internalized in consciousness; it is a concrete, not an abstract, "beyond." But it is still *other*.

"Now I live," said Paul, "*yet not I*, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). "It is not by dialectic," added Ambrose, "that God has chosen to save his people."⁵⁶ But, if Hegel is right, God has no choice in the matter. For it is not God alone—as the transcendent "substance" in which we live and move and "have our being"—who can save us; and it is "by dialectic" that the people does, and must, save itself in God. The last moment of "Faith" to be overcome is that threshold of thought at which the Unhappy Consciousness knelt in silence. From first to last, Religion is *devotion*, *Andenken*. It is intuitively directed towards an object of pure thought, from the Rising Sun to the Risen Christ; but it obstinately refuses to think, except in the external mode of observation. The community of forgiveness is prepared to contradict Ambrose directly, and to say that God has indeed chosen to save us by dialectic. One could even paraphrase what Hegel says about "this depth of the pure Self" being "the compelling violence [*Gewalt*] by which the *abstract essence* is dragged down out of its abstraction, and raised up to the Self by the might of this pure devotion," by saying that "God saves Himself in His people by their dialectic." But the religious community will not readily say that; and in everything we say about God, we ought to remember His logical status as a pure thought ("the Unchangeable"). What is true, then, is that God is eternally saved in His people by their mutual comprehension.

This *eternal* mode of speech about God preserves the logical character of His self-emptying into selfhood as an *Ansich*, or as something which no action of the people can affect. It is the recognition that this *Ansich* is the In-itself of the community's *own* pure thinking or logic that is the one step that we have still to make. At present, the eternity of philosophical truth is something that religious devotion recognizes, but cannot comprehend as a moment of its own essential changeableness. The sublation of its changeableness in the Unchangeable has to be put off into the future. It is externally tacked on to the reconciliation with God in the community. It is then thought of as the final goal, a sort of "millennium" which I experience now, but which is still "to come" in the world. The "Sunday consciousness" of the community is still alienated from its "weekday consciousness."

Hegel expresses this circular return to the Moral World-View, through a curious metaphorical inversion of the Virgin Birth story. The history of the Christian revelation moves from world-belief in a God-Man who has an actual mother but no actual father, to a community that has an actual father in the Spirit (the Risen Christ present in “its *own doing and knowing*”) but no actual mother. The Church Triumphant is still an object of *love* and *hope*, not of actual experience. The Church is not reconciled with its present actual world (as the Art-Religion was, however tragically).

It seems clear to me that in this perspective, Religion is a permanent “shape” of Spirit. There is an important sense in which this *Entzweiung* of consciousness, this *Gebrochenheit* of actuality, *cannot* be abolished. The Christian definition of God as “love” expresses the rational attitude toward the openness of the future.⁵⁷ Our active orientation to the future cannot but be critical of the present (even if we are only consciously critical of those who want to change the way the world is now). So we are bound to look to the future with a faith and hope that should always be guided by charity toward the faith and hope of others. As the universal community of this spirit of charity, the Church must always remain sundered from any actual community. The actual structure of society is always, necessarily, a particular (and hence a changeable) “State.” A final “Heaven on Earth” in which “the State withers away” is just as much an illogical phantasm as the Heaven of faith; and now that we have reached the final shape of the “estrangement” of thought from actuality we can see that the Marxist “gospel” is one of the logically necessary *shapes* of “the manifest Religion.”⁵⁸ “Marxism” cannot be “Science,” precisely because of its orientation towards a rational ideal that is not already *actual*.

Hegel’s final reconciliation of the religious spirit with actuality can do no more than banish *both* of these phantasms from our minds. In this respect his philosophical community, the community of Absolute Knowledge, is a universal resurrection of the Greek *tragic* consciousness. It is no accident that his speculative theology concentrates on the unorthodox thesis that evil is to be “grasped in the divine Essence” (par. 777); and that it must be comprehended as *evil*, not harmonized with the goodness of God by any conceptual sleight of hand (par. 780). We must be reconciled with its absolute necessity, and consequently with its eternal presence. The symbol of the Crucifixion (universalized as “the death of God”) is indeed *crucial* to the Manifest Religion. The Science of Experience inverts it into the moment of Resurrection; and science generally teaches us to distinguish *necessities* from removable “evils.” But “removable evil” is itself a *necessity*, because the removal of one evil creates another. Our negative practical attitude to “evil as evil” is logically determined; so all that can be debated is *how* it should be overcome where it is perceived; and it is a logical necessity that we shall always disagree about that.⁵⁹ The religious doctrine of comprehension is the foundation of a new perspective and a new strategy; but it does not change either the practical duty or the inevitable disagreement about values and priorities. So the Church will always remain a critical conscience of actual society—with all of the anarchy of Conscience sublated in the Spirit of charity.

Let us close by reviewing the phases of the Manifest Religion in their scientific aspect. Manifest Religion is the “Religion of Reason.” Absolute Knowing will produce only the “concept” of Absolute Spirit, in which this objective (social) shape of Reason is self-consciously integrated with the subjective shape of Reason. This provides the *closure* of the “Science of experience” upon itself. The full development of the pure concept of Absolute Knowing is the proper project of Philosophic Science as a “system.”

The first phase of Rationally Manifest Religion is that of the Unhappy Consciousness raised into universal awareness of the Substance. Here the finite Spirit is a Reason that *observes* the Absolute Spirit in Pure Thought. God in Heaven—the Unchangeable Objectivity which the singular Unhappy Consciousness cannot reach—unfolds logically as “the Trinity.” This determines the other moments as follows:

Consciousness as Understanding (a):	The Inner Concept of Force as the necessary mutual <i>solicitation</i> of two complementary forces.
Self-Consciousness as Unhappy:	First Relation: God as Judge (complemented now by the Divine Emperor and Gnostic Hopes).
<i>Observing Reason:</i>	(a) The Universal Individual (and its Life) (b) Phrenology (singular Self-discovery as a <i>Ding</i>) ⁶⁰ (c) The universal <i>Volk</i> of God (Dante’s <i>Comedy</i>)
Spirit in Self-Estrangement:	The Trinitarian Faith ⁶¹

The second phase is the world of the estranged *Vorstellung* in motion. Here everything is dominated by the God-Man’s story:

Consciousness as Understanding (b):	The world of Appearance, Law, and Explanation
Self-Consciousness as Unhappy:	Second Relation: Dependence and Trust
	(a) Devotion in Church (Jesus in Solitude) (b) Desire and Labor in the world (Jesus as Teacher and Example) (c) Contrition and Absolution (the Crucifixion)
<i>Active Reason:</i>	(a) Pleasure surrenders to Necessity (the Crucifixion) (b) The Heart triumphs over Self-Conceit (the Resurrection) (c) Virtue returns to the World (Pentecost)
Spirit as Culture:	(a) Noble Service and Sacrifice

- (b) The “Truth of Enlightenment”
- (c) Absolute Freedom and Terror

In the final stage each moment contains its opposite. Spirit reverses the motion of Reason and moves back from the Crucifixion to Pentecost. This circular aspect of things is the emergence of Absolute Knowing. In this phase (Self-Conscious Reason) we find:

Conscious Under- standing (c):	The Inverted World (cf. par. 158)
Self-Consciousness as Unhappy: Third Relation:	Salvation ⁶²
<i>Achieved Individual Reason:</i>	(a) The Thing Itself (the Community of Humanity) (b) The Law of Loving God and ones’s Neighbor (c) The Forgiving of Trespasses (as the Test of Reason)
Spirit	(a) The Judgment of Conscience (Crucifixion) (b) The Beautiful Soul in its Universal Community (Resurrection) (c) Evil and Forgiveness as actual experience (Pentecost)

The tragic return of the Crucifixion at the level of Spirit (“the harsh truth that God is dead”) represents the fact that the healthy Conscience directs its Judgment upon itself; and the fact that self-forgiveness must never become too easy. What is involved is a forgetting of the past in our active concern with the future. This is the aspect under which we can see why Religion can never completely disappear into Absolute Knowing.⁶³ Religion *can* disappear as the *particular* cult of the first phase, and under that aspect it is bound to multiply. Its disappearance into “Scientific atheism” is simply one shape of this logically necessary multiplication.⁶⁴

Notes

1. F. Guibal (1975) provides useful analyses and diagrams for Hegel’s discussion of “Manifest Religion.” Hegel’s use of the concept of “revelation” in the *Philosophy of History* is examined by John Walker (1989). This provides valuable insights into the brief logical analysis given here.

2. This is the reason why Hegel maintains that philosophy begins in Greece. Philosophy is not reflection *about* the Absolute, but “absolute” (i.e. free) self-consciousness. Cf. *Einleitung* (Hoffmeister), 225–227; *Geschichte der Philosophie* (Glockner) I, 183–188.

3. The Roman Peace, based on the “artful system” of Augustus, was regarded by Gibbon as the *happiest* period in human history (*Decline and Fall*, London, Everyman, I, 78). Hegel

accepts Gibbon's view, and simply applies his own moral standard to it when he calls it "the boredom of the world" (Rosenkranz, 136; Harris and Knox, 181).

4. The implication is that "in itself" (and hence "for us") the Light Essence *cannot be* "the Absolute Subject." The worshippers take it to be the "absolute Self"; but *we* can see that it is *not* a proper self (because it has no "other" in which it can recognize itself). The "absolute Self" of the Unhappy Consciousness *is* the Light Essence that has returned to itself in thought (Yahweh). The moving relation of this absolute Substance to the finite self-consciousness *makes* it into the Absolute Subject.

5. Hegel's text is ungrammatical, and the emendation which the Critical editors have accepted from Moldenhauer and Michel renders the sense correctly. But since Hegel does not give us the "proposition" of "the first substantiality" at all, it is better to leave the text alone. The "first substantiality" cannot utter its own "proposition"—that is why Hegel writes in such an irregular form.

The evolution of the speculative proposition—"Absolute Essence is the Self (Natural Religion), the Self is the absolute Essence (Art-Religion), and the Absolute Essence is [spiritually] the Self (Manifest Religion)"—is examined in detail by G. Wohlfahrt (1981). I hope it will be found that my briefer discussion has added some necessary refinements. (The "Christian" prejudice in Wohlfahrt's view is too strong. *Every* kind of religious experience requires "speculative propositions.")

6. This mode of expression is intended to cover such cases as the devotion of Hippolytus to Artemis, the labors of Heracles, and, of course, the *Bacchae*.

7. All of these data I owe to the marvellous book by Robin Lane-Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York, Knopf, 1987). Judicious users of his index can quickly find many more like them.

8. In the culture of 1800 this situation has returned again at a much deeper level. It is one major function of the *Phenomenology* to resolve it, by putting all of the "shapes of God" into a "pantheon" of quite a new kind in which Beauty and the Understanding can finally be reconciled.

R. K. Williamson has rightly grasped that "the dialectically later is not necessarily spiritually superior" (1984, 347, n. 93) in his discussion of Fackenheim (1970, 157). (Fackenheim himself is criticizing a mistaken interpretation; but his own view of how Hegel regarded dialectical development is unclear.)

9. Most of the "persecutions" were locally inspired; and the local populations would naturally be mainly concerned about their own cults. The failure of Christians to make the required gestures of veneration for the Emperor (or his ancestors) served as an argument by which the Roman authorities could be forced to act.

10. Compare Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus (von Arnim, *S.V.F.* I, 537; M. Hadas (ed.), *Essential Works of Stoicism*, New York, Bantam, 1961, 51–52) with the inscription at Oenoanda about "All-seeing Aether" (Lane-Fox, 169). (The fact that the *Epicurean* philosophy was certainly influential in Oenoanda should *help*, rather than hinder, our appreciation of what Hegel calls "Stoicism." The Epicurean, Diogenes of Oenoanda, is a perfect paradigm of "freedom of thought.")

11. Acts, 14, 8–18. Paul is taken for Hermes, because Zeus is expected to speak through his usual messenger and herald. Compare also Acts 28:2–6.

12. The phrase comes from Luther (see *Werke*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Band 50, 589). But Hegel was probably echoing a hymn of the seventeenth century—compare *Vorlesungen* V, 358; Hodgson, III, 125.

13. Plutarch, *Moralia* 419B.

14. Carducci, *Rime nuove* 14: Muor Giove, e l'inno del poeta resta"; Gentile, *Filosofia dell'arte*, 2nd ed., Florence, 1944, 292–293 (Gullace, 263–264).

15. For a Christian theological interpretation of the “implicit father and real mother” see H. Küng (1987, 208–209).

16. When we refer the “resurrection of the body” to the supersensible world of Faith’s “pure thinking,” it becomes (as pagan critics always recognized) the most intolerable of all the absurdities in the Christian Creed.

17. Many interpretations of the *Phenomenology* seem to me to treat it like that. The one that lies closest to hand for Anglophone readers is the “Analysis” by J. N. Findlay in Miller’s translation. I am myself quite prepared to subscribe to Michael Rosen’s condemnation of all such “Neoplatonic fantasies” whatever their provenance may be.

18. This moment in the evolution of religious truth has come round again in Hegel’s contemporary world—see the Preface (par. 10). It is a sign that the world is ready for the transition to “Science.” Thus H.-G. Gadamer was right to call Hegel’s “Absolute Knowing” a “Gnostic self-redemption of finitude.” (Hegel depended mainly on August Neander for his knowledge of Gnosticism. For an estimate of its limits, and of Hegel’s sympathies and insights, see C. O’Regan (1994, Subject Index).

19. According to P. C. Hodgson and J. M. Stewart (Jaeschke, 1990, 318, n. 57), Hegel’s “es ist *wirklich an dem*” simply means “it is *actually the case*” (not, as Miller has it: “is actual in the believer”). This is important *historically* because some members of Hegel’s school seem to have believed that the historic actuality of Jesus was here deduced. What the actuality of “this self-consciousness” *must logically* mean is stated in my commentary. Anyone who ascribes to Hegel the view that a historical *event* can be deduced “logically” is crediting him with an appalling error about his own logic. The way that he makes this “actuality” depend upon the *appearance of a universal belief*, shows that he made no such mistake. But even if one obstinately maintains that Hegel *did* hold this mistaken view of what the “universal belief” necessitates, the supposed deduction remains a logical mistake and nothing else. (R. Gascoigne [1985] deals mainly with Hegel’s Berlin philosophy of religion. But in his first chapter he integrates the contributions of the *Phenomenology* fairly adequately. He takes the historicity of Jesus rather more literally than is necessary [1985, 25]. D. P. Jamros [1994, 194–195] understands the historic Incarnation much better.)

In fact, what is *observed* (not “deduced”) here is the *experience* of “Christ living in me.” So Miller’s mistake makes no difference to the only logically defensible interpretation of the argument. I cannot stand in the “third relation” to the Unchangeable without admitting as a necessary truth that an earlier *world* stood in the “second relation.” But once I am in the “third relation” I can believe whatever seems reasonable about the factual *correctness* of the historical beliefs upon which the “second relation” depended. (That some components in the “belief of the world” are logically incomprehensible was never denied even in the “second relation” itself.)

20. J. N. Findlay (1958, 139) got the point of this sentence. *Pace* H. Küng (1987, 227) “faith in Christ” is *not* “presupposed in his [Hegel’s] way of doing philosophy.” Jewish, Moslem, Indian and Japanese students (or enlightened modern agnostics) do not need to become Christians in order to comprehend the concept of Absolute Knowing with full agreement. (All of them must, of course, appreciate what the Christian experience contributed to make Hegel’s consciousness of Absolute Spirit possible.)

21. It is in the Mass that this “spiritual sense-certainty” is *vorgestellt*. But, philosophically, we should remember at this point that Jesus himself, when he was among the children, said “Whoso shall receive one such in my name, receiveth me” (Matthew 18:5). Also the voice that spoke to Paul identified the persecution of the physically living community with the persecution of its dead self (Acts 9:4–5; 22:7–8; 26:14–15); and the final meaning of the moment of sense-certainty is given by I John 4:20: “. . . he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

This seems to be the appropriate point at which to remark that E. Brito’s attempt (1979, 19–49) to distinguish between the “subjective” Christology of the *Phenomenology* and the “historical” (or “objective”) Christology of the Berlin Lectures is patently invalid. I would not wish to take a position here about the relation between religion in the *Phenomenology* and religion in the *Encyclopedia*. But I will say that insofar as the Lectures are “historical” they are *ipso facto* “phenomenological.”

22. The doctrine of the Incarnation in Manifest Religion is not “orthodox” even in the rather liberal sense in which the Christology of writers like James Yerkes (1982) or Hans Küng (1970; 1987) might be called orthodox. (The “Catholic” orthodoxy of the latter has, of course, been called in question.) Hegel’s doctrine holds good *philosophically*, without any act of “Faith” being required. Thus the *manifest* (or *absolute*) religion has only an “invisible” Church which comprehends all the visible churches. Q. Lauer—who certainly agrees that the Christology of Yerkes is that of Hegel—has correctly said (1976, 254) “God and man are *not* one and the same *being*; they *are* one and the same *process*.” In philosophical terms, no she is God qua finitely embodied from time_i to time_{i+x}; but every she who grasps what her proper *humanity* consists in, is *as much* God as she is *human*. (Hegel’s view of the movement of salvation was probably inspired—or at least confirmed—by his reading of Eckhart. Compare M. Henry [1973, 333–334, 428]; also C. O’Regan [1994, 194–195].)

Outside of this absolute *identity* there are only “beings” that are *less than* “God”—though they may be very *real* and *awful*. For example, there are the “order of Nature,” and the Lawgiver who authorized the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie.

23. I have deliberately substituted the formula from the Nicene Creed for Hegel’s *Mosaic* formula “Creator of Heaven and Earth,” because I think it helps to make a bridge between our *conceptual* activity and the abstract “thinking” of dogmatic theology.

24. See the stories told by Heinrich Heine in Nicolin reports 362–364.

25. Synesius of Cyrene wrote to a correspondent in about 408 A.D. that some country folk believed King Agamemnon was still in power, and that he had a friend and minister called Odysseus, “a bold man, but clever at finding ways out of difficulties . . . Indeed, they laugh when they speak of him, believing that he blinded the Cyclops only last year” (Epistle 148; I cite the story from R. Lane-Fox [1987, 48–49]); one cannot help suspecting that some educated person—Synesius himself?—has had his little joke with them.

26. The *abstract* possibility that Paul might be lying must be conceded, because the freedom of “thinking” requires it. *Concretely*, however, the coherence of the record of Paul’s life after his conversion raises obvious problems about what the word “lying” could mean in this hypothesis. One who advances the hypothesis would, it seems, have to be employing a concept of the “real truth of character” like the one that we find in “Phrenology.” So we need not trouble ourselves further about abstract concessions of this sort.

27. I must emphasize, again, that it does not matter in the least whether the historic man from Nazareth had this consciousness or not. This is the “shape” that is *remembered* in John’s Gospel; and a “false” memory is indistinguishable from a “true” one, once there is no longer any possibility of contradicting it.

28. The *actual* community is the community of the living; the *religious* community is the community of the living, the dead, and the yet unborn.

29. The form *Gemeine* is old. It was used by Luther both for the empirically present congregation, and for the ideal “communion of saints.” See T. Rendtorff in J. Ritter (ed.), 1974, 238, col. 2. (I am assuming that it signifies here the *withdrawn* community of would-be “beautiful souls.”)

30. Hegel speaks of “the spiritless recollection of an intended [*gemeinten*] singular shape and its time that is gone.” The word *gemeinten* indicates clearly that the historical Jesus is beyond our reach as philosophers. It does not matter to us what sensible phenomenon the *belief* of consciousness is actually pointing at. The *historical Erinnerung* involved in this “pointing” is *geistlos*. It was relevant to the Crusaders, but it is not significant for us.

31. Compare Rosenkranz, 546 (*J.P.* iii, 1979, 3, no. 4); 547 (*Clio* 12, 1983, 405–407); and Rosenkranz, 182 (Harris and Knox, 256–257).

32. There is an impressive body of scholarly discussion concerning Hegel’s interpretation of the dogma of the Trinity (most of which is not directly concerned with the *Phenomenology*). The Anglophone reader should begin with D. M. Schlitt (1984), whose work is well founded on that of J. Splett (1965) in German; and C. Bruaire (1964) and A. Chapelle (1964–1967) in French.

33. K. Barth (1959, 268) asked “Why did Hegel not become for the Protestant world something similar to what Thomas Aquinas was for Roman Catholicism?” The answer is simple: unlike Thomas he did not accept the *divine* authority of the Scriptures. He sought to transform (and in a certain sense to invert) the whole relation between Reason and Revelation, in the light of Kant’s “Copernican Revolution.”

34. *Philosophy of Religion* (ed. Jaeschke, I, 212–213; ed. Hodgson, I, 308, n. 97). This famous remark occurs only in Hotho’s transcript of the Lectures of 1824. Perhaps Hegel did not say it in his public lecture; but he must *surely* have said it to Hotho. The “necessity” of Creation troubles H. Küng (for a useful review of Küng’s attitude to Hegel see J. P. Fitzer, 1972). But this *necessity* of creation is identical with its *freedom* (cf. G. S. Hendry, 1981, 350). (W. Pannenberg complains that there is a “leap in thought” from the universal as “free power” to the universal as the “freedom of love” [1973, 174–175]. But this “leap” is only *arbitrary* if we take it to refer to a real being posited as beyond or above us. In our interpretive concept of the human experience of the world, it is only a dialectically logical development.)

35. W. Kern’s proposal (1959, 423–427) that the Hegelian dialectic of knowledge must be extended by a “dialectic of love,” seeks to mitigate the *absoluteness* of the otherness in which self-recognition takes place. But this mitigation is only *mystically* possible. We cannot escape from the *finitude* of selfhood; hence we must always recognize the *otherness* of the other-self (or of God). This is how “ontic” difference appears within the “ontological” identity of Absolute Knowing.

Our commentary has gone through Hegel’s argument backwards. We began from God’s logical need of the world in commenting on paragraph 772; and we have only spoken of the *eternity* of the Logos now. Hegel goes the opposite way. My hope is that the inversion will help to make clear what the argument is.

36. Hegel did not make the mistake of thinking that everything *in* the “resolve” was physically *perpetual*. Since God is Spirit, the resolve is “for freedom.” So although Hegel’s philosophy of organic nature is not evolutionary, it is not Aristotelian either. The evolutionary hypothesis is quite consistent with it.

37. When we extend our view beyond the natural order, to “Heaven and Earth, and all things visible and invisible,” this reading becomes ever more convincing, because, upon our interpretation of it, “creation from nothing” begins to make sense for the very first time.

38. See the Dissertation of 1801, Lasson, *Erste Druckschriften*, 378.

39. In one sense, the Evil Spirit is necessarily as old as the Good one. So the “Dark Essence” is the Lord of Evil just as the Light Essence is the Lord of the Good. But I am not counting these “essences” as “spirits.” Their communities are constituted by nature, not by free choice. Properly speaking, there are no “spirits” in the “natural religions”; and there is no “Evil Spirit” in the Art-Religion. (About the logical status of “the enemy” in Judaism I do not want to be dogmatic. His appearance in the Book of Job as one of God’s “servants” suffices to establish my point—or if that is not thought to be enough, then I will give it up.)

40. It is a general complaint of students that Hegel’s interpretation of Boehme, though it *uses* many texts, leans too much on the early *Aurora*—see especially R. F. Brown, 1977, and D. Walsh, 1984. I think myself that this is because Hegel recognized the uniquely philosophical or speculative drive of this early work. Boehme’s desire to be “orthodox” is at the bottom of the more complicated doctrines found in his later work. This complication (and especially the *doubling*, or distinction between God’s life and ours) is of no speculative interest. It merely reflects the estranged condition of the world of Culture. Boehme’s greatest insights (like those of Eckhart) came at the moments when he broke out of this conceptual frame (which was typical of all orthodoxy). Hegel’s *speculative* interpretation of Descartes is *selective* in the same way, and for the same reason. (Compare C. O’Regan [1994, 132]. His comments on the influence of Boehme on Hegel’s theology—which can be traced exhaustively in his Subject Index—are uniformly helpful and enlightening.)

41. See J. Boehme, *Sämtliche Schriften* (ed. W.-E. Peuckert), I, 161–162, 194 etc.; trans. (1960, 88–89, 334–383 etc.). The “double Fall” or two-stage engendering of evil in this paragraph is discussed from a theological standpoint by E. Schmidt (1952, 186–193). Compare also C. O’Regan (1994, 155–156). On the significance of Lucifer cf. W. Desmond (1992b, 204–205). Desmond has written a long essay on the Hegelian concept of evil (1992b, chap. 4). He finds that the discussion in this section is “equivocal” (1992b, 192). One cannot deny that several kinds of uncertainty are possible. But Hegel has here returned to the level of ordinary common sense.

42. The Anglophone reader should rely on Baillie (not Miller) at this point.

43. There are a number of discussions of God’s *wrath* in the *Aurora*. But see especially, *Sämtliche Schriften* (ed. W.-E. Peuckert), I, 105, 183.

44. Because of his doctrine that Spirit is the beginning and the end, Hegel is not quite orthodox (cf. Whittemore, 1960, 151). J.M.E. McTaggart (1901, 201–205) argued on these grounds that only the Holy Spirit is truly God. His mode of argument is cogently criticized by R. K. Williamson (1984, 165–166). But when it is rightly understood, his claim expresses an important truth.

45. Hegel’s theory of “evil” is contextually located by W. L. La Croix (1971).

46. The champions both of the Neoplatonic concept of Evil, and of the Spinozist identity of God and Nature, were Schelling and his disciples. Compare Rosenkranz, 188; *G.W.* VII, 34, lines 16–18; see further Schelling, *Werke* VI, 38–42; and IV, 307 (Vater, 203). Hegel’s insistence that Concepts cannot be expressed in *Vorstellungen*, and that even Boehme was not successful here, represents a disagreement with Schelling, and a criticism of his mode of presentation. But Hegel himself employs Boehme’s *Vorstellungen*; and he himself is *interpreting*

the philosophy of Nature of Schelling's *Bruno*. His rejection of Schelling's neo-Platonism is more radical. He does not agree that metaphors like that of the Fall should simply be taken over, and used by philosophers. But I think he saw this as a discord within a concord; he had been attacking the "Fall" metaphor for several years in Logic lectures, while at the same time insisting on his sincere respect for Schelling—see *G.W.VII*, 34 (Burbidge and Di Giovanni, 36) and *Night Thoughts*, 400–402. There are epigones both of Schelling (especially Eschenmayer) and of Jacobi (especially Köppen) at whom his dialectical explanations are far more directly aimed. Schelling is mistaken in thinking that these *Vorstellungen* are, or can be made, adequate for the expression of properly speculative truth. But it is his merit to have seen that these *are* the *Vorstellungen* in which the truth is most nearly visible. Where Hegel's own theology takes leave of the orthodox tradition it is because he *agrees* with Schelling. In 1807 that fundamental concord was still more important than any *disagreement*. Of course, when Schelling himself failed to see this, and continued to do philosophy in the theologizing mode of *Vorstellung*, the situation changed. But Hegel's belief that there was no reason why they could not be friends even in the 1820's demonstrates the persistence of the attitude that I am ascribing to him in 1807. Compare H. S. Harris, 1987 and 1989.

47. Even the "Animal-Religion" must be admitted to have some positive value (as the foundation of "concreteness"); but the "Roman religion" is not embraced within the range of my generalization. (The *Herrenvolk* concept of the Nazis was a conceptual synthesis of these two moments. Only the face of "the enemy" can be seen in it. We must "comprehend" it certainly, but only as Unhappy Consciousness.)

48. The "name of Jesus" belongs to that *dead* Savior—the sublated "essence" of Sense-Certainty—so the two meanings of *besondere* coincide.

49. For a translation of the Analysis (keyed to Hoffmeister and Baillie) see Kojève (1969), 261–287. Our reference here is to page 287.

50. For a sounder interpretation of "Hegel's Atheism" see Paul Lakeland (1980). Kojève's humanist "Wisdom" still smells strongly of the cultural imperialism of Western historical reason that Nietzsche attacked so brilliantly. See his *Use and Abuse of History* (1957, 51–52).

51. Compare the end of paragraph 779, which is where the "spiritual resurrection" was mentioned before.

52. Compare further the commentary on paragraphs 670–671 above; and the commentary on paragraphs 228–229 in *Pilgrimage*.

53. See W. James (1909, chapter III). That we find this moral valet's judgment in a great psychologist, devoted to the ideal of comprehension, is an index of how far the religious climate of James' time was from the spirit of "science" as Hegel understood it. But we must not blame James alone for this; his view that the world needed *improving* on the basis of scientific understanding was only the obverse side of the academic otherworldliness which believed that it possessed, in its curious amalgams of Christian neo-Platonism with Hegel, a purely theoretical access to the supersensible world that is behind or beyond "mere" experience. The Absolute that James attacked deserved to be attacked; only it was *not* (as he thought) the Absolute of *Hegel*.

54. P. C. Rasmussen (1972, 103) is probably thinking of Nietzsche when he asserts that Hegel's thought is the first to say "God is dead." Since the death and resurrection of God is an element in every developed religion this is an empirically improbable proposition if taken abstractly. But what matters more is to insist that Hegel is the first to give a *philosophical* account of the *Resurrection* of God and man together. I find myself much more in sympathy with the argument of J. W. Burbidge (1992, chapter XIII) who uses this paragraph to estab-

lish that Hegel really is a “Christian.” But I have to say that the paragraph is, at most, Hegel’s final observation as the philosophical *historian* of Christian experience. For a mere *observer*—like myself and *my* Hegel—the question is more clearly answered by E. Black (1977, 209). (D. S. Pacini [1987, 116–118] radically misinterprets the concept of God as Spirit.)

55. “God’s forgiving Himself” is a logically absurd locution, because He can only manifest what He logically (and hence “unchangeably”) *is*; but there have been many religious souls who have “hardened their heart” against God, and have needed to “forgive” Him. The most vivid example known to me is that of Heloise. The way that Hegel (and I myself) see the question is partly a function of personal psychology.

56. The quotation comes from my memory of a conversation many years ago with A. A. Nemetz. I have not managed to find it; and I dare not claim that my memory is perfectly accurate!

57. The “openness” of the future is identical with its *mysteriousness*. In this sense the Hegelian philosophy of religion retains “mystery.” In general, we can afford to smile gently at the arguments of A. K. Min (1983) in defence of this thesis. But his Kantian description of Hegel’s procedure as “*presupposing* the givenness of a fact” (1983, 349) must be rejected. The only *facts* involved in Hegel’s doctrine can be *observed* by anyone at any time (specifically “the appearance of the belief of the world”). Hegel aims to remove *all* mystery from our comprehension of the past. He achieves this end by interpreting the *Vorstellungen* of religion aesthetically—cf. M. Donougho (1982, especially 490–498). (The theory of “appearance” is necessarily “aesthetic,” but it should not be *reduced* to *aesthetic theory* as in H. P. Kainz (1972). Donougho’s *semiotic* approach is the right one.)

58. Kojève (as we have seen) was a “Hegelian” only in a grossly distorted and impoverished sense. But, by the same token, Ernst Bloch was a very good Hegelian indeed; and the whole tradition of the “Frankfurt School” belongs within the Hegelian Church. R. Ahlers (1978) offers a valuable outline of the complex relations between Hegel’s philosophical theology and the Enlightenment (both in his own time and in ours).

M. Westphal (1987b) has noticed the problem created for the general thesis that “Religion is the foundation of the State” by the fact that Hegel’s “Protestant principle” makes religion sectarian. He does not admit that secular humanism is another form of Protestantism. But he ought to. He would then be on the way to the conceptual (philosophical) solution to the problem (as we can readily see in his own essay of 1974 = 1992, chapter 11). It always remains true that the real world has to solve its own *real* problems; but we must not engage in “spiritual” polemics about this under the mistaken impression that we are doing philosophy. That only makes the problems worse.

59. C. Taylor (1975, 178) rightly says that in the modern Nation-State “men . . . accept their identification with external social reality . . . but . . . they do not feel *bei sich* in it.” Hegel aims to restore our sense of “being-at-home”; but we cannot regain the immediate *Beisichsein* of Greek *Sittlichkeit*. One can plausibly argue that our own century has taught us how dangerous it is to be *bei sich* in our political community. It is by redirecting our *religious* consciousness to the human family in this world, that Hegel’s philosophy restores *Beisichsein*. Atheistic believers in the “class war” are entitled to call Hegel’s way out “chimerical” (W. Becker, 1971, 121); and believing Hegelians can argue that “bureaucracy” must be “humanized” as much as possible. But the Hegelian sense of *Beisichsein* involves acceptance of the fact that conflict can never be eliminated (compare M. Franklin, 1960a, 1960b).

60. Perhaps, since this is the Phenomenology of *absolute* Spirit, we ought to refer to the *empty tomb* here. This “middle” refers us to God’s Kingdom in the Beyond. But the speculative inversion in Absolute Knowing requires us to show where “Phrenology” fits in the circle of Manifest Religion.

61. Compare paragraphs 531–533—here we have a moment of direct and explicit coincidence between finite and Absolute Spirit: the first moment of Absolute Spirit is identical with Objective Spirit as Thought.

62. Since the Unhappy Consciousness persists here only in the logically irremovable aspect that we all live from day to day and “the Kingdom never comes” this moment is now simply the finite singular aspect of the world of Spirit defined below.

63. B. Baugh (1991, 72) has shown that Kojève inherited from Koyré the mistaken view that “human time is primarily futural” in Hegel’s Jena thought. I do not want to give comfort to any heresy of that kind.

64. According to my interpretation, the overcoming of the “alien [*fremd*] satisfaction” is simply the sublation of the *orthodox* Christology (liberally interpreted, see note 19 above). M. Miller (1978, 198) describes the “contradiction” correctly. “The subject as religious knower, remains opposed to what, through religious knowledge, it knows itself to be.” When this contradiction is overcome, the subject becomes directly a member in the “procession of God’s infinity” in paragraph 808. Thus Findlay is (rather too prosaically) *right* about the “Absolute Knowing” of the *Phenomenology* (1958, 144). Writers like Flay (1984, 237) who say that “Once interiorized, there is no objectification, no representation, no simple transcendence of what is represented” etc. make the final “procession of the Spirit” incomprehensible. They are confusing the “absolute knowing” of the *Phenomenology* with that of the *Logic*. (For this necessary distinction see the commentary on 799 below.)

Chapter 13

The Republic of the Learned

VIII: Absolute Knowing

Hegel's last chapter is concerned with the closure of his Science of Experience into a proper conceptual circle. With the speculative comprehension of the universal community of humanity in its history we have reached the final Gestalt of Spirit as a "world" (the We). In Hegel's sixth chapter ("Spirit") we comprehended the human community as a substance that finally becomes subjective in its members as free self-defining individuals. We saw how the comprehension of our self-interest, our moral bias, our finite mortality, and our relation to the dead was crucial to this transformation.

Then in chapter VII ("Religion") we studied the absolute concept of the communal substance; that is to say we comprehended the context of nature and history within which the human community has its being. "God" is the absolute Concept that human communities have developed for this task of absolute self-comprehension.

Now that we have formulated that concept as adequately as possible, only one task remains. It is a task with two faces. On the one hand, we have to show how the absolute concept comprehends all of the "experiences" that have led us to it. On the other hand, we have to show how we (as singular consciousness) comprehend it—or how it is incarnated as a Concept in the thinking individual. These are facets of one task because the closing of the circle, the recapitulation of the science in our minds, is the adequate formulation of the absolute Concept as a concept. We all embody the Concept (before we do any philosophizing at all) because it comprehends us; it provides the context (both practical or "real," and theoretical or "conscious") of all that we intelligently say and do—and of everything that we understand about what is unintelligent. But to embody it as a concept is to raise it to the level of explicit consciousness on its theoretical side. The concern with conceptual structures, or with "logical necessity," is what distinguishes "philosophers" generally. Most of us do some practical philosophy, when we are in problematic or conflict situations (or at least we are grateful when others do it for us). There is a smaller tribe who enjoy doing it theoretically, but in a piecemeal way, by studying the conceptual structures of finite ranges of experience shared by particular communities. But we (meaning those who have followed out the project of the "Science of experience") have formulated the concept of the absolute community, the "we" that comprehends all experience. We must now finally discover what structure that has developed in us as "I." That will be the conceptual awareness of "absolute knowing."¹

(a) *The Final Problem*

- 1./788. The spirit of manifest religion has not recognized its conscious object as its self. God's community as absolute Spirit is its *imaged* object. The form of the final transformation must have appeared already. It is not a one-way process but a circle. It is to be shown that the *thinghood* of consciousness is posited by the emptying of self-consciousness; and the positing is to be at the same time a recuperation. Our complete display of the relations of consciousness to the object has shown that they are all aspects of the Self.

Hegel's Absolute Knowledge is simply the self-conscious awareness of what the "manifest religion" of the universal human community really means as a concretely logical experience of the individual thinker in (and for) the community. We have now understood that the function of Religion in human life and experience is to express the universally shared consciousness that a community must have (if it is a community of rational consciousness). Religion is the consciousness of the community's relation to the world, and of its own self-cognitive structure (as a unity with many members). When that actual structure is fully consistent with itself as cognition, then the community is rational. Knowing this, we can see that, if there is to be any "absolute knowledge" it has to be the knowledge expressed in the religion of a community which has arrived at a rational relationship with the world, and with itself; it is the knowledge that is finally and demonstrably necessary (in a logical sense, and not just as a matter or received general conviction) for the complete realization of human Reason. Reason is not "common" to humans in the way that their body skeletons are. It is communally recognized, because it is the constructive achievement *of* the human community, by the community.

Hegel's "*science of experience*" only becomes possible when the religious consciousness of the human community has become completely *rational*, i.e. when we can show that it is the objective expression of a logical consciousness of what human rationality (theoretical and practical) really *is*, and of what the natural boundaries and social conditions of its realization are. The social structure of the community—our universally shared consensus about how we ought to act, and how we are to treat one another, together with our consensus about "values," i.e. about the goals which make life "good"—all of this (and the institutions by which the consensus is maintained and where necessary enforced) is the substance of Reason.²

As singular organisms, none of us could be "rational" at all, except through the self-perpetuation of this "substance" in the education and cultural formation of ourselves, and those with whom we live. The idea that we are all endowed with Reason "by nature" and that it unfolds "naturally" in us, is an error of the Enlightenment, from which the speculative recollection of the history of how our Reason has actually developed, decisively frees us. If we were not the spiritual offspring of a religion that teaches us that all human beings are the children of a God who is supremely rational, and who loves us all equally to the point where He took our nature (with all of its limits and sufferings) upon Him in order to exist for us as

“Spirit,” we would not have the concept of human rationality (theoretical and practical) that we *do* have.

Aristotle, for example, did not have this concept. He was more impressed by the evident fact that humans differ in their rational capacities, and in what they take to be rational. Living in a world that had *no* universal religious community, it was obvious to him that Greeks were rational, in a way that barbarians were not, and that among Greeks, free male citizens were—or at least *ought* to be and *could* be—rational in a way that women and those born in servitude were not and could not be.

In the absence of a religious consensus that mankind is *one* community under the fatherly eye of one God, any proposed “absolute knowledge” of what human Reason *is* could only be Utopian;³ and that religious consensus took a long time to evolve into a logically consistent form. Having identified that form for us, Hegel must now show us that the consensus involves an unselfconscious recognition of what *we* know the rational function of religion in society to be; and secondly, that when this unselfconscious knowledge is logically interpreted, it provides a functionally complete and coherent concept of what human rationality *is*. The two tasks are logically distinct, but in the context of the science of experience, they turn out to be identical. Our scientific analysis of what history has shown to be involved in a subjectively free, but socially substantial rational life, culminated in the same community of self-conscious religious *absolution of sin* to which our analysis of the actual religious tradition has now returned. In order to show that this community must know what religion *is*, and further that its religion is the actual concept of its experience, all that we have to do now is to repossess the earlier stages of our Science, as the conceptual *truth* of the traditional *Vorstellungen* of our religion. What makes it certain that this can be done is the fact that according to our religion God, the absolute essence of pure thought (or abstract Reason), became Man and accepted human death in order to exist as “Spirit.” This *Vorstellung* is visibly and unmistakably identical with the *concept* of Reason to which our critique of “truth” has brought us: Reason is the living substance that becomes subjectively self-conscious in these mortal organisms whose intercommunication constitutes the distinctively “human” (or *free spiritual*) world.

Religion continually refers to the eternal aspect of Reason in its purity, as if it were a supersensible Beyond. Being absolute, and hence “eternal,” it seems that the categorical “truth” of experience must simply *be*, in a sense and a way in which we *are not*; but the Hegelian concept of “Spirit”—combined with the concept of “the Spirit” that we find empirically in our religion—sublates this necessity, and makes “eternity” a moment of “time,” just as “time” is a moment of “eternity.” By bringing out this identity, the *philosophical* interpretation of God’s Incarnation sublates His absolute otherness.⁴

Scientifically there is no need to use the name “God” at all, and there are sound arguments against doing so (see par. 66). When the religious *Vorstellung* is turned into “Science” we find continually that as the arrow of signification is bent back from the sphere of pure thought to the experience of the actual world, the overt meaning of the *Vorstellung* is radically inverted. Hegel always maintained

that Religion and Philosophy were the knowledge of the *same* “content” in different “forms.” But those who think that the change of “form” leaves the truth of “Religion” effectively untouched, are deceiving themselves either about what Hegel meant, or else about their own (not yet properly Hegelian) relation to the *faith* of the religious tradition from which Hegel’s language is derived; in traditional terms the transition from Religion to Philosophy in Hegel is the transition from Faith to Reason.⁵

Hegel accepts the claim of his religious tradition that “Faith is a kind of knowledge”; and we have seen what a vitally important “kind of knowledge” it is. It is the universal context of all the “knowledge” that saves us from a Hobbesian chaos. But equally Hegel accepts the dogma that faith is an *imperfect* kind of knowledge; and when he claims to turn it into absolute knowledge, he is quite consciously and deliberately claiming to do away with its “imperfect” character as “faith” altogether. Religious “faith” is finally, completely, and *absolutely* liquidated in Hegel’s “Science.” Kant claimed to have set “limits” to Reason in order to “make room for faith.” Hegel can be seen as a conscious successor of Kant, in that he took it as his task to show that Reason is “infinite,” and hence that “rational faith” is philosophically quite superfluous.⁶

Reason is self-generating and self-sufficient within experience; or to put it another way, we know what “Reason” means, when we discover the interpretation of “rational life” that is comprehensive and self-validating within experience, so that no “postulates” that transcend experience are necessary. Specifically Hegel does away with the Kantian postulates (God, freedom, and immortality) by showing what the rational interpretation of the terms in actual experience is. All of them are transfigured by being absorbed within the domain of Spirit (as the most comprehensive concept of actual experience); but of them all, the postulate of “God” is the one that is most radically affected.

The “content,” which has now to be transformed from *Vorstellung* into *Begriff*, is “the absolute Spirit.” In our *Vorstellung* this is the Holy Spirit that descended at Pentecost, making the disciples of the dead Savior capable of communicating with everyone in their own tongue (Acts 2:1–41). The “truth” of this image of the Spirit *must*, says Hegel, “have yielded itself in the shapes of consciousness.” There is nowhere else for it to be, if it is not in the Beyond of religious faith. The chain of experiences led us up to the community of mutual absolution, and the evolution of Religion into the *Vorstellung* of God as Spirit has brought us back to that; so there is nowhere to go now except backwards.

How far back must we go? Not surprisingly, the answer is “all the way back to the beginning.” But the most important point is that which this present commentary has identified as the halfway mark. Hegel himself identified the beginning of Self-Consciousness as the crucially important point of returning reference; for he said that Self-Consciousness was “the native land of Truth” (par. 167); and it was there that he introduced the concept of Spirit (par. 177). But for the comprehension of the definition that he gave there, the critical moment must necessarily come later. It arrives when Reason, possessed already of the “certainty of being all reality,”

comes face to face with its own finitude as an observable object. What Reason observes then is the death in which it vanishes; its object is *the skull*, an object which can in fact tell it nothing about itself, except that it is a human mortal. This is where our Science begins to unfold for us the religious *Vorstellung* of God as mortal; for (in religious terms) “Reason’s certainty” is the certainty of being one with God; and “Reason’s truth,” as observer, is *mortality*. So “the death of God” is the moment upon which the “absolution” of the religious *Vorstellung* turns. (This present paragraph reviews the “biography of God” as summed up in chapter VII.)

“This overcoming of the object of consciousness is not to be taken as the one-sided one, that the object showed itself as returning into the Self.” The “object” is the “absolute Essence,” and this “onesided *Ueberwindung*” of it was the climax of Greek Religion in the comic consciousness that the Self is the “maker of Gods.” So the “overcoming of the object” that Hegel means, is *not* that (though I suppose Kojève would have said that that is exactly what it was)

... but more precisely this, that the object both [*sowohl*] displayed itself as such to the Self as vanishing; and equally, but more significantly [*als noch vielmehr*] that it is the alienation [*Entäusserung*] of Self-Consciousness that posits the thinghood [of the Self], and that this alienation has not only negative but positive significance, significance not only for us or in itself, but for Self-Consciousness itself.”

Let us see what we can make of this conundrum.

This comprehensive *Ueberwindung* of objectivity is what is achieved by the long process of the Unhappy Consciousness raising itself to full rational Self-Consciousness. The Unhappy Consciousness is the Comic Consciousness that has alienated *itself* into the Unchangeable. In the experience of the *Weltgeist* the “emptying out that posits the thinghood” of the Self is the *Rechtzustand*, in which all self-conscious beings are defined as legal “persons,” or thought-things. Thus the “positing of thinghood” is quite clear and explicit for the self-consciousness that we are observing at that stage. But this alienation of the Self in Law includes the legal authorization and regulation of religion which is the “vanishing” of the Gods—who were the objective essence of social life in the world of the natural communities. This loss of the Gods receives a *positive* significance, through the movement of Faith. The world, in the person of its self-conscious Lawgiver (Constantine), gives itself up to the Unchangeable Law of God’s unfathomable Reason, in the secure knowledge that that Unchangeable Law is humanity itself: “in this emptying-out it posits *itself* as the object, or (in virtue of the indivisible unity of *being-for-self*) it posits the object as itself.” Faith knows that God is Man, that the eternal Reason is necessarily embodied. It “*knows* this nothingness of the object” (or “the self-sublation,” the double negation of the object “has a positive significance”) because it alienates its own self *into* the object.

The “emptying out” (*Entäusserung*) is a description of “salvation by faith” which Faith itself can recognize—but the description of the God to whom it gives itself up with absolute trust would be strange to it. We have grasped the “nothingness” of Reason as natural necessity, because we have already recognized (in

observing the Understanding) that the “world of laws” is identical with our own human Reason. This “nothingness of Nature” is the theological “nothing” out of which the world was “created” (compare the last part of par. 780). Hegel understands “Creation” as the continuous process of *our human interpretation* of the world natural and spiritual.⁷

The surrendering of the human will to God’s Will is only possible because God’s real identity as human Reason, his necessary humanity, is recognized. Thus, as Hegel puts it, “there lies herein [i.e., in the positing of itself as the object, or the object as itself] at the same time this other moment: that it [self-consciousness] has also sublated this emptying-out and objectivity just as much, and has taken it back into itself, so that in *its own* otherness as such it is at home [*bei sich*].” This “other moment” is implicit but it is deeply buried; it takes a long time to emerge. Faith knows that it has surrendered its will to God, as the Unchangeable Law; and it knows that it has done this because God appeared in human shape, and accepted the fate of death. So it even knows that in this surrender it is *bei sich*, it has come home. But the conception of this “homecoming” is all upside down, because it takes the home of its longing to be *elsewhere than here*.

The whole journey of the *Phenomenology* is necessary in order to disabuse “Reason” of this dialectical illusion. But our familiarity with Hegel’s method tells us that we should take paragraph 788 as a review only of the *repetition* of the whole journey on the part of “the Infinite” in chapter VII. In chapter VII the genuinely “substantial” spiritual Self-Consciousness, the *self-conscious human community*, has repeated the whole movement of the finite Consciousness. It has related itself to the object (i.e. to its own “absolute essence”) and has grasped it in every conscious way. As a result the object (i.e., what is ordinarily called “God” in our language) has in truth become for consciousness the “*spiritual* essence” that it is “in itself.”

Unless we take the intended reference to be to the *repeated* journey, we cannot make sense of Hegel’s claim that the object “becomes this [i.e., the spiritual essence]” . . . through the apprehension of each singular one of them [its determinations] as [a determination] of the Self, or through the *spiritual* [my italics] relationship to them just mentioned.” For it is only after chapter VI (*Spirit*) that the consciousness we are observing can have a *spiritual* relationship to its “determinations.” In chapter VII the community recognized its own Reason (or Spirit if you prefer, but it must be remembered that Spirit is the *positive*, or “concrete,” reality of Reason) as the life-and-intelligence-giving Light, as the Life that posits the Living Thing, and as the Understanding that reduces objective reality to dead raw material for craftsmanship. In this last shape it identified itself as Bondsman; and in the aesthetic religion of Greece it enjoyed Lordship. Tragedy was the absolute shape of Stoicism, and Comedy of Scepticism. The Unhappy Consciousness of the *Weltgeist* is the Roman Imperium; and the advent of Reason is the coming of the Savior.⁸

This advent of Reason involves a long *Bildung* of Unhappy Consciousness into universal Faith; and the downfall of rational Insight into Phrenology is the “sign of the times” for the reconciliation of Faith with the Insight of the individual

consciousness. In the Christian Unhappy Consciousness (its “second relationship”) human Reason is in quest of itself as an object of Observation; and the Crusade for the Holy Sepulchre is the reduction of Religion to Phrenology. What comes forth from this meeting point is the Manifest Religion that can take cognizance of itself as Absolute Knowing.

- 2./789. The object of devotion is partly a thing-in-itself (singular object of spiritual sense), partly a thing for itself and for another (spiritual perception), partly a pure essence (intelligible universal). As a whole it is a syllogistic process both ways from universal to singular and back. But it is not the pure *comprehending* of God that we are now discussing. We shall review only the side that belongs to us. God as “essence” is not our concern, but only as “shape of consciousness.” This will involve our picking out a number of the earlier shapes in which both the totality of God and the behavior of [finite] consciousness can be demonstrated (though only “dissolved in the totality’s moments”).

Hegel himself now correlates chapter VII with the story of Consciousness in chapters I–III. These first three moments—the moments of theoretical Consciousness itself—are of crucial importance to his problem in the present chapter, because “the object appears in consciousness as such not yet as the spiritual essentiality . . . but partly as shape of consciousness in general, and partly as a number of such shapes which we collect together.” There are *three* of these shapes (identified progressively in pars. 790–792) “in which the totality . . . can be pointed out only [as it is] dissolved in its moments.” These three shapes answer to the correspondences between chapters I–III and VII established here.

The parallel is complex, because it embraces Hegel’s seventh chapter as a whole; but the crucial application of it is to the section on the Manifest Religion, because it is the “object” of the Manifest Religion that has now to be turned over into the “Subject” of “Absolute Knowing.”

Let us get the more general parallel clear first. “The object is in part *immediate* Being.” This is the “It is” of Sense-Certainty; and all of the modes of Natural Religion are subsumed here under the “It is” (although, as we have already seen, they also exemplify the three stages of Consciousness). For Natural Religion God is simply (and immediately) *there*. There is no distinction yet between His being-for-self and His being-for-another; and there *cannot* be any, because no “other” has any independent essence of its own.⁹

Secondly the object is “partly an othering of itself, its relationship, or *Being for Other* and *For-Self-Being*, that corresponds to Perception.” This is how God is experienced in the Art-Religion; we make the Gods in our own image, while at the same time regarding ourselves as their servant, and envisaging our own free existence as a play for the Gods. God is thus an ambiguous *relationship* of Being for Other and For-Self-Being, just like the “thing and its properties” in Perception.

Lastly, the object is “partly *essence* or as Universal, which corresponds to the Understanding.” This is how God is experienced in the Manifest Religion. Here He is the rational Force whose essence is to manifest itself. It is the repetition of the

same three stages in His manifestation as “Essence or Universal” that is our more particular concern.

First, He is “immediate Being, or a thing in general.” He is manifested as Jesus, the living thing who dies in order to become the Universal Logos; and in the tomb he is “a thing in general.” Secondly the Divine Logos is the ambiguous relationship of *Being for Other* and *For-Self-Being*. As the Ascended Lord, Christ is both the Mediator and Savior of all who “believe on Him,” and the eternal Logos “by whom all things were made.” Finally Christ as the Spirit is “Essence or as Universal” in the community to which He is manifest as its “Spirit.”

In this movement of consciousness there is a “syllogism” that goes both ways: the universal goes through determination to singularity, and conversely singularity goes through determination by sublation, to Universality. God comes down, through birth, to human embodiment; and the human being ascends through death to spiritual community.¹⁰

But what we are now concerned with is not this comprehensive totality of human experience. We aim only to characterize the “knowing” that comprehends it. We need to show that it is a mode of human truth-seeking and finding: “But this knowing is to be pointed out only in its coming to be or in its moments, on the side that belongs to consciousness as such.” Here Hegel is speaking programmatically, and telling us what he is going to do; and he does go on at once to identify three moments in the “coming to be” of *Wissen* “on the side that belongs to consciousness as such” (rather than to the “comprehensive totality of the essence”). The obvious problem is that no justification or explanation is given for his picking out just precisely these three moments which he selects in fulfilment of his programmatic promise. His procedure in paragraphs 790–792 appears to be a matter of arbitrary subjective *insight*; and that contradicts his claim that all we need to do is to *observe*. Let us see if we can find any logic behind this outward show of free choice.

The object of our “observation” ought, logically, to be the one that we have methodically arrived at. That object is the “manifest Religion.” If we take Hegel’s “soll nur . . . nach der Seite aufgezeigt werden, die dem Bewusstsein als solchem angehört” to refer to what the faith of this religious community requires (and not just to a subjectively insightful programme of Hegel’s own) then we find that the problem of a lack of continuity does not arise. After the first step that identifies the new “shape of consciousness” the development follows *its own* logic (as usual). Since I have far more respect for the methodical coherence of Hegel’s thought-processes than I do for his style (especially since by this time he was writing in a great hurry)¹¹ this is how I shall proceed.

As we saw already, the moments which, as far as the religious community is concerned, “are to be pointed out on the side that belongs to Consciousness as such” are “Jesus as the man who lived and died,” “Christ as the Logos,” and Christ as the “Mystical Body” of which we are all members. The faith of the community is not conceptual knowledge, because it needs all three of these. They are all *one* (Christ Risen); but the second presupposes the first, and the third presupposes both of the others. The third is the mode of Christ’s presence *now*, in the Spirit; and this is

what makes the Manifest Religion absolute. But this third mode is unthinkable for faith, without the historical presupposition of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, and the logical presupposition of God as the Logos.¹² The totality of the moments of the Concept can be recognized in each of the “shapes”; but the three shapes are “taken together” by the religious community without any effort at the speculative comprehension of their oneness. Since “we” (the philosophical observers) want to achieve precisely this speculative comprehension we shall now “pick them out” in their abstract otherness as the simple “shapes of consciousness” that we have encountered already. The first is a shape of “Reason”; the other two are shapes of “Spirit.” This answers to the logical character of the religious moments: the first is a singular rational being; the others are universal shapes.

(b) *The Recapitulation*

- 3./790. We just have to pick this earlier cycle out. We saw Observing Reason find itself as a *singular object* of sense and declare the being of Ego to be a “thing” (pars. 344, 346) (and not an invisible thing such as the “soul” either). This completely unspiritual judgment is conceptually the richest for spirit.

The three *Gestalten* of the Savior in Faith will be easy enough for us to unite conceptually as soon as we identify them in the order of our scientific progress to the Concept of the Community (which we had reached when the transition to Religion became necessary).¹³

It is obvious already that the last of them is the Concept that underwent that transition; and the first of them is not much harder to recognize. We were able to identify the *immediate* objectivity of the “absolute essence” at once as the *God who appeared*; and we have seen already that for the “belief of the world” to appear, the Divine Man had to be long dead. The whole movement of Observing Reason was a search for itself over the complete range of the “absolute essence” as a world of immediately sensible, perceptible and understandable objectivity. This is the range of finite being with which God has to be reconciled according to the theological *Vorstellung* of the Incarnation. Christ, as the Logos, must live, die, and “descend into Hell.” Observing Reason makes the conceptual pilgrimage of our own scientific community, in which this divine experience gets its universal significance.

John (1:10–11) says of the *Logos* that “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” The experience of Reason (which has the Johannine “certainty” that it is the Logos) is rather that it is in the world and it does not know *itself* there; that it “comes to its own” (in the Observation of Self-Consciousness) but cannot be “received”; and it finally encounters “itself” as the skull-bone of the phrenologist, in which all that can be read unambiguously is “Death.”

Hegel made it clear at the time (and he reiterates now) that this absolute defeat was an experience of enormous significance. It is the recognition that “*the Being of the Ego is a thing*” that forces us to make the transition from the natural “subjectivity” of

Reason to the recognition that Reason is a social Substance. This “substantiality” of Reason is “Objective Spirit.” *The mortal “rational beings” are only able to make the social Substance because it reciprocally makes them able to make it.* In their natural “substantiality” (the skull that houses their living intelligence) there is absolutely nothing rational. Phrenology reveals to us the exact “nothing” out of which “all things were made.” The real being of the rationality of humanity is not to be looked for inside us as natural organisms at all, but rather in what we do to the outside world which abides “substantially” when we are dead. Only when this “uttering” of the rational self has been comprehended, can we return to the inner world of Self-Consciousness and comprehend substance as subjectivity.

This then, is the speculative meaning of the life and Passion of Christ. Reason must be embodied and must die, in order to “create the world” in which it can know itself as Spirit. Once this has been comprehended, the symbol of Faith is sublated. We still know that the experience was *historically* necessary; but the very reason why it was historically necessary (to make the logical truth *objective* for “the world”) is the reason why it is no longer necessary now that its logical function has been completely fulfilled by comprehension. There is a deep truth in the saying of Jesus to his disciples, “It is expedient for you that I go away” (John 16:7). For until the illusion that the universal community of forgiveness depends “necessarily” upon a founder “goes away,” the religion of the Concept, the religion of Jesus himself, will not perfectly exist. This is what chapter VII has added to the “spiritual riches” of the “non-spiritual” judgment of Phrenology that *“the being of the ego is a thing.”*

- 4./791. But this *sensible thing* only has meaning through the relation of the Ego to it as active. That is what we learned through pure insight in the Enlightenment [see esp. pars. 560ff. and 580–581]. The thing-world is for use. The alienated experience of “culture” begot the thing as the self, and sense-certainty as the only truth [cf. par. 558].

Speculative comprehension of the “infinite judgment” (i.e. the logical absurdity) of Phrenology leads us straight to the proper speculative interpretation of the “Logos by which all things were made.” For the Logos by which the world of Objective Spirit is created is the Enlightened Gospel of universal utility. The natural self-consciousness already knows that the world of consciousness has no independent essence; every natural self knows that “the world is my oyster,” and everything in it is for my use and enjoyment—compare Locke’s theory of the origin of property. But the rationally universal form of this (according to which “Nature” is the sum-total of its use-values for the human community as a universal brother- and sisterhood) is the work of Insight and Enlightenment.

It is in this world of socially active Reason that Faith is first seen and declared to be what it actually is: the production of the In-itself by consciousness (par. 566). Enlightened Insight sees only the absurdity of this “anthropomorphic” projection, not the deep truth of it that is unveiled by Hegel’s speculative interpretation of the Incarnation; for Insight is still caught up in the conception of itself as “pure subjectivity” (i.e. as independent singularity). But now we have comprehended the

substantial community for which “Nature” is the sum-total of use-values; and we have seen how the pre-conscious projective act by which every community objectifies its own self-conscious unity as its *Vorstellung* of God was essential to its substantiation. “Substantiation” is something very different from the liberation of Reason as “Absolute Freedom.” The rationally substantial community can now properly comprehend the “truth of Enlightenment”; it can see and say with Insight, that the God who created the world “out of nothing” is its own communally embodied Reason; and that as the circle of substantial community and subjective insight, this Reason should more properly be called “Spirit,” because its totality—which we have still not quite reached—is a spiritual community of the living, the dead, and the unborn in the *logical* substantiality of thought.

As an object for consciousness, the real human community is made up of “Ego-things.” These things are natural self-consciousnesses, things that assert themselves, and are *for* themselves. Each of them is *ein fürsichseiendes*; but this being-for-itself is only a moment in the life of the community. It passes over into the spiritual Being-for-Other of the Incarnate Logos that has returned to Heaven. This is the “use-value” of the human natural self; and in this way the second moment of our conceptual progress incorporates the sublated shape of the first, so that it does not need to presuppose it.

- 5./792. This thing of spiritual perception must now be *understood* as the essence of the self. This happened in the Moral World-View where the alternation of Stoic moral independence and world possession was stabilized as *Conscience*. (My knowledge of the world and my decision in it is *me*.)

The transient thinghood of Spirit as Sense-Certainty is, on the one side, the “Divine Man who died,” and on the other side Yorick (as the representative of every human who comes into the world); the permanent thinghood of Spirit as Perception is the natural world in and upon which we labor (and the divine-human Logos that creates its utility). It first came before us as the permanence of the “Shaped Unchangeable” from which the Unhappy Consciousness received its guilty and self-renounced, but inevitable, enjoyment (par. 220). Here we can see its ambiguous identity with the incarnate Logos, as the reconciliation of Evil within the motion of Goodness. For enlightened Insight it appears in its simply alienated object, as the Nature that is the source of all “goods”; but in that one-sided perspective it brings forth the “evil” of universal death. This is the thinghood of Spirit “according to its determinacy.”

Finally, therefore, we must comprehend Absolute Spirit in the mode of Understanding, or as an “intelligible force.” This came before us first when the Terror forced Insight to recognize the immediate identity of Good and Evil in its dream of a return to the Earthly Paradise. The “thinghood” or objectivity of the Absolute was then recognized to be the intelligible “essence” of Moral Law (just as the “thinghood” or objectivity of the natural Understanding was Natural Law). The world of Utilities is the *instrument* (or the raw material) of Moral Reason. Unlike the Law of Nature, the Moral Law is *free*; it is the self-positing of Practical Reason.

But it is precisely the essence of this intelligible “absolute essentiality” to manifest itself. So while, on the one hand, the moral consciousness “lets the natural world go free out of the Self,” to be whatever it contingently must be, it is equally true, on the other hand, that it takes that contingent natural order back into itself. In the unity of conscientious *conviction*, this contradiction is successfully sublated. But the community in which Conscience finds itself, and for which it claims to act, is in a state of moral anarchy, which is only overcome by the transition to the religious community of universal forgiveness. That community, having returned to itself as the shape of religious faith, has only to recognize itself in the ultimate community of finite Spirit, from which its religious journey began. That ultimate community of Spirit was able to make the religious journey because, in the final sublation of the standpoint of moral judgment, it is reconciled with humanity at all times, and in all places. It does not need to judge, but only to comprehend, i.e. to integrate the *other* as a *member*.

Thus, when the community of Faith recognizes its own true “infinity” here, it comprehends what religious consciousness *is* as such, and what the function of *Vorstellung* is in that mode of consciousness. In this final form, the “Manifest Religion” ceases to be a “revealed” religion (in any but the historical sense) for it will comprehend that the whole range of religious “manifestation” belongs to it in principle, because its God is just the “intelligible force” of Reason, whose very essence it is to “manifest” itself. This concretely universal community of the human spirit is “the Self’s pure knowledge of itself.” “Conscience” is just its alienated, universally *self-assertive*, shape.¹⁴

- 6./793. The reconciliation of the ideal world of religious devotion with its actual world is built from these three elements. Conscience is the start because it contains the others; conscientious action is the beginning of the reconciliation of the two worlds. Action sets the stage for conscientious judgment; and all action must be condemned as selfish in some aspect. Forgiveness, as the pure knowing of this, which brings the singular and universal aspects together, and accepts the fact that judgment is as selfish as action, gives rise to the singular self as pure knowing or community.

These three moments that we have picked out of the finite career of Consciousness were not determined simply by the final structure of Manifest Religion. Only the first of them is given directly by that. The “death of God” is the “result” of the Manifest Religion; but it is just the beginning of the “Kingdom of the Spirit” and the moment into which that Kingdom returns. One can with some legitimacy say therefore that Hamlet musing upon Yorick’s skull is the determinate negation with which the mind of an “anthropological scientist” must begin when “faith” finally passes over into “knowledge.”

After that, however, the progression determines itself *logically*. We look over the course of the science and ask how “dead thinghood” evolves logically. First we go from “singular thinghood for self” to “universal thinghood for another”; and so to “the singular self that is lawgiver for the world of things.” And when we reach the third “shape,” we realize we have *not* passed over to Kojève’s “anthropology.” In

his world, the essential anarchy of Conscience takes us straight back to Hobbes. He does not need the "Religion" chapter at all except as a banishing of dialectical illusion. But for Hegel "Religion" is much *more* than that.¹⁵

These three moments of our scientific journey are the key to the conceptual reconciliation of Religion with actuality. These are the moments that contain the "actual" significance of the religious *Vorstellungen* for a fully "self-conscious" (i.e. *spiritual*) Sense, Perception and Understanding. The last of them, Conscience, necessarily contains the others in a sublated form. So that is where the movement of Absolute Knowing begins.

Hegel runs through the whole "experience" of Conscience for us again—driving home the fact that his seventh chapter circles back to where the sixth ended. It is the communal judgment of every would-be moral action that constitutes the "iron actuality" by which the active conscience is faced; the Hard Heart of the Community is what must "break." When Jesus prays for the forgiveness of those who crucify him, we must think not of his heart—which was only ever momentarily "hard"—but of the "Father" to whom he prays. It is no accident that, at the end of "Manifest Religion," Hegel inverts the Virgin Birth myth, and insists that the reconciled community knows "its *own doing and knowing*" as its "Father" (par. 787). The putting together of that knowing and doing leads logically to "heartbreak," because every judge must recognize the "sin" of sundering knowing from doing. Absolutely *pure* knowing becomes possible only in and through the act of "forgiving."

"Immediate *Dasein*" already has no other significance than that of "pure knowing" for the active Conscience. My conscientious conviction is that I have done the best I can in the circumstances as they are known to me; my "pure knowledge" is precisely that it is my *duty* to do that. We expect, in simple justice, to be forgiven for the errors caused by ignorance; the *Oedipus at Colonus* already makes this point quite clearly. Of course, in my uneasy "shifting" I do learn how "impure" my motives always are. But the forgiving community comprehends and forgives the fact that I saw the whole situation in *my* way, and defined my duty according to some personal interest that is not universally (or as Kant would say "categorically") imperative. Thus the community reduces "actuality" to the pure knowledge of what the inevitable conditions of acting are.

The "*determinate Dasein*" that arises from action and judgment in their "relationship" is the forgiving that comprehends the action in its concreteness. The acceptance of the action as "conscientious"—or as objectively rational—involves as its "*third moment*" the Spirit that says "Yes" (rather than "No," as the moral spirit must say). When the two sides are thus reconciled, the "universality" or "essence" in which both are comprehended is the "I=I" or "the Self's pure knowing of itself."

This "pure knowing," as a concrete experience, is necessarily both an achievement (for the two sides do indeed clasp hands in reconciliation) and an end or goal to be achieved (for we may spend a lifetime trying to comprehend the objective rationality of the other's act or judgment). *Experience* sets its limits too (as we must realize, if we read different interpretations of the work of the Magdalenian cave artists, to take the most striking boundary-instance that I can think of). But, in

principle, this is how the singular rational self—the recognized Conscience or justified sinner, *simul peccator et justus* in Luther's phrase—both constitutes the community, and is constituted by it.

- 7./794. Religion repeats this reconciliation process from the other side. In our Science the reconciliations happen separately. In the logical order of conscious evolution, the reconciliation of independent self-consciousness *must* come before that of its communal foundation (the *Ansich*). Now the union must be demonstrated; the *an sich* and *für sich* must be brought together.

Hegel is now going to bring the two shapes of reconciliation together (which I have been doing all along, so that this part of the discussion should by now be easy for us). In the Science of Experience the conceptual reconciliation of the finite consciousness had to come first, because it is the condition of our being able to comprehend what "Religion" is; and that finite reconciliation did already involve some aspects of Religion.¹⁶ If consciousness is to come to the comprehension of what "truth" is (or what the word signifies) through a process of self-criticism that we simply *observe*, then we must necessarily begin from the side of the "for-itself." The communal substance of our rationality is the "in-itself" which can only gradually come to be "for-itself"; and its last step must be later.

Religion is the complete shape of our cognitive experience, the shape in which the universal community of Nature and Spirit appears to itself as One Substance. In the order of historical experience the reconciliation (of the world of consciousness with social self-consciousness) happens first in Religion; and the full realization of the two reconciliations happens together, but with the conceptual reconciliation one step behind the consciousness that is achieved in Religion. It is, of course, the motion of "the Concept" as self-critical that drives both sides onward; but it is a mistake to identify the motion of the Concept with philosophy as speculation (or even as both speculation and critique) because the concrete historical movement of the real world—serfdom, political freedom, the Roman Empire, the Papacy, the Reformation, national monarchies, the Revolution—is so essential to it. The lesson that philosophy is not to be understood apart from its history is widely understood; what Hegel's science of experience teaches us is the much more demanding imperative that philosophy and religion must be comprehended together in the context of the actual history of the human community.

- 8./795. This union has already happened in manifest religion. But it appeared there as the voluntary self-manifesting of God in the worshipper's experience. Its proper form is the one it has from the side of the *für sich* (which presupposes the *an sich*). This is the side where the self-concept has already appeared as the beautiful soul. The beautiful soul is a vanishing moment because it declines to commit itself to realization, but it is the self-intuition of God; and its self-alienation is fulfilment (or the *community* of forgiveness)—the acceptance of "thisness."

All that remains now is to produce the last "shape of consciousness," the shape in which the religious community is reconciled with the world of actuality. It is

because this is now the problem that we have to turn back to the shapes of “actual” Reason and Spirit for our material; and the very fact that experience is now consciously turning back upon itself in search of the way forward is the sign that our journey is nearly over, our task nearly complete.¹⁷ In Religion we have seen the “absolute content” of Spirit (or *its* substantiality) expressed. We have now only to return to that contentless form (or subjectivity) of Spirit, which was our point of entry into Religion.

The evolution of Religion has brought us back to this portal already. So in principle, the equilibrium of Substance and Subject has already been established. But this reconciliation *an sich* is not in the proper “form,” the form of the communal self-consciousness that is *an und für sich*. Religion sets before us the *eternal* truth as what is “in itself.” Like Plato’s world of the Forms, it is “above”; it stands over against everything that we do, and remains unaffected by what happens in our “fallen” world. When the Risen Christ is recognized as “the Spirit” that descended at Pentecost, and both Pentecost and Resurrection are comprehended as a matter of now and everyday, this opposition of eternity and time, of the logical and the empirical, is implicitly sublated. But the sublation must be carried through logically.

The “shape” of Self-Consciousness in which God first appeared as Spirit was the penitently broken-hearted Beautiful Soul. This was the self-consciousness that avoided a bad conscience by avoiding action; its fully developed shape is the one seen in Hölderlin’s *Hyperion*. Hyperion acted conscientiously, only to find himself involved in sin and evil; and, in consequence, he withdrew from active life to become a spectator of all time and all existence. His world *now* is fallen and evil; only in the Greece of long ago do Beauty, Truth and Goodness still dwell. In Novalis, whom Hegel seems to have more directly in mind at the present moment, we find this “soul” not as a voluntary hermit, but as the leading member of a community that exists only as a fantasy in the book. This fantasy world need not perish (like its author) in consumption; it can move onward—as Hölderlin did, I think, in the *Empedocles* project. It can surrender the *determinateness* of its Concept (as Universal Judgment coupled with a *utopian* ideal in a book) and move towards its fulfilment in actual experience. The shape of the Beautiful Soul who did this was Jesus himself, who established a real community and then “went away” to a voluntary death, because it was “expedient” for them.

Thus, the historical Jesus (as imagined by Hegel in his essay on the “Spirit of Christianity”) is the singular *Gestalt* in whom actual subjectivity coincides with its religious “content.” But now we are not satisfied that this coincidence should happen only in *death*. The substantial content has to become the logical content—the necessary knowledge—of the universal subject who does not die to achieve universality, but lives to enjoy its “absolute knowledge.” And this knowledge is to be concrete; its “content” is the living recollection of the complete history of the community in which this absolute consciousness has finally become actively possible, i.e. possible as self-enjoyment, not only passively as self-sacrifice and suffering. The communal self of whom we are now speaking is ourselves. It is we who have

made the journey, endured the “patience and labor of the negative,” and who now constitute the self-enjoyment of the *Weltgeist*.

- 9./796. On one side self-consciousness was realized as the acting self; on the other truth has been expressed as religion. These two sides must now be united (negative thinking with positive thought). As selfish, the singular agent is evil. But *conscious* pure knowing is a mode of action that is self-absolving; it dies to know, and the substance dies to become its knowledge. In this way, the Divine Spirit emerges as knowledge. We must act in order to be knowers; but knowing is the sublation of action.

The concept (of self-conscious Absolute Knowing) fulfilled itself as “forgiveness” in the “self-certain spirit” that had no content except an *ideal* community; and it fulfilled itself as a *real* community in the historical evolution of Religion. But that real community depends for its unity on a projected image (*Vorstellung*) of its eternal destiny. The self-certainty of the broken-hearted Beautiful Soul must take the place of this *Vorstellung*. The real community must know “its *own doing* and *knowing*” as its “Father” in the way that the Beautiful Soul does. In this final confrontation it is the singular self who acts and the community that judges. The crucial moment of “forgiveness” belongs therefore to the community; but the absolute knowing belongs to the absolved individual, who thinks and knows at once for herself and for the reconciled community. It is the moral agent who steps out of the reconciled community in action; and it is she who has the knowledge of return and forgiveness. Everyone must recognize the reconciliation; but that communal recognition only preserves the community—it is not a knowing that is capable of further development.

In contrast, the “absolute knowing” towards which we are now moving is capable of development. It is the *experience* precisely of the philosopher.

Hegel regards the self-assertion of conscientious action as identical with the advent of “pure thought”—the thinking that can do Hegelian logic. The acting Self “carries through the life of the absolute Spirit. This shape is . . . that simple concept . . . The concept has its *sundering* or stepping-forth in the *purity* of the concept, for this purity is absolute abstraction or negativity [i.e. it is pure thinking].” This thinking by the moral agent is “negative thinking,” because it changes the world. But the “pure thinking” of the same self as an Hegelian logician is “positive thinking.” It does not negate any content. It changes nothing except the form of its own content; but the “content” we are speaking of is the whole history of Religion as manifestation, the whole history of actual spirit, and all of the experience of common sense and science that we traversed and organized in chapters I–V.

In other words, since the Hegelian logician must not be guilty of sundering herself from the self-consciousness of the community by a *moral* action, one can do logic only when one is in the most comprehensive possession of the “experience” of the community that one is able to achieve. Hegel’s *Logic* is not a “neo-Platonic fantasy.”¹⁸ Philosophical Logic is the attempt to think out the conceptual structure of the knowing that interprets the world of its own time scientifically. Hegel can only do Logic, because he already knows everything that it will be used to organize

in his "Real Philosophy." We have seen him rehearse all of this "experience" in his critical approach to the "absolute knowing" that is the "element" of Logic.

"Pure (logical) knowing" is the self-knowing of the reconciled Conscience that is self-consciously at one with its community, and incarnates its "Spirit." In its practical aspect this knowing is "evil" because it *does not act* and *is not actual*. But Hegel's repetition of the reconciliation of the Concept's two sides in their mutual recognition now has the object of turning Religion into "knowledge" not as the "knowledge of good and evil" but as the absolute knowledge of "what is." In this cognitive reconciliation each side has to recognize itself as "evil for itself and good in itself." Both will therefore be "in and for itself" the reconciled identity of good and evil, i.e., the "pure Concept" in which evil is accepted as a dialectically necessary moment of the affirmation of the good. The human good is *knowledge*, and it involves the recognition of selfishness as evil; but it involves also the recognition that only the self can have "knowledge."

Pure knowing is neither judging, nor acting; it involves the letting go (*Ablassen*) of both "determinacies" of the Concept (the active subjectivity of the agent, and the substantial Objectivity of the community). Thus pure knowing is a kind of return to the paradisaical state of "innocence." But we can speedily disabuse ourselves of the idea that there is anything particularly remarkable about it, by reflecting that we ourselves achieved it fairly easily and without much conscious strain, in adopting the posture of speculative *observers* of consciousness. The Absolute has been with us from the start, in the form of our knowledge of what our own proper position is, and what our behavior as observers should be. We have been "neutral"; and now the systematic philosopher must be neutral, with all that we have observed at her disposal. She needs it all in order to have the saving consciousness of being "good *an sich*"; and unless she has all that we have, the communal *Vorstellung* will still be essential.

The Beautiful Soul is the hero of this last movement of Spirit, because its moral *act* is the withdrawal into Self as a pure observer. It is the antithesis of the self-actualizing *Begriff*, because it does not act, and is not actual. It participates in the antithesis; and in so far as it is independent knowledge of the Concept as pure essence, it is self-assertive and "evil." But, in that it has become the simple knowing (observing) of the essence, the knowing that has received forgiveness, and gives it back freely to everything that it observes, it remains "good." It lets the Concept go through the very same motion as Substance, or as the absolute essence. The doubling that occurs in this state of free release lets the Concept be "in and for itself." In this pure knowing, the one-sidedness of self-assertion and the one-sidedness of simple being are both renounced. Self-Consciousness renounces itself just as the absolute essence does in the *Vorstellung*; but now it is knowingly renouncing its own concept (as self-assertive) just as the absolute essence does. Thus the "beginning" is *mediated* by self-negation on both sides. Each has the definition of "self-negation" for the other, and the negation is a double one, or is self-sublating into a higher unity.

The point is that the Spirit is what it makes itself to be, and "absolute Spirit" is

the unity of the knowing self with its world. On the side of the knowing self there is an “inequality” consisting of its self-containment [*Insichsein*] within its singularity *vis à vis* the Universality; on the side of the religious content (or Universality) there is the “inequality of its abstractness *vis à vis* the Self.” Each side *negates itself* (or “dies”) *for* the other. The movement is the same as in forgiveness, but we should not call it that, because it is more radical. The sides die for each other, exactly as Man and God “die” for each other in the religious *Vorstellung*. What is crucially *identical* in both movements is that they begin with a self-conscious act. But the act of self-conscious thinking needs no absolution from the other side; it absolves itself by knowing that as the act of knowing it is good in itself; and as the act of knowing it is the act of self-negation, of “dying” for the content known. The community’s religious knowledge, on the other side, “dies to its unliving Self and its unmoved Universality.” This refers to its descent from the *abstract* eternity of Heaven and the old logic. “Through this movement of action the Spirit . . . has come on the scene as pure universality of knowing that is self-consciousness, or as self-consciousness that is simple unity of knowing.”

- 10./797. Thus by simply gathering the moments we have shown that God’s manifestation is the same as our activity in knowing our own world. We only had to collect the moments (each of which exhibits Spirit as a whole) properly; and to insist on the maintenance of conceptual form.

The task of philosophy, as Hegel understood it, was to interpret the *actual* world of experience; the philosopher is supposed only to organize what is there logically. Religion is the proper object of philosophy, because it is the way in which the community “is there” for itself in its world. The philosopher’s task is to exhibit the rationality of the way that the community presents itself to itself in its world. What shows that the community is now presenting itself to itself rationally—what shows that its Religion has become obsolete as *Vorstellung*—is precisely the fact that a would-be philosopher with the formal concept of her task stated in the first sentence of this paragraph has come to the philosophical consciousness of what “Religion” actually is.

In the *Vorstellung* of the Manifest Religion God graciously gives us the knowledge of what He is; He reveals Himself as Creator and Preserver, and as the Spirit that knows Himself, by sacrificing Himself to death. All this has now become the act of the rational self-consciousness. The knowing self has the absolute knowledge of being “the activity in all essentiality and all *Dasein*.” It is “the knowing of *this subject* as the *Substance*, and of the Substance as this knowing of its doing.” In order to show this, all that we had to do was to put together the right conceptual moments, and to insist on the conceptual form of expression.

I believe I have successfully shown how and why we are led by the *Vorstellung* of the Manifest Religion to pick out the three moments that Hegel does pick out in order to make this final transition; and how they express the “totality” of the Spirit. Whether the complete *Versammlung* of the moments for the Science of Experience is logically adequate the reader must decide; my task has been only to exhibit the

“logic” of it as well as I could. The one advantage I claim to have had over previous students is a clear understanding of why the period from Augustus to Napoleon represents the “logical cycle” of experience, and why it has to be traversed several times. This I hope by now to have made clear; for it is only when we know what actual world is being interpreted that we can assess the “logic” of the interpretation. That the logic is perfect I would not myself pretend. But I claim that when it is properly understood it is far better than most previous interpreters have thought (and far more adequately concrete and historical than those who did believe in it have ever managed to show).

I find nothing further to explicate in what Hegel says about “the knowing of the doing of the Self within itself as all essentiality and all *Dasein*.” As soon as we read it in its *spiritual* sense it is obvious. The human community lives in the world of its own interpretation, and this decides even what counts as “fact” (*Dasein*) for it. “This Subject” knows itself as the Substance when it does Hegelian logic, for then it is self-abandoned to the *Sache selbst*; and the Substance is “this knowing of its doing” when the *Sache selbst* achieves its philosophical apotheosis as “the actual cognizing of what truly is” (par. 73).

The mode of speech may seem strange—I find it so myself. But we should notice how *existential* it is. It is the self-knowledge of “this subject” that is said to be “what truly is.” One could not imagine a more emphatic affirmation of the Christian view that God loves every one of us; and that every human person is therefore of *infinite* value, as the free self-determining of Reason, the Incarnation of the Logos. Anyone who recognizes the answer given here to the problem of philosophy as posed in the first sentence of the Introduction must know with categorical certainty that all of the “totalitarian” interpretations of Hegel’s social philosophy are radically mistaken. We do not (cannot) live simply in accordance with “duty.” We define ourselves in our own way (and we must be “forgiven” for this necessary self-assertion). Hegel himself lived in a finitely actual world in which there were many forms of authority that are plainly no longer “rational” for us; and because of the Terror, Hegel may have thought some of them were more nearly “absolute” than we have found them to be. But that only represents a “progress” on our part within the “infinite” community that he recognized.¹⁹

(c) *Science as Self-Comprehension*

- 11./798. This last shape of Absolute Spirit is *comprehending* knowledge. The truth of religion has now achieved self-conscious certainty. Spirit has appeared as *Science*.

This philosophical consciousness that the knowledge-seeking Self is the world’s own necessary process of self-interpretation is the last *Gestalt* of Consciousness in the Science of its “experience.”²⁰ It is a “shape of Spirit” because the philosopher is a singular consciousness who must think neutrally for the human community. She must have “died” for the *Sache selbst* of *comprehensive knowing*. The religious consciousness of “Christ risen in me now and here” has the same knowledge. But

that is still the knowledge of an “other”; it is not a truth that is identical with self-certainty. Josiah Royce expressed the religious view philosophically when he claimed that “We are saved by the Community.” But absolute knowing is implicit here, because the “saving” community arises through the mediation of the conscientious individual. Royce did not foresee the totalitarian communities (for whose excesses no rational critic would blame him). But *we* have seen clearly that the actual community that sustains us as our *real* “substance” can just as easily be the cause of damnation as of salvation.

One might be tempted to argue that there is no real difference between the religious view and that of philosophy, because no individual thinker is perfect, and there is a strain involved in the achievement of scientific “neutrality.” But to see this identity is also to see the crucial difference. To be “self-certain,” to be free even of the *Vorstellung* of the Savior, is to be able to *think* freely, and without impediment. As philosophers, we must leave the *Vorstellungen* of Religion behind, because there is no going beyond them in their own terms; and yet we know that there is still much work to be done. We have arrived at the “element” of Science, but we have still to produce the scientific interpretation of our world. So far, we have only produced a scientific demonstration of what Science is. And it is only because we have arrived at *this* knowledge that we can now see and say why it is a “scientific” demonstration.

- 12./799. As a result of the whole progression, *this* single knowing self has become identical with Absolute Spirit (I/We). It has a distinct content, which is the logical *movement* of self-sublation, that it subjectively is. It is Absolute Spirit because it has the shape of the concept in its objectivity.

Philosophical knowledge is the “pure *Being-for-Self* of Self-Consciousness.” “All men,” said Aristotle, “naturally desire to know.” The primitive Self-Consciousness which knows nothing except that it is *free*, *desires* “another Self-Consciousness” as its ultimate object (par. 175). In my interpretation of that Desire I argued that it makes sense only as the desire for self-knowledge, the desire for a self that knows its world, and itself in its world. That interpretation was confirmed by Hegel’s claim that the “concept of Spirit” had come before us (par. 177). At the present juncture we must underline the fact that philosophical Being-for-Self is the last shape of Spirit. The Self-Consciousness whose Being-for-Self it is, is Aristotle’s “all men,” or the human community. As Hegel insists, it is “an ego which is *this* one and no other ego.” But at the same time it is the absolute “We,” or the “sublated *universal* Ego.”

“It has a *content* which it *distinguishes* from itself.” But this content is the whole human world of which this philosophical self is the “Spirit”; so “the content even in its distinction is the ego.” The content is that “absolute otherness” (the “otherness” of God or the world, the *absolute* object of consciousness) in which the philosophic self *recognizes* itself as “We” (pars. 26, 177). In the Preface Hegel called this “absolute otherness” “Aether”; here he calls it “pure negativity.” Clearly he means “pure thinking,” the element of Logic, but it is not “pure” in any Cartesian or Kantian

sense. The whole of human experience is sublated in it; and that means that all of experience is here *preserved*, that it is available to recollection at any and every moment. For the moment I have only the methodical character of our progress to confirm this claim, but we shall see that Hegel himself confirms it explicitly when he closes his Science of Experience into its own speculative circle at the very end (par. 808). The difference between the “Aether” of “absolute knowing,” and the “dark night” of “formalism” is the abyss that lies between a logic of abstraction which requires “forgetting,” and a logic of “knowing” which requires “recollection.”

The explicit content of this Absolute Knowing, however, is simply the structure of the *movement* of this concrete pure thinking. This motion is the Spirit that unites the thinker with the world of human experience, making both of them “human” in the proper sense. The “shape” of the Concept in its objectivity is God as incarnate in the human community. The pure thinking of the logical philosopher is that same “shape” in its sundered *being-for-self*. The task of systematic philosophy is to exhibit this identity by moving from the pure subjectivity that has here been achieved, back to the developed form of the “Concept in its objectivity.” At this moment what we “absolutely know” as the Ego that we *are*, is precisely the “movement” that is expounded at the climax of the Logic. We are standing at the midpoint between Logic and Real Philosophy.²¹

- 13./800. This concept of Science could not appear earlier in time, because Spirit had to reach this consciousness of itself first. In particular we had to conceive God as Spirit. The religious consciousness had to be mature. The “substantial” cultures could not achieve “absolute knowing.”

Science, as the self-conscious movement of this objective Concept, logically could not come to “be there” as an object of consciousness until the fully concrete concept of the Spirit had fulfilled itself in history. Hegel recognizes the first dawning of the philosophical concept of “Reason” in Anaxagoras’ doctrine (par. 55) of the cosmic Nous (which is present in all living things, and can be *recognized* by those living things that can *think*). Plato’s Ideas were the beginning of Hegel’s conception of Logic. But the *Gegensatz* of objectivity and subjectivity, or of eternity and time, is absolute in Plato. It was Aristotle’s concept of Nature as a system of self-actualizing “Forms” that began the sublation of that antithesis. At the level of “Spirit” Plato’s doctrines of Recollection and of the “kinship” between the Soul and the Ideas, are self-estranged shapes of Hegel’s phenomenological *Erinnerung* and of the Incarnation respectively.

But without “the belief of the World”—which had learned to use Plato by the time that it “appeared”—the reconciliation of Self-Consciousness with the objective consciousness of the Platonic “Understanding” could never have come to pass. Hegel’s main story flows from Anaxagoras and Sophocles (who were almost exact contemporaries) to the writing of his own book. But in the evolution of Religion he has to go back to Zoroaster in order both to encompass the contribution of the invisible God of Abraham, and to make clear the speculative significance of Greek Art (and especially of Sophocles). There is no doubt that the Greek experience (of

the Ethical *Substance*) taken up into “the belief of the world” forms the driving power of the Spirit as Hegel understands it. Christianity contributed the principle of “infinite subjectivity,” the principle that the singular self-consciousness, every singular self-consciousness, is just as absolute in value as the “Substance” itself.

As Hegel said in the *Real Philosophy* of 1805, “This is the higher principle of the modern time, that the Ancients, even Plato, did not know.” When he says here that “Substance . . . is not in itself absolute knowing” we should remember the *Eumenides* in which the “absolute knowledge” of the Ethical Substance is expressed through the *Vorstellung* of a speaking Goddess; and then Antigone and Creon tearing Athena’s wisdom in two in their tug of war; and finally Plato, the philosophical Creon, proposing to abolish the family for his ideal City.²²

- 14./801. The knowing substance (the community) has to be there first before it can be the self as subject. It has first an imaginative consciousness; and subjective self-consciousness remains much poorer than this, being always just one moment in a cycle. But in the progress of this cycle it takes over the whole content. So self-consciousness finally *arrives* at the whole with which its consciousness begins. Time is the mode of being for this cycle, and the concept is in time until it comprehends itself completely. Until then time is the river that carries everything away, in order that self-consciousness may enrich itself.

The appearance of the “belief of the World” is the first moment of the “knowing Substance.” This is also the beginning of “the world of Spirit in Self-Estrangement.” That world sees itself as an opposition of two worlds; but we should remember that Hegel calls it a “*doubled world*” and speaks of it always in the singular. This is because it expresses the internal “antithesis” of the Concept; more concretely, it knows *itself* in the *Vorstellung* of the “other world.” All of its knowing is Faith. It has the form of *Vorstellung* in the mode of sensible “immediacy” and “simplicity”; and the singular consciousness of life in this world is “unhappy.”

By the *wissende Substanz* Hegel means the Christian world of the Empire and the Papacy; and its conceptual cognition—in which the knowing self and its objective world must be equal—is, to begin with, very “poor.” Its simple consciousness of God (“the Substance”) in Faith is “much richer.” But the manifestation or revelation of all this truth is actually a concealment, because all of the objective being in the actual world is “selfless.” Reason (although it is the Substance) has only the certainty of being a *pure* Self in this world; its Substance is hidden or “buried” in its Faith. So at first only the “abstract moments” of the Substance belong to Self-Consciousness. These “moments” are to be found (first of all) in the thoughts of the Trinity in Faith; but it was the abstract thoughts of “Good” and “Evil” that appeared before our observing eye, and drove themselves forward until self-consciousness had wrested the whole Substance out of consciousness. The *manifest* world of Faith is really all hidden or buried in the “mind of God”; and “God” is a “substance” (not yet a “self” for whom things are *useful*). The humanism of the Deists and Materialists “sucks in the whole structure of the essentialities of the divine Substance”; Insight brings *Heaven* (the hidden world, manifested only to

Faith) down to Earth. This “movement” of finite Reason must now be seen in the context of the movement of the Trinity-Concept in the Manifest Religion. I am not sure how this can best be done, so I shall leave it as a programmatic requirement (just as Hegel does here).

At the stage of Enlightenment, Self-Consciousness (as Pure Insight) has a firm grip on the “abstract moments” of Substance. It cannot find itself in the world as anything more than a dead skull; and the order of Nature is a great system of *Utility*; but through the evolution of the Moral World-View, Self-Consciousness becomes the real *Begriff*. The emergence of the absolute Self-Concept, presupposes the parallel development of the Critical Philosophy of finitude and of the Manifest Religion, until they come together in the self-consciousness of the broken-hearted Beautiful Soul. The “presupposition” is *historical*; until the moment of convergence, the “whole Spirit” is moving forward in time.

Reason has the intuitive certainty of “being all reality” from the first (Anaxagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Descartes). Enlightenment is its *Gegensatz*, Reason’s own condition of alienation. In the rebirth of speculation that begins with Schelling’s Identity Philosophy (pars. 14, 17) “the Concept knows itself as Concept.” The *Phenomenology* itself is the completion of this speculative revolution. It is a revolutionary work, and we can see by what happens to the Enlightened concepts and the *Vorstellungen* of “Manifest Religion” when they are united, that it completes the revolution almost alone. Only the Romantic creators of the Beautiful Soul literature contribute positively to the final movement from the “estrangement” of Judgment to the syllogistic mediation of purely conceptual knowledge; and Hegel, as the author of the unpublished “Spirit of Christianity,” himself provided the portrait of Jesus as the Beautiful Soul in whom the *Vorstellung* and the *Begriff* finally coincide.

Of course, Kant’s discovery of the *Triplicität* in the structure of the categories—his triads of what *Fichte* called “Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis”—was an absolutely vital step in the emergence of Hegel’s “Concept” as a formal logical entity. But as Hegel says (par. 50) that was a discovery made by *instinctive* Reason. So he quite rightly expounds it as “the self-certainty of Reason”—which is a revolutionary force in the world of “estrangement,” but is itself “estranged.”

All of these moments (including Hegel’s own “Jesus”) had to “be there” in the record of our culture, for Hegel to “recollect” and put them together into the *Begriffsgestalt* of Absolute Knowing, or the Substance that is Subject. He says modestly that “the share in the collected work of the Spirit that falls to the activity of the single [individual] can only be tiny” (par. 72). But he is well aware that the one stone that he has put in place is the coping stone of a great arch between the ideal of natural courage, and the ideal of spiritual charity. That arch took more than two thousand years to build; and to be able to see it at all was a truly remarkable feat of “Insight.”

Hegel’s own comments on “time” bring the magnitude of his achievement home to us; and they also show that he appreciated clearly what his own achievement consisted in. Time, he says, is “the *Dasein* of the *Begriff*.”²³ It is the way in

which the Concept—the incarnate unity of God and Man in the Community—is simply *there* as an immediate “object of experience” (a “fact of consciousness,” as the philosophers of his time said). “The Absolute was with us” at the beginning when we said “Now is Night” (par. 95). But that concretely transient Now was the Absolute as pure negativity. In this negative sense, “Now” is “what is by not being.” The time in which the Spirit appears is a time in which the “real” negativity has been negated through idealization by the Understanding. It is not the transient Now, but the forever fixed and unchangeable expanse of the “Then,” which is preserved in the “eternal Now” of recollection (while the simple Now continues to perish). In the seemingly inexhaustible variety of the recollected Then, the shape of the Spirit in its *positive Dasein* must be picked out. It must be *resurrected*, recollected as the infinite “living thing” of which our presently sensible world is the sensible “property.” That “Substance” is the outwardly intuitable shape of the “pure Self.” When we have it complete before us we can first *cancel* (*tilgen*) time (as we do in the imagined “eternity” of Religion and in the logic of the Understanding) and then *sublate* it properly, by comprehending it and “eternity” together as the *Gegensatz*, the opposed moments, of the self-knowing Concept that is the “true Infinite.”

Until we reach that comprehensive perspective, that “absolute knowing” of the Concept, “time” must appear to us—as it does in the *Vorstellung* of Religion, or the abstract conception of the Understanding—to be the (religious) “fate” or the (understandable) “necessity” of the Spirit. It is a “bad infinite” in which only mortality and change is visible; we yearn toward an “eternity” that is altogether “beyond” it (or even more absurdly, towards a Utopia that is supposed to be at the “end” of it). If we are to “comprehend” time we must comprehend the recollection of the understandable past in the present. Then we shall be able to grasp how the negative, vanishing Now, and the positive, eternal Now are comprehended each in the other. Hegel is now marching steadily towards this final insight with which the “Science of Experience” will close upon itself as a speculative circle.

- 15./802. Thus it is true that only what is felt to be *true is known*—i.e., experienced as an inner revelation. Experience is the motion of the spirit as substance coming to itself as self-consciousness (the only form in which it truly is spirit). This movement is a circle that closes back upon its beginning. At the beginning the intuition of the whole divides into concept (time) and content (Being). The content must be displayed moment by moment in time, before spirit can be its absolute self as comprehension. So the historic evolution of religion comes first.

Time in its endlessness—or as it is formally conceived and preserved by the Understanding—is the medium (or the element) of *experience*; so the Science of Experience is the “comprehending of time.” This Science is necessary (and it is necessarily the *first* science) because whatever is to be “known” (that is to say, philosophically comprehended) must first be experienced as an “object of consciousness.”²⁴

The “experience” of philosophical truths is always in the mode of *abstract eternity*. As we can see from the examples of Phrenology and Utility, the conceptual experience of the Understanding is just as crucial as the religious conviction

expressed in an eternal *Vorstellung*. But it is “self-estranged”; and for that reason it cannot be absolute. The experience of the truth in Religion can be, and ultimately is, “absolute” in every respect except that it is a form of “consciousness.” It does not have the philosophical form of “absolute *self*-consciousness.” Hegel is faithful to his existential principle of subjectivity (as well as to his methodological principle of continuity) when he insists on the religious form of truth as the ultimately comprehensive mode of “experience.”²⁵

Hegel speaks now for the first time of the necessary closure of the Science of Experience. Through the transformation of the “absolute object” of (religious) Consciousness into the object of Self-Consciousness (the substantial Self of the human community), the circle of experience closes. This closure entails the elimination of all radical transcendence. Nothing “beyond,” nothing outside of the circle can break in. We might express Hegel’s concept of Spirit by saying that “To be *potentially* is to be interpretable conceptually as an element in human experience, and to be *actually* is to be successfully so interpreted.” Christianity is the “absolute” religion, because it makes “God” conceptually interpretable without residue; and what is more it makes that self-absolution of its absolute object *necessary*.

The moments that have finally to be reconciled, in order to close the circle of experience into a scientific (or conceptual) circle are the initial “intuition” of the “pure Concept” (or time as absolute negativity, the self-sublating Now) and the final comprehensive intuition of the “content” (the biography of God as Spirit, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a whole). The intuiting Self is always and necessarily aware of itself as the first term; but it could not become the “scientific” (or logically comprehensive) Self-Consciousness, until the *Weltgeist* itself reached the objective shape of self-conscious Spirit in the Manifest Religion. (By this time we have said quite enough about that.)

- 16./803. Actual history is the labor of self-display. The religious communion as Substance [i.e. the Roman Church] is *raw consciousness*. Only when the hope of an alien overcoming of alienation was given up [the Reformation] did the turn inwards begin (along with the revaluation of this present experiential world). This was the first step in the descent from Heaven. Scientific observation came next, finding *Dasein* as thought [Descartes]. Now the Light-Essence [par. 686] could be grasped more rationally as unity of being and extension [Spinoza]. The rational spirit was appalled and asserted the claims of individuality [Leibniz]. But culture alienated this individuality, and achieved the utilitarian outlook [pars. 580–581, 584] and absolute freedom. Only then could it turn inward and become Fichtean [par. 657]. Now it has reached the form for which “time” offers the content. Instead of Thought = Extension [Spinoza] we have Thought = Time [Hegel]. In between comes the Identity Philosophy through which [Spinoza’s] Substance was comprehended—but only as the blackness of all cows in the night, except for details randomly rescued for interpretation.

The *Weltgeist* is the Spirit as incarnated in the history of what the conquering Romans called “the world of homes” (*oikoumene*). This is the world which had inherited the Greek concept of *polis* and *oikos* (city and household), before the Gospel came. Thus the Science of Experience is properly the speculative philoso-

phy of history as applied to and perfectly exemplified in the history of Western Europe as one self-constituted, and self-conscious (i.e. universally recognized) community. Seen thus, in its *proper* perspective, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a far more interesting essay in the speculative philosophy of history, than the *Philosophy of World History* as conceived and executed at Berlin in the context of Hegel's mature system.

In the System it becomes the assigned project of the philosophy of history to show that the "freedom" which Kant took to be the regulative ideal of history, is *actual* in history; and the theological form of the self-knowledge of the *Weltgeist* as Substance, is a logically unavoidable starting point. For this reason, it becomes disastrously easy to overlook the fact that this theological form is precisely what is sublated in history by the actualization of "freedom." In the *Phenomenology*, because we begin from immediate (and hence subjective) experience, we are logically obliged to find out what words like "God" and "Providence" really mean, before we are allowed to use them at all. The *Phenomenology* shows us what the *Weltgeist* is; the *Philosophy of World History* appears to take it for granted that we already *know* that.

Actually the intention of the *Philosophy of World History* is that we should find out as we go. We begin with the *Vorstellung* of "Providence" because we are all presumed to share it and to believe in it. But we children of the scientific Enlightenment are not accustomed to learn from books (or even from "experience") in that primitively "natural" way. Difficult as its transitions are, the *Phenomenology* at least presents us with the problem in what is for us the appropriate perspective of a "scientific investigation." And although we may cease to take the programme seriously because we cannot make the transitions, at least we are hardly tempted to think that we understand the Science of Experience while we still have everything backwards. That is the *natural* temptation when we read the introductory part of the *World History* lectures.

In this Western Roman world—for although *Constantine* is crucially important to Hegel, *Constantinople* only becomes important when it "falls"—the Christian "commune"²⁶ is the "raw" consciousness of the barbarian hordes that first took over the Imperial authority, and then let it lapse. In that situation, it was the Church itself that became "all the harsher and more barbarous, the deeper its Spirit is."²⁷ This is the time when the authoritarian spirit triumphs in religion. The estrangement from God in Heaven is to be sublated in an "external, i.e. an estranged way." This "hope" is only given up in the Reformation, after the failure of the Crusades. The Lutheran interpretation of Paul's doctrine that "Christ lives" in every saved consciousness is "the return into self-consciousness."

Absolute Knowing has its "phenomenology" in the history of *philosophy*. This is the logical "return" of finite Reason into the phenomenology of the Infinite in Religion. Hegel shows himself to be far more conscious of the Scientific Revolution than he is of the Renaissance. This is because the Reformation has such crucial importance in his mind. According to his analysis, the scientific revolution presupposes the Reformation. This is an oversimplification, for he was demonstrably con-

scious of the importance of Galileo's work, and he recognizes Descartes as the philosophical pioneer of "Reason." But, if challenged, he could point to Galileo's difficulties with the unreformed Church, and the evident fears aroused in Descartes by the news of Galileo's trial.

What he says here about "Observing Reason" (*die Beobachtung*) points first to scientific rationalism generally ("it finds *das Dasein* as thought") and then to Descartes specifically ("and conversely it finds *das Dasein* in its thinking"). Rational Observation is "conceptual comprehension" both of "*Dasein* as thought" and of "thinking as *Dasein*." But the whole revolution takes place in the world of "estrangement"; and Enlightened Utilitarianism is a decisive falling away from the speculative achievement of the "Cartesian metaphysics" (par. 578). Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibniz all know themselves "in God," and regard rational theology as the necessary logical context of human rationality. The empiricists, and the scientists who operated in the thought-context that they provided, were only "instinctively" rational. The dualism of Descartes, and the postulational theory of Kant, are the logical development of "estrangement" in this instinctive mode of Reason. Extended body becomes the instrumental material for the externally teleological activity of mind (or "thought"). So we should understand "Reason's Certainty" as an *intuitive* kind of "conceptual comprehension"; it needed to lose itself, and become self-alienated in its *Gegensatz* (Bacon, Locke and the utilitarian common sense of the Enlightenment) in order to "return to itself" in German speculative thought (*instinctive* in Kant, and increasingly self-conscious in Fichte, Jacobi, Herder, Schelling and Hegel).

Hegel moves from Descartes to Spinoza thus:

In virtue of having thus next expressed the immediate *unity* of thinking *and being*, of the abstract essence and the self, itself abstractly, and of having awakened the first Light-Essence *more purely*, viz. as the unity of extension and [thinking] being—for extension is the simplicity that is more nearly equal to pure thinking than light is—so that it has awakened again in thought the *substance* of the sunrise . . .

If I am construing this awkwardly complex sentence correctly so far, then Hegel regards Spinoza's "geometric" reformulation of the Cartesian metaphysics as the abstractly universal expression of the "immediate" unity of thinking and being asserted in the *Cogito*. It is clear, in any case, that he regards Spinozism as the return of the Light-Essence of natural religion at the level of rational consciousness.²⁸ Thus my contention that "manifest Religion" must reincorporate all of the earlier phases of its development is confirmed, because this is what has happened during the emergence of philosophical Reason. That Spinoza's rationalism itself is stigmatized as "abstract" confirms further that the reincorporation of natural religion has to involve spiritual reconciliation (for that is what the "concreteness" of experience involves). Hegel expects that the religion of the dawning culture will be Wordsworthian in its attitude to Nature.

The horrified reaction of orthodoxy to Spinoza's "God-intoxication" (as Novalis

called it)²⁹ is expressed by Leibniz. The Leibnizian concept of the rational monad is the “affirmation of individuality” against the “abstract unity” and the “*selfless Substantiality*” of Spinoza’s God. The monad is a completely self-contained subject (and hence an “individual substance”). But the doctrine of universal mirroring enables Leibniz to maintain that all of the monads subsist logically “in God”; Leibniz is therefore probably the most adequate paradigm of the *speculative* “Certainty and truth of Reason.”³⁰

When “Culture” establishes the Absolute Monarchy verbally, and the older nobility of *service* gives place to the *flattery* of the courtiers, this principle of “individuality” is *entäussert* (emptied out). The Leibnizian substantial monad (the “immortal soul” of theology) becomes the finite bourgeois self. It spreads out over the whole range of the external world of material property, and the gospel of salvation becomes the gospel of “universal utility.” Then, in the “absolute freedom” of the Revolution, the spirit grasps *Dasein* as its “will.”

Bildung is originally the reformation of the human self in accordance with God’s plan of salvation. But in *Candide*’s doctrine that we should “cultivate our gardens” we can see how it has inverted itself. We can recognize the transition from theological rationalism to matter of fact empiricism as the “alienation of individuality in culture, through which it is made into *Dasein*.” At this point, *Dasein* is the “matter of fact” that no longer refers us to a real essence, because all “essences” are presumed to be nominal. The Revolution seeks to make the Rights of Man and Citizen into simple matters of recognized empirical fact, as if society itself had no spiritual essence, and as if social recognition itself was not a recognition of essence. This empirical recognition is what is secured by force; so the Terror realizes the Hobbesian philosophy in which that nominalism was systematically formulated.

Only after this self-alienation of Reason can it return to itself and enter into full self-possession. In the Revolution, Spirit “turns the thought of its inmost depth to the outside, and expresses the essence as ‘ego = ego.’” But essential being is a reflection back to inwardness; and that is what is produced by the Terror. So now we have the critical idealism of Kant and Fichte. Fichte’s “Ich = Ich” is the motto for “Reason’s Certainty” because Fichte makes the implicit essence of Reason explicit. But what Hegel says about Kant’s “formalism” in the Preface applies to Fichte’s idealism as expressed in his “turning of the inside outwards.” It is still “dead and uncomprehended” (par. 50). Fichte thinks that the identity of inner and outer is immediate, and can be expressed in an abstract Utopian vision. To express his own relation to Fichte, Hegel has to insist that the whole historical movement of the *Phenomenology* must be inserted in place of the immediacy of the equality sign. “As pure and at the same time objective for the self-knowing Self, this pure difference [between self as subject and self as object] has to be expressed as *time*.” His own conception of Absolute Knowing has the motion of “reflection into self” as both its “subject” and its “object.”

The “difference” between “this” self and its absolute object is “expressed as *Time*” in the first chapter of the book; and we have finally comprehended the “difference” by recollecting the experience of more than two thousand years. The

problem of the Hegelian philosophy is not the “unity of thinking and extension” as conceived by Spinoza, but the “unity of thinking and time”.

Recollected time is “the distinction left over for itself” as “the objective rest of *extension*.” The reduction of time to a kind of extension (which we all perform with our appointment books and diaries) is the first step in its comprehension. Our critique of Sense-Certainty began with the recording of “Now is Night,” and the recollection of it at midday. The preservation of what is “restless and unhalting” in a state of “objective rest” is what the Self is as an *identity*, so this sublation of time is what we have to be self-conscious about. We are able to *spatialize* time in this way, because there is a spatial world that “abides” for us in time; and that is why the Leibnizian monad can “alienate itself” into a finite *Dasein*.³¹

But when we *externalize* the self in this way, we are led to accept the abiding immediacy of things in space as our model of substantial being. Everything that changes, becomes a mere *accident*; and that means that the “absolute knowing” (of the Subject as Substance) becomes the knowing of a bare identity. Like the finite self in Sense-Certainty, the absolute self that is “beyond time” can know *nothing* except that “It is.” Schelling was badly mistaken when he tried to found the theory of absolute selfhood on Spinoza’s identity of Thought and Extension. The *motion* of temporal consciousness, as a reflection upon itself as “being,” is the essence of its *life*.

When we shift from Spinoza’s problem to Hegel’s it is the nature of “logical eternity” (of which Spinoza, with his mathematical approach, thought we all had a perfectly intuitive knowledge) that becomes the focus of concern. The “eternity” of logical validity is guaranteed for Hegel by the successful closure of a circular movement in recollection. It is properly the conclusion of a “syllogism” rather than the absolute premiss of all syllogizing.

Only when the great circle of experience has been completed and comprehended in recollection is the “complete and immediate unity” of the Self as subject with the Self as Substance established. At the beginning of the *Phenomenology* what we are “certain” of is a mere “accident” of Substance; at the next instant we are certain that it *was* just an accident. Otherwise we have only the empty intuition that “It is” (meaning the nameless Substance that cannot be characterized). This is just the situation of the worshipper of the Light-Essence; and by applying this model properly to Spinoza’s Substance we can arrive at the *Urwahre* of Reinhold. This is the “Abyss” of the Absolute as a dark night in which all the cows are black.

Kant has taught us to recognize Spinoza’s error (the assumption that the categories of reflective Understanding—and especially “causality”—can apply to any such “Absolute”). So when the formalists of “Schelling’s school” do their “philosophy of Nature,” we can recognize at once that they are only picking up their supposedly rational “content” from sense-perception, like Zoroaster and his followers.³²

The last sentence of paragraph 803 strikes at the Identity Philosophy in all of its forms. It is as much a criticism of Hölderlin and Schelling as of Reinhold, and Schelling’s epigones for whom Hegel felt such bitter contempt. “Knowledge would seem to have come by things, by the distinction from itself, and the distinction of a

manifold of things, without anyone being able to comprehend how and from what source.” This expresses the discomfort Hegel had felt throughout the Jena period about Schelling’s “intuitive” approach to the Absolute; and certainly the *Phenomenology* makes a heroic attempt to do justice to the whole world of “difference.”³³

- 17./804. Spirit is this movement that is the structure of consciousness as subject and object, each advancing towards its own supersession. To begin with, the self is submerged in the social substance. But self-consciousness withdraws into independence and is *there*. This free self must go down again into the communal continuum fearlessly, emptying itself out in order to express its being-for-self. This is not a drowning of self among the black cows, for self-knowledge grasps the whole.

Hegel’s most important debt to the Identity Philosophy is his debt to Hölderlin. His insistence on the subjective concreteness of “absolute knowledge”—or what he calls here “the withdrawal of self-consciousness into its own pure inwardness”—had its origin at Frankfurt. We cannot tell how far this way of thinking was a “debt,” because it was Hegel himself who developed the detailed conception of Jesus as the Beautiful Soul; and it was probably Hegel who developed the theory of the “forms of Union.”³⁴ The “Hellenic Ideal” around which this general theory crystallized was originally Hölderlin’s; and even Hegel’s “Tübingen fragment” should (in my present view) be regarded as a testimony to Hölderlin’s influence.³⁵ But the influence operated upon an abiding interest and commitment of Hegel’s own. This can be demonstrated, for example, in the crucial instance of his concern with Sophoclean tragedy.³⁶

In any case, the debt to Hölderlin is implicitly acknowledged when Hegel’s reference to his mental breakdown places him firmly as the climactic *Gestalt* of the Beautiful Soul. Hegel’s repeated references to this *Gestalt* (the present allusion being the last) show how important it was in his own thinking.

Hegel’s debt to Schelling, on the other hand, although real and arguably enormous, was completely self-liquidating. He came into Schelling’s circle with the declared mission of providing the Identity Philosophy with its own “logic.”³⁷ This put him into a *critical* relation to the intellectual intuition of “A = A” from the first, and made him ever more conscious of his debt to Kant and Fichte. In the end, Fichte’s “Ich = Ich” triumphs, and absorbs “A = A” completely. Schelling’s speculative insight has all flowed over into the discursive unfolding of the *Phenomenology* itself. The “aether” of *Erinnerung*, on the other hand, is Hölderlin’s “Father Aether” which is never “liquidated.”

When Hegel returns to argue briefly in the Preface (par. 14) that “Science, at its first beginning” should not be subjected to a criticism that attacks its “essence,” he does mean, I think, to acknowledge that Schelling made a vital contribution. The rest of his discussion there only amplifies the dismissive line of argument sketched in paragraph 803; but we can recognize the triad Spinoza – Fichte – Schelling clearly in paragraph 17. Since at that point, the philosopher in whom “thinking unites the being of Substance with itself and grasps immediacy, or intuition as thinking” is unmistakably Schelling, we must conclude that Schelling (rather than

Spinoza) is the *Gestalt* of the “bare sinking of self-consciousness in Substance and the non-being of its distinction.” Thus we can fairly say that the last pair of *Gestalten* to be reconciled in the *Phenomenology* are Hölderlin and Schelling.

Actual spirit is neither the subjective retreat of *Hyperion*, nor the immediate submergence of the self in the *Sache selbst* achieved by Schelling’s “intellectual intuition.” Rather it is the cyclic *movement* from the one to the other and back again, which is portrayed in the history of the Manifest Religion, and conceptualized (*begriffen*) in the *Phenomenology*. First the Ethical Substance must be “betrayed” (par. 703), and the absolute subjectivity of Reason must slowly and painfully emerge in the Empire and the Church; this is the “self-distinguishing of the subject from its substance.” Then it must make its own circle to full self-consciousness in Rationalism, the Enlightenment, and Rational Moralism; *this* is the proper “coming to be of the pure Ego.” The completion of this circle enables us to comprehend the earlier “self-emptying” of Substance in the religious tradition; and so finally the self-conscious Beautiful Soul can return to a philosophically comprehensive unity with the *real* community of Reason.

This is Hegel’s achievement on the basis of the “instinctive” speculation of Kant, the “formal idealism” of Fichte, and the intuitive theories of Hölderlin and Schelling. The *Phenomenology* demonstrates how “the Concept” (i.e. the substantial movement of the *Weltgeist* in Western culture, which is evident to philosophical observers like ourselves as a gradual self-transformation of the communal beliefs and convictions about God, man and our human duty and destiny) is the moving force—the “necessity”—in the whole process. The self-conscious *personality* emerges as the *Dasein* of the Self in the Empire, and has “Substance” (i.e. God) as its “essence” in the Church.

To say that what is moving is “the Concept” is to say that nothing but the movement of human social Reason, with all of its material needs and its ideal aspirations, is involved. It is these needs and aspirations that human social Reason “portrays” for itself under such forms as the Unchangeable, the Will of God, Destiny, the Way of the World, the law of Duty, and finally as the all-creative Logos incarnate in “every man that cometh into the World.” When this last *Vorstellung* is properly comprehended Reason is fully “self-conscious,” and the *Phenomenology* can be written. The self-conscious ego must not cling to its subjective identity with the Logos in its inwardness, in preference to its real identity with the world of actual Spirit, and the recollection of its history as absolute Spirit. Rather it must go outwards and downwards, to recognize itself in its actual and spiritual world. There are no grounds for any fear of being “sullied” by this movement. For whatever is alien or *evil* in it, is transfigured into the “knowledge of good and evil” by the motion itself. The “force” (*Kraft*) of the Spirit is properly evident in its maintenance of self-identity throughout the motion. Everything is to be known as *ours*; and how it is known is for us to choose.

Thus, to take the most awesome year of the post-Hegelian era, no philosophical comprehension can affect the twin horrors of Auschwitz and Nagasaki,³⁸ which were *manifest* in 1945. But we must comprehend them in every way we can, as

things that man has done. We must use *concretely* the same Reason that planned and perpetrated them in its “enlightened” condition of abstract self-alienation. To cast them into the Abyss of some incomprehensible transcendent “Being,” or to regard technological Reason as a kind of superhuman devil, and claim that “only a God can save us,” is to make *all* aspects of human experience equal in their futility. It makes everything “the same.” But the vital nerve of Hegel’s dissent from the Identity Philosophy is the insistence that the “knowledge of good and evil,” through which Spirit is eventually “reconciled” with evil, begins with the clear recognition that good and evil are *not* “the same.”

The “absolute knowledge” that “returns into itself” is *not* the same as “forgiveness.” It must comprehend everything, but it does not have to “forgive” everything over again. There is room in it (just as there was in the religion of Jesus) for “the sin against the Spirit.” But it is for us to define that, and to comprehend it theoretically; and we *know* that it cannot be abolished, except in the self-abolition of the human community. If we must stand in awe of the destructive potential revealed by the horrors of 1945 as an alien power, then it is best to regard that power as a kind of “Fate,” and not as any “judgment of God.” For there is nothing so rational as “justice” in it; and “the Concept” in its aspect of “absolute negativity” or “wrath” does not require us to dignify what happened in that way. Death remains nothing but the natural fate of life, whether it be the death of one on Golgotha, or the death of all in Armageddon. It is only “recollection” that can make death significant.

(d) *The Circle of Experience*

- 18./805. The motion of the *Gestalten* stops here; the self-concept is achieved. The content is just the self-alienation of the self for its expression; its rational evolution is its necessity. The content is essentially relational, it moves of itself toward supersession; both necessity and free being are equally the self, and in this subjective “form” the “content” is the self-concept. Spirit unfolds in its own aether as *Science*; but the moments of its development in Logic are determinate concepts, not embodied shapes. There is no dialectic of experience and its truth-concept, but an identity of self and essence as a self-developing concept; the definition itself generates the dialectical movement. But a *Gestalt* of consciousness corresponds to every abstract moment of science; spiritual being is neither richer nor poorer. Cognition of the *Gestalten* is the real side of Science, in which the concept sunders its own moments.

The reconciliation of the Identity Philosophy with its history is the completion of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Spirit is now fully manifest to itself as the concrete principle of “self-knowledge.” Any rational person who wants to know herself adequately (in the philosophical sense in which Apollo commanded humanity generally to “Know Thyself”) must strive to know the world that has made her what she is, and in which she is to become whatever she has it in her to become at her best.

There are, of course, other forms of “self-knowledge.” One for whom it is problematic “what to become” (and for whom the options offered by “the world” are less problematic) may very reasonably devote herself to “self-observation” of the

rationally-empirical kind; and the repertory of means for such observation (in psychology and the other "social sciences") is now by no means as limited, or as useless, as the introspective observation of a "bag of faculties" to which Hegel gives such short shrift. But the self-knowledge that is true self-enjoyment is the "absolute knowing" in which Hegel's "science of experience" culminates.

What interests Hegel about it, however, is not its use as an organon for the relating of the "being-for-self" of the thinker to the "being-in-itself" of the spiritual world, but its propaedeutic character as the portal of properly scientific or systematic philosophy. Hegel was himself "condemned to be a philosopher." For him it was the exposition of "the Concept in its objectivity" that was the appointed task.

The first form of this objectivity is the "being-in-itself" of the Concept as "pure thought." This is the element of Hegelian "logic." The pure thinking through which we now have "absolute knowledge" of the self that "recollects" the complex history in which it both "made itself" and "was made," is the "pure element" in which the Concept "is there" as pure Concept. The "pure movement" of its self-utterance and self-recovery is just what Hegel expounds once more as a conceptual movement for itself alone, i.e. as the *method* of "pure thinking," in the *Logic*.

The "Science of experience" establishes the beginning of "pure thinking" *absolutely*. The "absoluteness" is the self-standing wholeness of a completed circle. We comprehend at the end the identity of experienced time as simple transience with time as eternal preservation in "recollection." This identity is the unity which distinguishes and unites all rational selves. The return to it at the end of the *Logic* establishes it again in the purely logical sense—which is the discursive or mediated form of conceptual necessity that replaces the mathematically intuitive character of logical "necessity" in Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz.³⁹ But the discursive process of the *Logic* itself can only be "absolute" in a relative sense. *Dasein*, even the *Dasein* of the Concept, is not "eternal" in the Platonic sense; for that would take us back to the old intuitive sense of eternity which has been sublated. The Hegelian logic itself is an organon of historical knowledge.⁴⁰

That Hegel's logic, in its discursive aspect, is flexible and elastic, is evident from his own fifteen year effort to produce the simplest, most economical and easy to follow version that could be devised for his *Encyclopedia*. The basic project is to provide a purely conceptual statement of just that identity of the thinking self with the world, which has been exhibited as the ultimate truth of *experience* in the *Phenomenology*.⁴¹ The students to whom this logic was taught—especially in its earliest form—did not know a great deal about their cultural world and its sciences.⁴² But they had to be given a conceptual schema that was adequate for the right organization and orientation of what they did know, or were supposed to know. They could not be taken through the self-education of the *Weltgeist*, because that presupposes a great deal of knowledge of the history of ancient and modern society, the history of Western religion, and the history of Western philosophy. So a very simplified substitute for the *Phenomenology* had to be provided to get them to the starting point; and their own Protestant religious education had to be heavily relied upon.⁴³

The crucial necessity was that the transition from the religious standpoint to the philosophical standpoint should be made. For this, what is essential is the understanding of what pure thinking is, the comprehension of what “absolute knowing” is, and the grasp of what logic *aims at* (viz. the comprehension of what “self-knowledge” is, and the orientation of the rational self in the world).

It may seem strange to speak of “what logic *aims at*.” But if we do not allow this question to be asked, we cannot comprehend how the Hegelian Left eventually came to give a wrong answer to it. They thought that having comprehended the world logically they could *use* the Logic to *change* it. In so doing they fell back into the dialectic of action and judgment; for while they were acting themselves, they used their supposed possession of Science as a foundation for the “judgment” that they passed upon the opposition which serious action inevitably brings to birth. In this sundering of the Concept, the Hegelian conception of Science as the *act* of comprehension, was shattered and lost completely. Subjective *insight* claimed to be “Science”; and all forms of substantial “faith” were condemned as “ideology.” This was the distinctively modern dichotomy that Hegelian logic, properly employed, is meant to preserve us from. So here again we *must* ask the question in order to *return* to “self-knowledge” with fuller self-consciousness.⁴⁴

“Logic” is the absolute freedom of self-consciousness. It is the pure “for-itself” of the absolute Substance set free; hence it is absolutely restless, it is negative and dialectical. When we are thinking “purely,” we are never satisfied; so Hegelian logic is like the Platonic dialectic in that it can never be “finished” in principle. But if we know where the circle begins and ends, it can be “complete.”

This paradox accounts for the fact that Hegel was always trying to do it again. He also tried to persuade his students not to do it independently. This reflects his uneasy consciousness that they did not yet really know what it was; the whole history of the “school” confirms that he was right about that.

In attempting to simplify logic, and to bind it up closely with “Real Philosophy” in an encyclopedic handbook, Hegel was taking the best way towards the resolution of this problem. Only within the larger circle of the *Encyclopedia* can we appreciate what the circle of the “pure concepts” is, and what it articulates. Hegel already understood this when he was writing the *Phenomenology*; the “System of Science,” for which the Science of Experience was to be both the “introduction” (in the *open* aspect in which it leads us to the “element” of Logic), and the “first part” (in its comprehensively *closed* or circular aspect, as a complete “Science”), was to be completed in one more volume, which would contain the whole “system.”

If we ask why this plan was abandoned, and eight years were spent on the elaboration of a “Science of Logic” which itself occupied three volumes, we are, of course, entering the sphere of “speculation” in a bad sense. But if we compare the *Science of Logic* with what Hegel was at the same time trying to do for his secondary schoolboys, and with the *Encyclopedia* which he began to produce and revise for University students, as soon as his “Subjective Logic” was in the press, two hypotheses suggest themselves. First, the attempt to simplify “the system” for schoolboys taught Hegel the risks of abstraction, and the dangers of authoritarian

dogmatism; and secondly the writing of the *Phenomenology* taught him that these risks and dangers could be obviated only by an immersion in the *Sache selbst* of philosophy which was as total as his immersion in the history of western ideology and religion in the *Phenomenology*.

The whole history of *philosophy*—the senators in “the slow moving procession of spirits” of paragraph 808—had to be comprehended in the circle of the angelic pure concepts, just as literature, religion, and sub-speculative thought were already comprehended in the ordinary human *Gestalten* of the procession itself. The *Science of Logic* is the educative discipline that Hegel put himself through, in order to be a pedagogue without degenerating into a pedant; and that is why (like the *Phenomenology*) it will always continue to interest serious students of philosophy more than the *Encyclopedia*. But the *Encyclopedia* remained Hegel’s goal throughout. This was the distillation of philosophy for the educated community generally (those who were not themselves “condemned” to be professional philosophers).

The *Science of Logic* is logic as the “self-enjoyment of the Concept.” It is for those who cherish the Platonic-Aristotelian ideal of pure contemplation—“being like the Gods, or as much like them as we can be.” The *Encyclopedia* shows us “logic *for* use, and logic *in* use”; it should preserve us from any “neo-Platonic fantasy” that we can really walk with the Gods in a “heaven beyond the heavens.”

I cannot *do* Hegelian logic very well; but I think I have understood what it is, and why it is vitally necessary. It is that understanding (the comprehension of “Science” even if only as a regulative ideal) that I should like to convey. For I am convinced that any view, no matter how “Hegelian” its inspiration may be—for instance, Croce’s “Philosophy of Spirit”⁴⁵ or Gadamer’s hermeneutics—, which takes Hegel’s “logical science” to be a dispensable illusion, is badly mistaken. It has no answer to the active missionary forms either of self-styled “science” or of “faith,” which will take us to Armageddon in their zeal; and no means of humanely comprehending the empirical sciences that will make Armageddon feasible for the rival zealots.

The motion of the concepts in the *Logic* belongs not to “experience” but to the “pure thinking” in which they are comprehended, and to the concepts themselves. We cannot look either to subjective experience, or to the substantial movement of the community to confirm it, since it is supposed to illuminate them. Hence Hegel can only offer a “dialectical” argument of the Aristotelian type in defence of beginning the *Science of Logic* with “Being.” But *he* knows that the reason for beginning with “Being” (interpreted in the way that he interprets it) is, on the one hand, the “absolute knowing” that makes him able to do logic in the first place—because it tells him what “logic” is—and on the other hand, the “absolute knowledge” at which he will arrive—which tells him that the “beginning” is not really “intellectually intuitive” in the way that it appears to be.

Hegel continued to speak of “intellectual intuition”; and hence, implicitly, to claim a “Platonic” status for the argument at the beginning. This was natural in the thought-context in which he lived and taught (as evidenced by the shortened historical approach to *Logic* in the *Encyclopedia*). But to me—with Hegel dead, and

his work before us in its objective spiritual shape—it seems more appropriate to view the beginning from the end. Nothing more than subjective preference and personal *Bildung* is involved in the decision. I would not try to argue with someone who insisted on the “intellectually intuitive” character of the beginning, for I have no idea what one could say (except that not everyone seems to have this “intuition,” and that it is only the eventual circularity that establishes the scientific objectivity of the argument as a whole).⁴⁶

We must turn now to the most difficult problem in paragraph 805 (and one of the most interesting assertions in chapter VIII). We read here that “to every abstract moment of Science there corresponds a shape of the appearing Spirit generally.” The “correspondence” is between the moments of Logic—since they are “abstract”—and the moments of “experience”—which are *concrete*, but for the most part “finite.” If we study Hegel’s theory of how the Infinite Spirit is in time we can see why he felt certain about the “necessary correspondence.” Only the absolute Spirit of Religion is properly “in time” (par. 679); and every shape of Religion is a determinate “shape of Consciousness.” So, at the level of the “biography of God” the sequence of “phenomenological categories” becomes strictly historical; and if every category is a “Shape of God” then surely it must be a necessary “categorical moment” in Logic also.

But already the complex relation between “Religion” and the finite stages of consciousness has taught us not to expect that the necessary “correspondence” between “categorical Shapes” and “categorical moments” implies a sequential *parallel*. According to Hegel’s theory of the *Dasein* of the Concept, the history of Religion must follow the logic of the *Phenomenology*; but we need not suppose that “pure Logic” follows quite the same historical course. It follows from what Hegel says here that every category in the Logic will appear in a complete phenomenological history of Religion. But chapter VIII itself shows us that Hegel was conscious that the history of “Philosophy” involves an *interaction* of finite and infinite moments. So it is quite possible that the view expressed in paragraph 85 of the *Encyclopedia* (1827 and 1831) is already operative in Hegel’s mind: the logical categories

may be looked upon as definitions of the Absolute, as the *metaphysical definitions of God*; more precisely, however, it is always just the first simple determination of a sphere that can be so regarded and again the third, the one which is the return from difference to simple self-relation. For to define God metaphysically means to express his nature in *thoughts* as such; but the Logic embraces all thoughts while they are still in the form of thoughts. The *second* determinations, on the other hand, which constitute a sphere in its *difference*, are the definition of the *finite*.

Of course, we cannot say for certain that this was so. There are many reasons why Hegel may have decided not to refer to this “correspondence” in the *Science of Logic* (1812) even though he still took the same view of its systematic relation to the *Phenomenology* that he held in 1807.⁴⁷

Hegel also says at this point that “Spirit in its *Dasein*” is neither richer nor poorer than “Science.” That the “science of experience” must in some sense embrace the whole range of “the System” seems obvious and necessary. Everything that belongs to experience is knowable in Science, and nothing is knowable at all that is not in “experience” (par. 802). But the way that everything enters into “experience,” organized as a science of historical evolution, is different from the way that it enters into the “Science of reality” as fully evolved. We have only to start looking for the philosophy of Nature in the *Phenomenology*, and compare what we find with what is in the System, to see this. The principal importance of the necessary identity between “experience” and “Science” lies in the implication that *nothing* we experience can *transcend* our logical grasp. That is my warrant for interpreting the name “God,” and the transition to the Infinite or Absolute Spirit, in the way that I have done. The “Beyond” must always be treated as *imaginary*, because (as far as our actual experience is concerned) it occurs only in the imagination, and its content is an imaginative projection of what we experience “Here.”

In spite of all that I have said, I agree that—since the *Phenomenology* of the Absolute is historical—Hegel *may* have believed in a “parallel” between *Phenomenology* and logic in 1806. It seems quite possible that he undertook the project of a “science of experience” in order to decide empirically (if possible) what pure Concepts must be systematically “deduced” in his categorical logic. Possibly he hoped that he would be able to use “history” as a control on the arbitrary freedom of reflective common sense. But I have no serious expectation that any generally persuasive logical sequence of “pure concepts” can be identified in the *Phenomenology*.⁴⁸

- 19./806. Science itself contains the necessity for the emptying out of the self-concept into the otherness of objective consciousness. For in grasping its concept self-knowing spirit differentiates itself as sense-certainty. This is its freedom.

After his brief characterization of the forward motion from the *Phenomenology* to the *Logic*, Hegel turns his attention finally to the closure of the Science of Experience upon itself. The Real Philosophy of Nature and Spirit has its experiential point of origin here. At the end of paragraph 805 Hegel spoke of the *Gestalten* of consciousness as the “side of reality” generally; and in this period he regularly expounded “Real Philosophy” as a whole. In phenomenological terms, the transition from Logic to Nature is not distinct from the emergence of finite Spirit. Nature is the Concept “in its otherness.” That means that Nature “is there” *for another*. The other for whom it is, is, of course, the thinking Concept itself; in its relation to Nature, the Concept falls from “pure thinking” to consciousness as the sense-awareness of an object other than itself. The phenomenological process of “consciousness” is therefore the *relation* between Nature and Spirit. Hegel says that in the phenomenological progression “the concept, which is posited in its *simple* mediation as *thinking*, strikes apart the moments of this mediation, and presents itself in accordance with the inner antithesis [between them].” In other words, “Spirit” (as absolute) is logically first, and Spirit as finite is experientially

first.⁴⁹ The “phenomenology of Spirit”—the motion from finite to infinite Spirit through the “Shapes of consciousness”—is the process of experience through which Logic, the science of what is “eternally necessary,” and Real Philosophy, the science of what is empirical and historical, become independent and distinct. This independence can only be established when the motion of experience is completed in time, so that the whole circle of Spirit is there for knowledge. The knowledge of it is the comprehension of how Necessity (both logical and physical) is comprehended within Freedom—or of how logical Eternity is comprehended within temporal experience.

The “sense-certainty” of consciousness in its immediacy is identical with the primitive antithetical relation of Nature and Spirit in their immediacy. But even here we encounter an interesting inversion. Nature as it exists for the immediately practical consciousness of the finite spirit is, first of all, spatial; but consciousness, as it exists for itself (as the theoretical quest for the self-consciousness of absolute knowledge) is first of all *temporal*. So the *Phenomenology* begins with *time*, and the Philosophy of Nature with *space*.⁵⁰

The fact that in paragraphs 805–808 Hegel is discussing the relation between the “Science of experience” and the “System” is obvious, and it has been universally recognized. But we need to remember that he is completing the Science of Experience, and *not* giving a bird’s eye view of the System. All that he wants to show is that the science of the *Gestalten* is neither “richer” nor poorer than the “System.” The Logic for the System of 1806 we have lost; but the Real Philosophy we still have. So we should not be misled into making superfluous “hypotheses” about it.

Hegel treats the transition from “logic” to “consciousness” in its *phenomenological* perspective. He is not looking ahead to the exposition of the System, but only showing how the *Phenomenology* is related to the starting points of the different sciences in the system. In paragraph 806 he makes the transition only from Absolute Consciousness back to sense-consciousness as the starting point of the *Phenomenology* itself. That is to say, he makes the circle of Consciousness back to the beginning of its “Science.” But the connected “primacy” (empirical and logical) of the beginning and the end of the Science of Experience explains the otherwise mysterious transition from Logic to Nature in the “System.” If we begin from the first sentence of paragraph 802 as an axiom (or a descriptive stipulation about the task of philosophy) everything becomes plain.⁵¹

- 20./807. But this emptying out into sense-certainty is not perfect. Because of the connection with self-certainty, the object is not free. Knowing knows not only itself here, but its limit; hence it knows how to sacrifice itself. This sacrifice is the alienation in which Spirit intuits its coming to be spirit. It becomes Nature with space as its being, and time as its externalized self. As alienated Spirit, *Nature* is just its eternal uttering, and the movement that sets up the subject.

Much of what I have just said about paragraphs 805–808, is validated not in paragraph 806, but only here in paragraph 807. Only now does Hegel speak of the

absolute alienation of the Spirit as nature proper; and he looks at it under the aspect in which it is relevant to the *Phenomenology*. In the movement from “pure thinking” back to “consciousness,” complete alienation, complete “emptying out” [*Entäusserung*] into “otherness” is avoided. There is a circle precisely because consciousness is a mode of knowledge. It is implicitly self-consciousness. Thus the science of consciousness must traverse the field of *nature* in its connection with the self; but when we reach the evolution of religious consciousness we realize that the independent objectivity of nature, recognized in simple consciousness, and conceptualized as the “Infinite” of Understanding, is necessary for the self-constitution of rational self-consciousness.

At this point, the rational self-consciousness can comprehend, at last, the “sacrifice of itself” that it made in order to be born as Reason. As Unhappy Consciousness, it had to make an apparently quite irrational leap of faith in order to be “saved”; in the Manifest Religion it comprehends this leap as the reconciliation of God with Nature; and in comprehending the identity of God’s act with its own, it comprehends that neither of them was gratuitous. In their unity they are one and the same *free* but logical act. They are not two contingent acts at all, but the positing of an “otherness” which is logically necessary if there is to be contingency (and hence a free return of selfhood to free self-consciousness) at all. Nature, as the sphere of *reality*, is the element in which the free self-positing of the Spirit can take place. It is “necessary” as the stage for the free creation of the Spirit, out of the nothingness to which it reduces Nature, by turning against it.

The whole religious story of a contingent sequence of partly mythical and partly historical events is the “spiritual substance” that has to be recollected in the *Phenomenology*. Thus the *Phenomenology* presupposes Nature; and by implication a Science of Nature, as the simple objectivity of the Concept, must be possible. But Hegel is not here concerned with that science; and he is not directly saying anything about it. What matters is that without Nature, there cannot be “experience”; and hence there cannot be the Science of Experience.

There is thus a “circle” between the Science of Experience and the *logical positing* of Nature. Hegel’s remark that “To know its own limit means to know how to sacrifice itself” is more intelligible to me in its phenomenological context, than in the context of Logic. The strange sentence at the end of the Logic about “the Idea *resolving* to let itself go,” should be interpreted in terms of the “leap of faith” and the “comprehension” of Religion. But I am thankful to be able to set aside the task of interpreting that sentence here.

- 21./808. *History*, as the other side of its coming to be, is the knowingly self-mediating becoming. But this emptying out of Spirit in time is also the alienation of alienation. The developing motion is a slow-moving gallery of pictures each endowed with all the riches of spirit. Comprehension takes the past up into the self, as a memory to be drawn forth out of its own night. It is drawn forth as a new *Gestalt*, born from Science [cf. pars. 11–12]. This new *Gestalt* has to mature slowly, with its origins all lost in the night of memory. But the record of achievement is all there, and hence the new development starts from a higher level. Thus, for Science, world history is a *realm of spirits*

forming a procession, and now the procession has come full circle. The “time of the Concept” has arrived, because the whole circle has been raised out of the depths. This recollecting is both the path to, and the content of Absolute Knowing. As a riot of free expression the procession is History; as a comprehended pattern they are the phenomenology of absolute knowing. As both together (History comprehended) they form the innering and the “skull-place” of Absolute Spirit, the point from which the true infinity of human life foams forth.

We should have noted in paragraph 807 that the Concept of Nature is self-inverting. Nature, in its independent objectivity, is the “true Infinite” of Understanding, the “logically living” process that sustains all mortal life (including the human Understanding) within itself. It is under this aspect that Nature can be called the “living immediate coming to be” of the Spirit. The “coming to be” of Spirit from Nature has two aspects; there is the biological organism called *homo sapiens* (which nature contributes); and there is the cultural *Bildung*, through which *homo sapiens* becomes actually sapient.

This cultural *Bildung* is the “self-creation” of Spirit proper. In its most fundamental (substantial) aspect it reaches out and transforms the physical environment, both organic and inorganic, so that “absolute knowing” is led to the recognition that the “true Infinite” of Nature as a whole is its own real substance. But as the “knowingly self-mediating” aspect of the coming to be of Absolute Spirit, this “self-creation” is the formation of our communal self-consciousness in history. Until it comes to complete self-consciousness the history of this communal self is the “biography of God”; its completion ends that “biography” properly with “death.”

When Hegel first speaks of the history of the Spirit as “a slow movement of spirits following one another in procession” he has to be referring directly to the community-spirits, i.e., to the shapes of “God.” This appears to be confirmed when he says a bit further on that “the kingdom of spirits . . . makes up a procession in which each one discharged the other one [preceding it], and each took over the kingdom of the world from its predecessor.” But the two processions are not quite the same because the first is the naïve procession of history as *res gestae*; and the second is that procession as recollected in the Science of Experience—the absolute *historia rerum gestarum*. The *Phenomenology* comes between them, and makes the transition from Religion to Philosophy.

The reborn Spirit is one that “begins its culture again from the beginning, seeming to go forth only from itself, but at the same time it is on a higher level that it begins.” This resurrection is a procession of human spirits (communities of *individuals*), ending with the marching company of the philosophers regarded as the conceptual *kings* of their community, because (in spite of what the community of the orthodox faithful, or the philosophers themselves as theologians may think) they are the true spiritual architects of the “self-consciousness” of their communities. Already, at a crucial turning point in the naïvely historical process of religious consciousness, the human artists knowingly “invented” the Gods; and the naïve historical procession reached its climax in a human self-consciousness that was clearly aware of its identity with God.

Philosophy proper moves on the higher plane constituted by that “self-certainty.” This transition from Religion to philosophy was the necessary goal of the naïve procession itself. For the “fulfilling” [*Vollendung*] of that “gallery of pictures” (the Gods, but not the spirits of scientific recollection, are *Bilder*) “consists in this, for the Spirit to *know* completely that which *it is*, its substance.” And hence “this knowledge is its *going into itself*, in which it abandons its way of being [*Dasein*] and gives its shape over to recollective inwardizing [*Erinnerung*].”⁵² The historical movement of religious consciousness is unconscious (“sunk in the night of Spirit’s self-consciousness”). But for our scientific recollection it is all there as “experience”; and so we have been able to bring it out into the daylight of reflective self-consciousness. The whole substance has been preserved in a higher form (i.e., as the Spirit, the Substance which is equally Subject) by the “*Er-Innerung*” of experience.⁵³

It is not we alone (the philosophical historians) who “inwardize” the cultural procession. History, as the establishment of a communal tradition, a universally shared body of memory, already does a great part of the work. But we raise it into reflective (and finally self-conceptual) consciousness; and we do this by organizing it logically so that its shape and significance can be seen. And now as we look back at the “inwardizing” of Reason, the communal Logos, and comprehend what *we* have done as its transformation from the “Son” into the “Spirit,” the whole character of *our* achievement changes. As our Science becomes complete, and the transition from religious consciousness to philosophy is made self-conscious, its real significance is comprehended properly for the first time. The Science of Experience itself is now established as a truly philosophical achievement.⁵⁴

The meaning of this achievement is twofold. First, the character and status of speculative philosophy itself is transformed. “Philosophy,” the desire for wisdom, becomes “Science,” the possession of knowledge. As the love of wisdom, philosophy had to exist under the aegis of the substantial tradition of its culture. Since the communal self-consciousness, in which that tradition was thoughtfully possessed, is precisely what the community represents to itself as its “God,” the earlier situation was that philosophy existed all through the long slow movement of the “gallery of pictures” as a mediating *minister* of the *substantial* religious consciousness. Philosophy was necessarily “speculative theology,” the theoretical consciousness of the “true Infinite” as the Absolute Self in its transcendent “otherness.” Spinoza and Leibniz (between them) “invented” the God of the rational community, as a *frozen* Concept of the Understanding.

As the moment of its own fulfilment as “Science” came nigh, this “theological” consciousness was alienated from itself, and entered into its *Gegensatz*. In place of speculative theology, the *critical* “philosophy of experience” was born, which recognized Substance as a *not-self*, the Unknowable, and itself as “Reason,” the truly universal subjectivity. That was when the *reflective* recollection of what the communal substance was, became possible. The love of *God’s* wisdom could now, at last, become the self-possession of the human community’s “Science.”

The fulfilment of this transformation is the “Science of Spirit” in the “Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences.”⁵⁵ As long as “the Spirit” was religiously con-

ceived as a transcendent “force,” no Science of Spirit was possible. But the *absolute* consciousness that we have reached shows us that the “objectivity” of the Spirit is just the real objectivity of our social institutions, and the ideal objectivity of our cultural tradition. The logical structure of this can now be expounded quite systematically and comprehensively. Rational *self*-consciousness of this scientific kind (not a mystical union of some kind with the Absolute Other) can be exhibited demonstratively—or “necessarily”—as the goal of our existence as *homo sapiens*.⁵⁶

The climax of this Science of Spirit will be the systematic portrayal of the religious “gallery of pictures” which have already come before us in their “slow procession” in chapter VII; and chapter VIII of the *Phenomenology* will be replaced by the “recollecting” procession of the philosophers who are only described in the distance here. We have already seen that the phenomenology of the Manifest Religion provides the proper context for the comprehension of the seemingly *gratuitous* “resolution” of the logical Idea to “let itself go” as Nature. Now we can see also that the climactic appearing of Absolute Knowing in the *Phenomenology* is the closure of the Science of Spirit into the great circle of the Encyclopedia. The last of the professors in the philosophical procession is Hegel, as the inventor of speculative logic, and the first explorer of “absolute knowing” in its “aether” (the *spiritual* “element”).

So much for the transformation of “philosophy” generally into “Science.” Now let us consider the second aspect of the achievement of the Science of Experience, its *internal* significance. The goal of philosophy is “the revelation of the Deep, and this is the *absolute Concept*.” The darkness of the deep is to be turned into a visible extended surface. When this is achieved scientifically the surface illuminated will be a conceptual *sphere*, the conceptually organized and comprehended “extension” of Real Philosophy. But the path to it is the human quest for knowledge, as a voyage of discovery in which we recognize first our own “accidental” character as mortals, and our dependence on the social substance for our rationality; then our own creative role as rational “makers” of the substance; and finally our spiritual relation to, and absolute significance in, the divine (or *absolute*) substance. We are the “subjectivity” of that substance.

Absolute Knowing, which is only the element, the “aether” of properly conceptual science, is *discovered* by the *Phenomenology*. What does it do to our journey when, like Dante in the Sphere of the Fixed Stars, we look back upon our journey from the height that we have reached? What happens when our long pilgrimage through the *history* of our community is united with, and comprehended in, the Absolute Knowing that is its “result”?

Hegel responds with the *Vorstellung* that forms the central paradox of the Christian “revelation.” But he transforms it. What happens is at once *death* and *resurrection*. We arrive at Calvary, the place of Crucifixion, because *all* of the *Gestalten* must now perish in order that conceptual science may come to be. This much is fairly easy to comprehend. It has not generally been appreciated that “Jesus” is the tragic image of the birth of “Absolute Philosophy”; but we have commented on the transition from the *Gestalten* to the pure Concept(s) of Logic already.

It is the Resurrection image that is radically transformed. For this is not a resurrection of Christ, the Divine Logos who must ascend to Heaven in order to come down again in his true universal shape as Spirit. This is not God manifesting Himself to us, by coming down in order to return to Himself and then come down again. This is the display of the finite individual spirit to God (the Absolute Spirit, i.e. the Body of Christ or the Universal Community). All of the shaped Spirits who have been crucified for the birth of the pure Concept, and who have sacrificed themselves for the birth of Science, are now *finally* resurrected as the *ultimately real substance*, the “In-itself” which the absolute “For-itself” of Science is *for*.

The Science of Experience is the “chalice” from which this resurrection, not of Spirit but of *spirits*, “foams forth.” The resurrection of the finite spirits is the *final* goal, meaning, and “result” of the Science, because the “foaming” here produces the very same procession of Spirits with which the “Science of Spirit” concludes and returns into Logic. But in the perspective of the “chalice of experience” we can comprehend that it is not just a procession of those privileged (or “condemned”) spirits called the “philosophers.” Jesus, the man who died for reconciliation, leads forth out of the “deep” of self-consciousness a procession that embraces consciousness in *every* form. The resurrection of Christ is in us, the philosophical observers who have become “science,” the divine or absolute knowing for whom the procession “foams forth”; but this resurrection of the dead is the recovery of every aspect of experience in its conceptually necessary aspect. It *has* to be that in order for the “science of knowing as it appears” to comprehend the whole of Real Philosophy in its own way—not just the beginning and the climax of it.

Commentators generally seem to take the reference to Calvary only in its mystical-religious sense. But they do not even offer an explanation of why the mystical reference to the “death of God” on Calvary is appropriate here. The *Phenomenology* mediates the transition between the two *processions*—the procession of divine *pictures*, and the procession of human *thinkers*. Thus it is the conceptual exposition of the one transitional figure who is both a divine picture, and a human thinker. It is the *philosophy* of the “life of Jesus,” including his death and Resurrection. It liquidates the Ascension and Descent of the Spirit completely, by interpreting them as the resurrection of Christ in us. But when that liquidation is complete, so that the God-picture is no longer logically necessary—then the figure of Jesus, the first Beautiful Soul to achieve full “reconciliation” with the world, is logically the first *human* spirit to be resurrected into immortality *for* us, the first to “foam forth” from the chalice of experience comprehended.⁵⁷

The moment in which we look back over our journey, and bind it into the circle of a conceptual “science” by joining the end to the beginning, is the moment when “Now” comprehends “Eternity” concretely. Each of us is the subjective “difference” of the Self from the Substance (par. 804). We now have, and we know that we have, that “richest cognition” that sense-certainty claimed to *be*, but which it could not articulate at all.⁵⁸ Sense-Certainty is in actuality so *poor* that, although we can only effectively *forget* it by “going to the death,” it is the one level of experience at

which actual, living, self-assertive consciousness cannot obstinately *remain*. When the Sense-Certain Consciousness talks at all (beyond the level of Night and Day) it must speak the language of Perception. As soon as it *extends* itself into Cognition proper it must *point* to real “things,” objects of perception in space, saying “Here is a house” (or a “tree”); and for this pointing it must *use* “concepts.”

Yet now we know that the pretence of Sense-Certainty was not vain. It becomes finally the existential side of the “element” of our Science. Our recollective Now contains “riches” that the sensationalist philosophers did not dream of, and do not know how to handle. It is a “sense-certain” (as well as a “self-certain”) moment. So we can comprehend, for example, how an artist like Turner can show us God, by *fixing* a moment of sense-certainty in a *picture* (a storm almost as dark as Night, or a sunset). And because of what Turner can *show* us, we can divine what the inarticulate consciousness of Sense-Certainty *feels*; we can interpret what we ourselves have felt, at least vaguely, and sometimes powerfully and explicitly, at some moments of our sense-experience. Hence this consciousness too, whose grounding presence we must and do recognize in our concretely scientific comprehension of “eternity”—even though we must necessarily *not* be attending to it at the moment of our “recollection”—this sense-consciousness, too, has to be recognized as “the actuality, truth and certainty of Spirit’s throne.” We experienced it initially as the Calvary in which Spirit died and all truth was lost. But it too must come forth from the grave, for without it nothing else can, and even our purely conceptual absolute knowing cannot subsist without it. The Resurrection itself really began with Peter’s thought of that *face* looking at him, when he “went out and wept bitterly”—and he certainly knew he was weeping.

If the truth standard of Sense-Certainty is necessary to Absolute Knowing, then so are all the others; and when they are integrated into the context of absolute self-consciousness—as they must be when we read the book again *scientifically*, because Absolute Knowing is now with us self-consciously from the beginning (and not just as the “instinctive” rational knowledge of what neutral “observation” is)—then every form of non-philosophical consciousness is raised for us in its proper “shape” of eternal life.

Jesus, who was no *philosopher*, still less a “scientist,” is the proper presiding spirit for the *Phenomenology* because the Science of Experience is the “salvation into eternal life” of all the *non-philosophical* forms of experience and concepts of truth. Philosophy and philosophers make few appearances in it; and except in the Preface and this last chapter, those few appearances are almost totally negative. Philosophy appears only as what it is not. It is *not* the Understanding, even though the Understanding aspires to be “Science,” and does formulate the concept of the “True Infinite.” Stoicism and Scepticism are the abstract forms of Logic, and its *Gegensatz* the dialectic. Reason is “instinctively” speculative. Fichte is the “formal” idealist; and in the “Spiritual animal kingdom,” the speculative *Monadology* of Leibniz has been wrested out of its logical eternity into the empirical dialectic of time, with a violence whose legitimacy we can only accept if we grant that the evolution of *actual* Spirit is paramount over the self-conscious will of the thinker. In

“Law-Testing Reason” Kant comes before us as the “shape” of philosophy in its absolute defeat—the logical emptiness of Stoicism returned.

With the glancing reference to “the Cartesian metaphysics” (par. 578), genuine speculation makes a *positive* appearance as the standard against which its *Gegensatz* in enlightened empiricism is to be measured. But again it is the paramount might of *actual* Spirit which, in order to forward its own evolution, has taken Descartes’ “theological” insight and deformed it into these “unphilosophers”⁵⁹ who are its willing and necessary ministers.

Finally in the “Moral World-View” we are given a sight of speculative philosophy struggling to escape from its bondage as the “handmaid of theology” into self-conscious freedom. But it cannot win the battle, because of the *substantial* commitments of Faith that it still has; and the “rational faith” that it produces, is even more obviously “unphilosophical” than the Deism or the Humanism of the Enlightenment. It is the religious consciousness that wins all of the battles, and absorbs all the forms of consciousness, with which the *Phenomenology* is directly concerned. Thus the resurrection of the spirits from the chalice of experience is the resurrection (and eternal justification) of all the *non-philosophical* forms of consciousness universally.

And that, in the end, is why there are no personal names in the book—or as few as Hegel can manage with, and those few used always *emblematically*. The book is not about the eternal salvation of Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Origen, Dante, Bacon, Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Newton, Reid, Diderot, D’Holbach, Robinet, Kant, Herder, Fichte, Jacobi and Schelling; it is about “Everyman.” And therefore it uses more freely the mythic figures of Everyman: the nameless Serf and his Lord; the nameless professors and their named “schools”; Oedipus, his sons and his daughters; the Roman Emperor, the Pope, and Luther (but none of them, not even Constantine, by name); Young Rameau, Faust and Gretchen; and the Beautiful Souls. Literary *Vorstellungen* serve best to represent actual Spirit, just as the Gods stand for the self-consciousness of their communities. This is because in the end it is every man and woman who steps forth from the chalice *here and now*, and not in that Heaven of the Christian promise of universal salvation into eternal union with the “Father” who loves us all to the point of absolute self-sacrifice.

Every one of us, philosopher or not, must *comprehend* our *lives* as best we may, including especially the education that has made us what we are, and able to do whatever we can do, with enjoyment. Many do not know that this is what happiness is (the “activity of soul in accordance with virtue”); many more have some inkling of it, but life offers them no reliable way to its steady achievement, no adequate means for the sort of self-realization that can be enjoyed. The comprehensive knowledge of what life-comprehension *is* will help both groups—and the philosophic science itself that is still to be constructed, *may* possibly help in the social reconstruction that the latter group need. Even after the fall of Napoleon, Hegel was as much concerned with that as a professor could be in a dark time; but his most important successors (who could not get, or could not keep, their professor-

ships) went to the opposite extreme and allowed the goal of social reconstruction to overturn comprehension into the alienated “unphilosophy” of the Enlightenment once more.

Hegel was concerned with Comprehension as the human goal of *self-realization*. That is what his Science was about. One does not have to have the Science in order to achieve self-realization;⁶⁰ the Science itself shows why that is the case. But the Science can, and it should, inform all of our educational institutions; and it can be used by those who have it, to mediate the conflicts of those who are “instinctively” happy (i.e. they have found rational self-realization in some non-philosophical form). It can do this, or at least attempt it with confident hope, because those who are “happy” in this sense must by definition have “the Absolute with them” as the spirit of charity and reconciliation. For those who are “unhappy” still, it can do little or nothing (except indirectly through its institutionalization). The Science itself shows why they must, in one way or another, come to the Calvary of *religion* first. We can only hope devoutly that the renewed battles between the alienated Enlightenment and the traditional “faiths” (together with the battles of the faiths themselves) will not bring us all to the last Calvary.⁶¹ And we must do our best (in spite of my logical pessimism about the reconciliation of the unhappy through “insight”) to “enlighten” both sides in the full speculative sense. For we *know* now that the only Providence watching over us is our own.⁶²

Notes

1. There is a French translation of this chapter, with sentence by sentence commentary by B. Rousset (1977). But it is not very helpful.

One can say with M. Theunissen (1970, 223–224): “The knowing of God becomes a knowing of oneself *in* God as the one who supports and comprehends man. To the extent that this knowing of oneself *in* God, concludes the religious movement, man certainly transcends his abstract separateness, but never his separateness from God.” But this surviving “separateness” is a conscious distinction from the universal human Spirit (as we meet it, for example, in Croce and Gentile); and there is no need to speak of it as “*the one who . . .*” That “one” is equally well comprehended as “the We.” For a rather more “religious” view of this transition than mine see M. De Nys (1987) and L. Dupré (1987).

2. J. C. Flay (1984, 236) says that “the function of religion . . . is to make itself disappear” in its philosophical sublation. That may be what it does for him (and sometimes for me, and probably for Hegel too). But “disappear” is quite the wrong word for what logically *has* to happen (in society). I have tried to show that the “absolute religion” is recuperatively reconciliatory (or *at least* ecumenically charitable). Someone who is religiously *committed* can go on from this conceptual transformation of her “faith,” to do pure philosophy without experiencing any disappearance. It is arguable, indeed, that even for someone as uncommitted as myself (a typically “inauthentic” professor enjoying the Jamesian “moral holiday”) whatever religious “recollections” are still present, are *enriched*. M. Westphal’s use of the Marxist “withering away” metaphor (1978, 212) is a logical error, even if it is empirically accurate with respect to the “absolute culture” of our own society. Q. Lauer (1976, 255–256) is right; but R. Kroner (1961, II, 415), with whom the “faith-oriented” Lauer would no doubt agree, is not. Any honest philosophical observer must agree with Kierkegaard: philosophical self-

consciousness has no necessary connection with authenticity of “existence.” But someone like myself, who is more in tune with the moral “authenticity” of James, may be inclined to the view that S. Kierkegaard himself illustrates that! (Westphal, Lauer and Kroner are sufficiently cited in Flay [1984, 395–396, n. 17].)

W. Jaeschke (1992, 1) says that Hegel’s philosophy moves from the “death of God” to the “end of Religion.” On my view there will be many Hegelian philosophers for whom “Religion has ended.” But the problem of mediating the cultural conflicts of human religious traditions will continue to be the focal problem even of these “absolute humanists”; and in performing that task, they ought to recognize that Religion has *not* ended (just as Philosophy has not).

3. Thus Plato’s *Republic* is not “science,” because it has never been realized. The “absolute knowledge” of our religious tradition can be recognized in it, a fact which is hardly surprising, since Plato has had an enormous influence on that tradition. But logically speaking, Plato’s *Republic* only differs from those Gnostic myths about the identity of God and Man which failed to become “the belief of the world,” in virtue of the “self-conscious” conceptual form that his thought gave it. The Gnostic myths are *Vorstellungen*; Plato’s *Republic* is the “science” of *his own* “self-consciousness” and that of a few “followers.” Plato was less of a “dreamer” than the later Gnostics, because he still had a real “substance” to think about. But the Peloponnesian War had already shown that the model of the *polis*, which he accepted as his substantial base, was not in fact absolutely “substantial.” In fact, it had to perish, before the truly universal “Substance” could become visible.

4. J. C. Flay (1984, 238–239) says that the transition from Religion to Philosophy is not an *Aufheben* but a *Hinausgehen*. I am not sure what the distinction means, but I suspect that it only distinguishes between the *Aufhebung* of phenomenological experience, and that of pure thinking in Logic. In experience, the sublated content is still “there”; in Logic the content is itself *radically* transformed—we are not simply *seeing* the old *Sache* in a new way. The “absolute Religion” cannot be forgotten in the way in which Reason “forgets” the Unhappy Consciousness. The consciousness that advances to “absolute knowing” must have a *religious* content. But it may, for example, be the “humanism” of someone like Bloch, for whom the “otherness” of physical nature remains “absolute.”

S. Houlgate (1993) has given the right interpretation of this transition. The reader should study first his earlier article (1991) and the critique of J. C. Flay (1993). I agree with Houlgate throughout.

5. According to F. Wagner (1971, 180ff.) the sublation of Religion in this transition is only abstract. I agree that the dialectic of what is past and what is future is not positively sublated (1971, 195). But I cannot see that Hegel achieves a more adequate transition in the later system (as Wagner believes). (For a good study of the transition from religion to philosophy through the *history* of religion in Hegel, see T.F. Geraets [1989]; Geraets [1986] provides a good survey of Hegel’s *later* philosophy of religion. It coheres well with my account of chapter VII of the *Phenomenology*.)

6. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xxx. We may note that *most* of the world’s religious traditions involve “faith” of a projective or postulational kind that is akin to Kant’s—i.e. they involve assumptions that are not self-verifying in the continuum of human experience and communication. So Hegel’s critical sublation of God’s “promises” does not only touch the three “religions of the Book” that are founded on a supposedly gratuitous “revelation.”

7. It comes naturally to me (in our world of physical “relativity”) to say “continuous process.” The words “in the beginning” probably had a certain *empirical* absoluteness in Hegel’s

Newton-dominated culture. But the “beginning” with “Force and Understanding” is a logical not an empirical matter regardless of whether “God plays dice with the Universe” or not; and so is the necessary revisability of the interpretation.

8. The absolute *repetition* of Reason in the Manifest Religion is laid out in the commentary on paragraph 787. I may not always have made the best possible identifications; but I hope to have succeeded well enough to prove that the “repetition” really is present.

9. Thus in a metaphysical or ontological sense, all of Natural Religion is Unhappy Consciousness. But except for the reconciled Unhappy Consciousness this comment has no relevancy because the ontological distinction between *self* and *other* has not yet been made. For the reconciled Unhappy Consciousness both Natural Religion and the Art-Religion are idolatrous (and hence eternally “unhappy” or damned) because it *has* made this distinction absolutely, and has seen the Other overcome it.

10. This circular or reciprocal syllogism expresses the structure of the whole chapter also: God comes down from the Divine Light, through the statue, to singular self-consciousness; and the singular sense-certainty that *It is* ascends through self-assertion, to the rational certainty that the Community is in me and vice versa.

11. Hegel did have an earlier draft of sorts (see *Pilgrimage of Reason*, chapter 3, note 54). For the conditions under which this chapter was written see letter 95 to Schelling of 1 May 1807 (Hoffmeister, I, 161–162); and for the reasons why Hegel was under pressure to complete his manuscript before a deadline that was already upon him, see *Pilgrimage*, Introduction, 8–9.

12. It is Faith itself that posits the experiential presupposition as *historic* (which in its *bounding* aspects it rationally *cannot* be, so that the free self-creation of the Spirit “out of Nothing” verifies itself); and the logical presupposition transforms itself *for* Faith into the reconciled acceptance of *unbelief*—so that the transition to Absolute Knowing verifies itself as necessary (and the presupposition-relations develop into presuppositionlessness).

13. The three moments are well interpreted in a secular philosophical way by J. L. Esposito (1983). But he does not deal with our problem of the transition from the Manifest Religion as one of methodic continuity.

14. For the connection between Conscience and Absolute Knowing see J. E. Russon (1991). Because of the disruption of the religious consciousness, we are conscious of the Kingdom of God as both “now” (in forgiveness) and “never” (in either the active or the judging consciousness). To exhibit the sense in which the “now” is absolute is the task of Absolute Knowing. So the simple opposition that M. Westphal sets up between Hegel and Tillich at the level of *Religion* (1972 = 1992, chapter 13) is a mistake. At the level of Religion Hegel is only opposed to Tillich in the way that he is to himself. At the level of Philosophy he appears to be opposed to Tillich at the level of Religion. But the appearance is misleading.

15. Even B. M. Reardon concedes too much to Kojève when he says “the real *Aufhebung* of religion, according to [Hegel’s] thinking, is not metaphysics but history itself” (1985, 55). For “metaphysics” we should read “the *actual* concept within which all of our experience—and especially our recollective experience of our religious history—is embraced.”

“Estrangement” remains a necessary moment of the absolute community (cf. F. Wagner, 1971, 176–177 and A. K. Min, 1974, 89–93). To call it a state of “satisfaction” is *misguided* in Kojève’s unitarian-political sense (the “universal homogeneous State”)—and somewhat Pickwickian in Pippin’s sense. It is not the mystical harmony of the song in Browning’s “Pippa passes”; and the philosophical awareness that “this is how things ought to be because

this is how they have to be (and the only way they can be) is consistent with an immense range of feeling-states (from Young Rameau through Mother Teresa to J. Royce). If we do “become God” (K. Schrader-Klebert, 1969, 94–95) it is only by indulging ourselves in the “moral holiday” of W. James.

16. It is not clear that this is *all* that Hegel means by his “*theils . . . theils . . .*” He may mean also that an important part of the evolution both of singular consciousness and of the *Weltgeist* took place before the advent of Christianity (and, in particular, before the Reformation). But this point is so obvious that it does not require commentary or explanation.

17. “Turning back” is always an option for consciousness. That is how each position makes itself into a stably closed circle. But *that* choice expresses the desire *not* to go forwards.

18. I borrow this phrase from M. Rosen, *Hegel's Dialectic and its Criticism*, Cambridge, C.U.P. 1982, 179. But as far as I am concerned Rosen's case against Hegel is “not proven”; and if history *can* be “comprehended,” then Hegel is *not guilty*. (For assessment of M. Rosen's work, the reviews by W. De Vries [1984] and S. Houlgate [1983, 1985] can be recommended.)

19. B. Yack (1986, 219–223) has understood *political* reconciliation correctly. Philosophy overcomes the dissatisfactions of reflective enlightenment—and those of romantic nostalgia. Hegel had suffered from both—cf. D. Henrich in M. Inwood (1985, 199–207). Philosophical reconciliation leads us to abandon revolutionary *methods* in politics, and obliges us to recognize revolutionary goals as unachievable. But we can continue to be committed *reformers* or *conservatives* on particular social issues. Philosophy does not change modern *Christian* politics. (Compare also M. Hardimon, 1994).

In “consciousness,” at least, we have made noteworthy advances with respect to the “natural differences” of race and sex. But our progress has been accompanied by some terrible regresses. “Absolute knowing” teaches us that it is folly to suppose that moral progress can be measured in any *absolute* way. It would be absurd for a Hegelian to suppose that we are “wiser” than Hegel. We simply have our own world to interpret as well as we can. “Absolute Knowing” has no use for comparatives.

20. In the terms of the Bacchic revel image, Absolute Knowing is not one of the participants in the revel. But it has its *Gestalt* aspect, because it is ourselves as the observers of the revel—and we are an embodied community. We become logicians by ceasing to observe, by closing our eyes and beginning to think purely. K. Schrader-Klebert (1969) is mistaken in her criticism of Hegel, because she ascribes to him a goal which (he agrees) is unachievable. His philosophy is “without presuppositions” because it moves *thoughtfully* from the real philosophical observer to the absolute comprehension of what philosophical observation is—and so to pure thinking (cf. S. Houlgate, 1986, 28–30).

S. B. Smith (1989, 177) describes absolute knowledge as if it were Aristotle's “best and most complete virtue” (comprehending all others). But in its moral aspect, it is only an adequate *concept* of the good life. Living is still to do; and there is an important sense in which “the I” will *never* “find in itself expressed *all* the capacities and attributes of the species. The *philosophical* “end of history” is *not* the land of heart's desire, with nothing noble left to do. Nor is it the world of Nietzsche's “last man” or of Kojève's “homogeneous State.”

Since Absolute Knowing is a *Gestalt*, there is no doubt that D. P. Verene (1985, 15–18 etc.) is right that it involves the subject-object structure of consciousness. W. D. Ludwig (1989, 1992) has developed this “unity of incommensurables” thesis systematically; compare also K. Düsing (1976, 205–208). But it is also clear that the “pure thinking” of the *Logic* is an “absolute knowing” that is no longer *supposed* to have this structure. The appalling diffi-

culty of writing about Hegel's *Logic* in the normal language of "consciousness" springs from this. Logic involves an "angelic" intelligence—but we are only "fallen angels" at best. We understand one another logically only when that is our *paramount* concern. W. Maker is mistaken when he says that the "absolute knowing" of the *Phenomenology* is "no knowing at all" (1981, 390); but right when he says that "consciousness is not an absolute limit beyond which reason cannot extend" (395). If he and Ludwig think that they disagree, they are both mistaken. (Maker [1990] has given a clear account of the purely negative conception of the purpose of the *Phenomenology*. This is very acutely criticized by G. Vassilacopoulos (Ph.D. thesis, 1993, 88–89, n. 4).

21. Compare the interpretation given by G. Varnier (1990, 292–293). There is an interesting debate in *The Owl of Minerva* between S. Houlgate (1991 and 1993) and J. C. Flay (1993) about "Hegel's metaphysics" (and whether he is a "refined Kantian," with a problematical "thing in itself" in the background). It appears to me that Houlgate must (logically) be in the right on this issue, because the transition to the *Logic* involves a complete sublation of the "standpoint of consciousness" (not the qualified maintenance of it that Flay appears to me to be ascribing to Hegel). As I see it, Houlgate ought to reply to Flay, that the supposed "possibility" of a being that is beyond our capacity of thought is a *meaningless* possibility, a thought that *fails*; and what is *meaningless* cannot *be* (because the assertion that it *is* is meaningless likewise). But I think also that Flay's claim that "the categories of Hegel's metaphysics . . . belong to, derive from, and ground the *relata* themselves *qua relata*, whether these be thoughts alone, things alone, or thoughts and things" (1993, 152) is valid.

22. *G.W.* VIII, 263, lines 16–17; Rauch, 160. Philosophy is the "for itself" aspect of the "Spirit that subsists in and for itself" distinguished into its moments; so Plato's *Republic* is the proper place to look for the "distinct moment" of the knowing of Spirit as "Substance." This is confirmed by Hegel's insistence, in the Real Philosophy of 1805, that it is not to be read as a Utopia. I am not sure exactly what Hegel meant to say in his marginal note in *G.W.* VIII, 263, lines 25–26: nicht die platonische Republik ist nicht ausführbar . . . But his *main* point—in this addition made while he was writing the *Phenomenology*—was that Plato's *Republic* was *not* an abstract ideal (of the Fichtean type) but a comprehension of the inner logic of the actual *polis* ("den Staat seiner Zeit in seinem Innern gefasst"). So if we read: "<wir haben> nicht die platonische Republik, ist nicht ausführbar u.s.w." the whole addition makes sense as an exposition of this thesis. Other hypotheses are possible—perhaps the first *nicht* should have been crossed out. But I am certain, at least, that Rauch's interpretation (160n.) is mistaken.)

23. For a valuable commentary on this dictum in the context of Hegel's "system" see John Burbidge (1973 or 1992, chapter VIII). As the eternal presence of what "has been," time is the sphere of *essence*—cf. J. C. Flay (1989) who brings a number of important passages from Hegel's other works together in an insight-producing way. M. B. Okrent (1980, 1982) is also helpful. P. C. Rasmussen (1972) is too much influenced by Findlay. (See further *Pilgrimage* pp. 246ff.

24. The deductive (predictive) control of experience is the *result* of our *inductive* experience—cf. P. A. Simpson (forthcoming, chapter 5, section 2, especially the reference to Marx at note 17). Joan Stambaugh (1974, 89) has articulated why many interpreters—Loewenberg, Marx and herself for three examples—find the arrival of "*absolute knowing*" as the "comprehension of time" so incomprehensible. She thinks that Hegel must *stop* time in order to comprehend it. The concept of "*absolute teleology*" in the *Logic* should teach her why this not merely unnecessary, but absurd (in Hegel's view as well as hers). I agree with

M. E. Williams (1970, 161) that the sublation of time is identical with its *structuring*; but since I take “absolute teleology” to be its *structure* I do not think we ought to say that the comprehended concept contains “no *nisus* towards futurity” (compare the commentary on par. 787 above).

25. As the note in the Critical Edition shows, the formulas Hegel quotes here come from the thought-context of the Moral World-View. It is the “experience” of the Beautiful Soul that is at once the most comprehensive and the most subjective.

26. Hegel uses *Gemeine* not *Gemeinde*, apparently to distinguish now the *absolutely* spiritual community, as opposed to the “actual world” of political authority. He also uses *Realisierung* instead of *Wirklichkeit* for the final transformation of the religious *Vorstellung* into the Concept. *Wirklichkeit* is the finite actuality created (or affected) by what we *do*. (Compare chapter 12, note 29 above.)

27. See Hegel’s *Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vorlesungen*, Band 9, 1–16, 20–32 for a fuller account of his view of early Medieval Christianity—Brown, III, 17–35, 40–51. (Note that it is “the Lordship of the Son.”)

28. Thus the “Lichtwesen” does *become* Yahweh. But only when he is *identified* with the Nature that he (Mosaicly speaking) “creates”; and even if we accept Spinoza’s distinction between N. *naturans* and N. *naturata* as a logical concept of “creation,” Yahweh cannot be identified as the *primitive* shape of the “Light Essence.”

29. Novalis, fragment. By treating Spinoza’s thought as the resurgence of “the Light-Essence” Hegel does justice both to Spinoza’s “god-intoxication” and to the general accusation of “atheism.” His turning away from the theology of Incarnation back to the conception of God as universally (or “immediately”) all in all, necessarily has both aspects.

Critics of Hegel’s later treatment of Spinoza (like J. B. McMinn, 1959–60, and E. Shmueli, 1970) are for the most part defending an interpretation of Spinoza towards which the younger Hegel was himself more partial—or at least ambivalent. For a moderate—though perhaps too Romantic—mediation of the dispute see R. K. Williamson (1984, 234–249).

30. This both explains, and is confirmed by, his evident presence in the discussion of the “law of Individuality (pars. 304–308) and in “Individuality that is real in and for itself.”

31. Of course, the knowledge of our mortality, the certainty that our own time is limited, makes this “natural.” (On the sublation of time see P.-J. Labarrière [1979 in 1986, 149–157; and 1981 in 1986, 317–334]. D. J. Schmidt [1988, 55–62] also has an interesting discussion of Hegel’s concept of time—and Heidegger’s mistaken critique of it.)

32. As Hegel has remarked a little bit earlier, Spinoza’s “extension” is at least a “pure concept”. It is obvious that this passage in Hegel’s text should be read in the light of his more extended discussions of “schematizing formalism” in the Preface. I have therefore interpreted it in accordance with my exposition of the relevant paragraphs there (pars. 14–16, 50–53). According to my view, Schelling himself is not the target of attack (see H.S. Harris, 1987 and 1989). But it makes little difference to the philosophical argument whether I am right, or whether *Schelling’s* Identity Philosophy is attacked here (not just Reinhold and Bardili on one side, and epigones of Schelling like Görres and Wagner on the other). The interesting thing on either view is that Schelling is given no credit here for any positive contribution. The *Phenomenology* is presented as the concrete fulfilment of Fichte’s “*Ich = Ich*.” (In my own view, the sense of having committed an injustice to the “Identity Philosophy” *here*—because of the urgent need to finish his manuscript—was one of the motives that caused Hegel to return to the whole topic at his leisure in the *Preface*. I regard the opening sentence

of par. 14 as crucial. But it remains true, when all is said and done, that Hegel cannot *specify* what he owes to the Identity Philosophy; after almost ten years he turned away from both Hölderlin and Schelling, back to the problem of “Self-Consciousness” as he initially posed it—in *Fichtean* terms—in the *First System-Programme* [end of 1796].)

33. Compare the first Lexicon article about Hegel, in which the biographical data almost certainly stem from Hegel himself (*Konversations-Lexicon* of 1824; see F. Nicolin, 1972). This is cited and discussed in the Introduction to *Pilgrimage*.

34. The logical sequence of “Unhappy Consciousness,” “Faith,” “Self-Conscious Religion” is, in all probability, a lineal descendant, and concrete “result” of this general theory.

35. I have argued for this view in more detail in H. S. Harris (1983 and 1990).

36. Compare Rosenkranz, 11 (and *Toward the Sunlight*, 47–48, 56).

37. Compare *Night Thoughts*, chapter I.

38. Hiroshima is to some extent comprehensible within the mantle of “forgiveness,” since we might say, as Jesus did, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” But if we are willing to say that, it only makes the full horror of Nagasaki more evident.

39. This seems to be the best place to say something briefly about two “logical architectonic” views of the *Phenomenology*. J. Heinrichs (1974) took the *Logic and Metaphysics* of 1804/1805 for the logical skeleton of the book. This view (which becomes implausible already by the time we reach Stoicism) breaks down completely at the great *ricorso* of chapter VII. Here Heinrichs has to import logical ideas that Hegel developed (or at least expressed) only much later. (For a brief refutation of Heinrich’s thesis see J. H. Trede, 1976.)

Retrojection of the later logic is the fundamental fault of C.-A. Scheier (1980) also. In his cathedral of thought, chapter VII falls into place nicely. But, gothic though it may be, the *Phenomenology* is not a cathedral. It is, first of all, a serial development. After we have appreciated the logic of the series properly, we can begin to examine it architectonically; and when we do that, we should either begin from the structure that the author imposed on it (in his belated Table of Contents), or else admit that we are uncovering something that he did not know was there.

40. Thus when some part of its discursive course needs to be revised—as for instance the early modern concept of “causality” has to be radically transformed in order to deal with relativity—what is absolutely necessary is that we must be able to find our way logically backwards and forwards between the older concept and the newer one (just as quantum mechanics can exhibit Newtonian mechanics as a special case). It is certain that Hegel did not envisage any actual “sublation” of the celestial and finite mechanics of Newton. He thought of Nature as “the Unchangeable” in the sempiternal Aristotelian sense. But he knew both that the concept had *evolved* in our Western tradition, and that in other cultural traditions there were different “Ideas of Nature.” So he framed his logical theory to comprehend these evolutionary differences. Moreover, he knew that his own “comprehension” of Nature was not perfect even with respect to the science of his own time. So he actually *expected* some revisions in his logic. See the *Science of Logic*, *G.W.* XXI, 38, lines 17–25; Miller, 54; compare *G.W.* XI, 25, lines 18–26 for the text of 1812.

41. I dislike arguing about the status of Hegelian logic as “ontology” (because that term creates in me the subjective impression of eternal stasis rather than motion). But I must agree with writers like A. White (1983) and S. Houlgate (1991) that the *Logic* should be regarded as Hegel’s “ontology” (cf. J. H. Trede, 1975). What R. D. Winfield’s denial of its status as ontology (e.g. 1989, 137) signifies I have not understood. But since I agree with

Houlgate's view (1986, chapters 4 and 5) that Hegel is a *critic* of "metaphysics," it is quite possible that all three of us would agree if we did achieve understanding.

42. While he was writing the *Science of Logic*, Hegel was regularly teaching "logic" to students of fifteen or sixteen at Nuremberg. This was the apprenticeship from which the effort to write the *Encyclopedia Logic* sprang.

43. Even in the *Science of Logic* we find Hegel speaking of logic as "the thought of God before the creation of Nature and the finite Spirit" (*G.W.* XI, 21, lines 18–21 or XXI, 34, lines 7–11; Miller, 50). At that point he was presupposing that his serious audience would study the *Phenomenology*, so that they would know what "God" and "creation" refer to in philosophically comprehended experience; and how the "Before" of the Concept is just as much within the "Now" of experience, as the Now is within the Before.

When he told his *Encyclopedia* audience that every logical Concept in its simplicity was a name of God, on the other hand, he was helping them to envisage the project in the best terms available to them at the beginning. He cannot have felt confident that they would understand what was happening to "God" when they reached "Absolute Knowledge" at the end; and he must have regarded the inevitable emergence of a *theological* interpretation of his "System" with resignation. In his eyes it was, at least, a great step forward from the Enlightened nominalist view of the world; and as long as the thesis of "Absolute Knowledge" was grasped *at all*, there was the logical certainty that the "theology" would *eventually* transform itself into a properly conceptual form. For what seems to me an appropriate contemporary reading of Hegel's Logic, see J. McCumber (1993).

44. My concern here is only with the *logical* error of the "Left" (for historical—i.e. *phenomenological*—justice to them see J. E. Toews [1981], H. Mah [1990] and M. Hardimon [1992 and 1994]). Through the Hegelian theory of experience, we comprehend why we cannot help being moral agents; and it is at least plausible to argue that when we comprehend "substantial subjectivity" our moral perspective becomes a socially responsible one—that is to say, self-conscious *solidarity* becomes a fundamental moral value for us. We are then bound to want to articulate that solidarity as *logically* as possible (that is, with as much communally rational "self-consciousness" as we can achieve). But we must never call this logical spirit "Science" while it is in action, since it is axiomatic that "action" involves a conflict of *ideologies*. Our own "absolute right of self-consciousness" is bound to be just as ideological as the "divine right" of the Substance that opposes it. It is just one side of the *Gegensatz* that it has recognized and defined. Only the reconciliation, when it comes, will be (potentially, at least) observably "real"; and it will not be exactly what our alienated pure insight anticipates when it does arrive. (One of the main uses of "absolute knowledge" is precisely to teach us what sorts of knowledge are *not* "absolute"—and to provide us with a way of showing just *how* and *why* they are not absolute.)

45. Croce's Philosophy of Spirit includes its own "Logic," of course. But it is not a logical theory of the right kind.

46. But this did not bother Findlay, for example, who greeted Rosen's critique with friendly appreciation, as a kind of insight of the blind (see J. N. Findlay, 1983); and Bosanquet was not the only "Hegelian" of an older generation who thought that a moment of vision, not unlike a "conversion experience," was necessary in order to "become a Hegelian." To me, this whole attitude appears quite absurdly "un-Hegelian." But who made *me* the judge?

47. Reflecting upon the logical relation of the *Lichtwesen* to Spinoza's concept of Substance (in the context of the thesis that every Religion expresses *all* moments of the Spirit) could

easily have made him realize that making a *historical* parallel between Religion and philosophy would involve an intellectual arrogance equal to that of Lucifer. (Also, one does not have to think about Religion very long, to realize that there are important religions that do not belong to the phenomenology of the Manifest Religion; similarly anyone who begins to do Logic soon realizes that no purely rational limit can be set to the dialectical evolution of the Concept in its detailed extension.)

48. The best constructive attempt to deal with this problem is in the book and articles of H. F. Fulda (1965, 1973). But I agree mainly with O. Pöggeler's sceptical criticisms of Fulda's thesis. See Pöggeler (1973) and Fulda (1973).

49. Thus the *Phenomenology* is the "first science" by any criterion; and the *Logic* is properly the *mediating* science between "consciousness" and "real philosophy." But Hegel would say that "Logic" is "first"; and the arguments of W. Rowe (1986) show how the circularity of "Science" can be used to deny or qualify all of these claims.

50. Compare the Real Philosophy of 1805, *G.W.* VIII, 3–10. (It seems to me that the contention of K. Schrader-Klebert [1969, 12] that Hegel's beginning does not still stand within the system is plainly mistaken.)

51. This is not a "presupposition" that violates Hegel's programmatic intention to produce a "presuppositionless" philosophy. It only says that philosophy is the theory of *life* as an intelligible whole. The theory involves organizing all of the "praxical presuppositions" of life (Flay, 1984) into a self-critical system. Life itself is an open infinite river (not a "whole"). So Flay's criticism of M. Leske (1978) is correct; and the *Phenomenology* shows why it *does* make sense to keep on insisting on the many ways in which life does not "make sense" (*pace* Flay's quote from *Toward the Sunlight*—see 1984, 410, n. 7).

52. E. E. Harris (1982, 135–136) points out that *Gestalt der Erinnerung* can just as easily be genitive as dative; and that in that case, a traditionally theistic interpretation is possible. I am certain that the interpretation is upside down, but there is no denying the grammatical point.

53. Surely Hegel means us to read this proto-Heideggerian hyphenation in a punning fashion: it is the "He-Innering" of the Logos that is the *creation process* of the Spirit. For the fulfilment of the transition from the all-creative Logos to the Spirit, *our* self-conscious remembering is crucially necessary. Compare, in this connection, the comment of T. W. Adorno (1993, 56) cited in *Pilgrimage*, chapter 1, note 136. If this interpretation of Hegelian "recollection" is correct then D. Jähnig (1971, 69) is wrong to say that Hegel's system results in an "eschatological-teleological nihilism" which sets aside actual history and "sacrifices the human present." Various prophetic *misinterpretations* of the Romantic "philosophies of history" have contributed to "sacrifices" of this type in our century. But Hegel's *Phenomenology* (at least) is innocent.

54. T. Bahti (1992, 80–91) wants us to see *Erinnerung* on the analogy of a community that eats and digests its fellows. But spiritual community is not like that at all. As resting upon a forgiveness relation, Hegelian recollection expresses the philosophical meaning of "resurrection into eternal life." One may wish to claim that the metaphor is misleading in some way. But one should not misrepresent what is claimed. Recollection "lets things *be*." (There are sound *logical* reasons why Hegel's brief discussion of cannibalism concentrates on the moral *act* of eating a fellow-human, and ignores the natural process of digestion.)

55. Or more adequately in the last part of the "System of Science" envisaged as the proper complement of the *Phenomenology*, but never completely prepared for the printer. Only

"Absolute Spirit" was fully worked out (in the great lecture series on Art, Religion and Philosophy).

56. The transition is well summed up by R. Norman (1976, 132): "History . . . henceforth simply coincides with the fully self-conscious activity of human reason." (It is the *content* of our own "experience" that we repossess—and that keeps growing. But we don't have to go round the circle again and again. We *may* read Hegel again—R. B. Haldane is reputed to have read the *Phenomenology* forty times—but we are never trapped in the system, as Feuerbach jokingly suggested one could be [1972, 62]. The problem raised by the fact that the "need of philosophy" continues—and so the procession must go on—is well aired by H. Kimmeler [1968/1969 = 1990, 301–312].)

It is the *History of Philosophy* lectures, not the *Philosophy of World History* lectures that are evoked in this last paragraph. All attempts at "World History" are *philosophical*, in the sense that we are bound to ask "Why is the author writing this?" It is no surprise to learn that Rosalind Toynbee called her husband's mammoth *Study of History* "the nonsense-book." Hegel's *Philosophy of World History* had already become a terrifying example of a "nonsense book" when Toynbee began. Within the system, it had a function, and it performed it adequately (for its time). Outside of that context it is absurd (and it always was so). The *Phenomenology* shows us why each of us must "recollect" our world, as well as we can, if we want to be *humanly* self-conscious. But (*pace* C. Butler, 1989) we shall not be helped by a more Hegelian Toynbee.

57. For an interesting discussion of Hegel's earlier use of this image see S. Crites (1982). Ernst Bloch offers a humanistic translation, calling this climax "a 'panhistorical harvest festival.'" The lives of living humans are the grapes that have been pressed for the wine. A. Heller avoids both the "tragic" and the "divinely comic" view, saying that "Hegel writes traditional novels. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* ends, after all, with the consummation of the marriage between the Absolute Spirit and History" (A. Heller, 1993, 67).

58. E.-D. Yon (1976, 553) speaks of the disclosing revelation of Substance which *conceals* its selfhood (par. 801) as a "return to the being-there that is immediate." But ordinary sense-certainty has the same aspect when we interpret it within the concept of "absolute knowing." For now the "whole" which was present in consciousness, though uncomprehended (par. 801) has been conceptually comprehended. (Cf. also D. E. Christensen, 1974.)

59. "The *Phenomenology* is, as M. H. Abrams has quite properly pointed out, a secular theodicy in which every truth the Notion loses along the way is recovered in the final accounting" (S. W. Melville, 1986, 42—cf. M. H. Abrams, 1971, 225–237). For *Unphilosophie* see the Introduction to the *Critical Journal* (G.W. IV, 119–120, 127–128; Di Giovanni and Harris, 276–278, 285–286).

60. "Common sense" can be "instinctively rational" in the post-religious community, just as it was earlier. Critics like G. P. Cave (1979, 26–29) fail to take account of the fact that speculative philosophy is the "being-for-itself" of the *community*. One can be a member of the community without being a *philosopher*.

61. The impossibility of war in modern circumstances means that Hegelians are now bound to think *against* Hegel himself on this issue—cf. E. E. Harris (1980). But against *him*, Hegelians must argue that "thinking for the future" is not "philosophy." Properly speaking, we have to leave the world to solve its own problems. We must not speak confidently of "sovereign power" (or of a *Weltgericht*). The Hegelian theory will continue to be a radical critique of utopian dreams like that of Dante (cf. H. Paolucci, 1980) and J. C. Flay (1980).

W. Sünkel (1988) argues that the seed of salvation is in economic developments, and the formation of supra-national blocs, rather than in the advance of international law. But why not in both together? (He is on good Hegelian ground in denying that organizations like the United Nations alone can save us.)

T. F. Geraets (1981/1982, 201) says that Hegel's talk of the "Völkergeist" is now "pure mythology, worse even than the cosmopolitanism or the world-republic which Hegel cast out as 'abstraction.'" Both categories are mythic certainly. But they are not equally "abstract." *Concreteness* is not a matter of "better" and "worse."

62. According to my interpretation what Flay calls the "single referent for totality and intelligibility" (1984, 254 etc.) either *logically must* exist or *logically cannot* exist (depending on how one interprets the reference). If the reference is to an intelligible *totality of categories* for the interpretation of life then it *must* exist because it has demonstrated itself in the *circle* of experience; if, on the other hand, the reference is to a supposedly real totality of life itself, then it *cannot* exist. The only way human life could be "totalized" would be through the death of the race as a whole. That is quite possible, but it simply abolishes the positive sense of "the world" (as a totality of *sense-making*) and leaves us to contemplate the *negative* identity of "intelligibility and totality." That outcome shows us the ultimate meaning both of the proposition "life as a whole does not make sense" and of the proposition that "it does not make sense to assert that the world may not ultimately make sense." Philosophical logic leaves us with both propositions and does not decide between them. Both of them "make perfect sense" (compare note 51 above).

Ritornello

1. *In Vino Veritas: Truth in the Round of Life*

Throughout this commentary we have concentrated upon the material concept of “Experience.” The principal object has been to see how far the “appearing of Science” can be followed as a logical process. According to Hegel’s programme, the *actual* concept of human “experience” can be shown to unfold (or develop) in a sequence of materially embodied *shapes*. By returning finally to its own natural attitude (and its spontaneous beginning in sense-consciousness), the final shape of Absolute Knowing consciously repossesses all of the previous “shapes.” The whole series is supposed to be cumulative. Each link presupposes the earlier ones; but as a separate “link” it is quite unaware of this. Only the final Shape—the Absolute Knowing that *we* have been from the first, and which has finally come to perfect maturity in our coincidence with the evolving consciousness that we have been observing—is different from the earlier links in its recollective awareness of all the stages by which it has come to be.

The natural and necessary task that imposes itself upon us in conclusion, therefore, is the *conceptual* recollection of what the earlier shapes forgot. The shape of Absolute Knowing is the self-knowledge of the Concept of Human Experience itself, the recollection of all of its developmental phases as logical moments in the development of the Concept. As *recollective* this final phase of Experience is itself a “shape of Consciousness”; indeed, it is the richest of all the shapes. It is the whole dance of life (with the music of the spheres for its orchestral background). Nothing now is forgotten, omitted or neglected. But this cumulative “shape” is different from all of the dancing shapes in the ring, precisely because it remembers them all, whereas their individuality depends upon their forgetting one another. We can think of this last shape as being “in the ring” only if we think of it as being “in the centre”; and that means that as a dancing shape it is not “in the ring” at all. Its motion can only be a simple spinning revolution on the spot.

This is the best way of understanding the paradox that Absolute Knowing both is, and is not, a “shape of consciousness.” The philosopher is a conscious being like any other; but her conscious concern is to get out of the round of life, and into the still centre. This is the place where everything can be seen and remembered—not forgotten necessarily, as one must forget the steps of an old dance when one

assumes a new role in the great round dance itself. In the centre we have spun gently watching each dancer go through the whole cycle of a life-performance, before we stood still for a moment to let the next one come into view.

But now even our self-inhibiting spin is over. The whole circle have passed before us, and we are back with the first one—the never-forgotten shape of the human body and its senses which every dancer has, and which we cannot lose even in our new stillness, sitting with closed eyes, and the dance of life all forgotten. Now we do not want to be in the dance at all, even as the observer who sees it all, and does not have to concentrate her attention on being one part of it. For now we know that we have managed to be the unforgetting observer in the centre, because from first to last we have been the *Concept* of the whole. Always we have been the purely intellectual awareness of a Being that is no longer sensible, a Being that already *has been* in its sensible mode of reality, and *now essentially is*. Thus far we have let it be as “experience”; that is to say we have *resurrected* it in our imagination. But now we want to know what *we* have been doing as pure intelligence; and with that objective we cease to be a “shape of consciousness” altogether. We are now the thinking Concept of Self-Consciousness aiming to say what it essentially is (in a strictly conceptual, or logical, language).

In the first sentence of his Introduction Hegel laid it down that the *Sache selbst* for the philosopher is “the actual cognition of what in truth is” (par. 73). Thus the thinking Concept of Human Experience, which we have become, is for Hegel “what in truth is.” The form of words itself tells us that the concept of Truth which we are seeking, is the “ontological truth,” the truth about “what is ultimately real.” But the result of our quest is paradoxical, because our actual cognition turns out to be “what really is.” The ontological quest has turned itself into the project of forming a comprehensive concept of *Experience*. If we want to understand what has happened, it will be best to examine the whole course of the argument as an inquiry into the *experience* of the concept of “truth,” without the prejudice created by philosophical modifiers. The driving desire of our progress has been to formulate the concept within which our lives can be *rightly* oriented, organized, and lived. This is a desire that we *do* have; and we need to know “what truly *is*” for the sake of it; so the concept of “truth as correctness”—which Hegel dismisses rather contemptuously when he presents his *Logic* to students—acquires, in this formulation of the problem, the focal position to which its uncontroversial character in the world of commonsense experience entitles it.

Let us reexamine our odyssey now therefore *formally* as a quest for the concept of “the truth of life.” What have we learned about the logical structure of our world, and of our experience in it? We began by trying to formulate the concept of “the world” itself, as the fixed stage or environment of all “experience”; and, of course, we began with the concept of “the world” that has to be there, already formed and readily available in our minds, before we can even conceive the project of formulating it “logically.” Critical reflection tells us, at once, that this unreflective concept itself is (and must be) the result of a historical formation-process; historical knowledge—or even the “unprejudiced” observation of some fundamental

disagreements with our neighbors—can soon teach us that the “world-concept” *has been* different in earlier times, and *can be* different in other places. We made a conscious decision not to worry about that, but to begin where we actually find ourselves, and go on with the project of formulating our world-concept, as our logical capacity itself appeared to dictate. What we were seeking clarified itself for us as we went; but the process of clarification could only come to a conclusion that was self-certifying as final, because the philosophical *form* of that final concept was present in our world from the first. We *knew* that it was there; but, as formulated by Fichte and Schelling, it appeared to be in conflict not only with all ordinary interpretations of “experience,” but with itself. And the ideal life of the Beautiful Soul—which proved to be the key to a logical reconciliation of the conflict—appeared to be nothing more than a subjective Utopian fantasy.

In the course of our logical journey everything came together; and the apparent contradictions did not disappear; but they were mediated out of the status of simple “realities” into the overall structure of a logical system of appearance. The “truth of life” turned out to have many “shapes”; but in the end, we have found that the speculative interpretation of Kant developed by Fichte and Schelling provides a conceptual framework for making harmonious sense of them all; and we ourselves, by incorporating the ontological and theological tradition for which the Beautiful Soul formed the climax, have given that speculative theory a completely new turn as a “philosophy of experience.”

We began with the world-concept of Frau Bauer. Here we have “truths” of the most familiar sort: “There are six cows in Frau Bauer’s cowyard, among which she says that Lisa is the best.” But already the last part of the sentence has a debatable truth-status. Her husband Georg (his name, like our philosopher’s, only means Bauer over again) may have plausible grounds for arguing that the “spotted one” is really better; so this world of truth is really in the eye of the beholder. Still, the *number* of cows we can determine beyond debate by pointing at them one by one. But then, not only is much that is of the first importance left indefinite by this pointing criterion; what is absolutely certain is that nothing in Frau Bauer’s world that can be pointed at, is one of its abidingly “substantial” components. Day and Night, Sun, Moon and stars, the cycle of the seasons, these are the “substances” that can be pointed out. The cows, their owners, and the children who drive them to pasture will die; and (at best) only their place in the Earth will then be pointed at.

But there will still be cows, farmers and children. The *kinds* are substantial surely? When we take the world to be constituted by “kinds,” the cycling alternation of day and night takes on a deeper significance. For now we are forced to recognize that what “truly is in itself,” only is “for another.” A simple “substance” such as salt arises from the interaction of two seeming things that are not “things” at all; and it is only cognitively recognized in a process of interaction in which it is dissolved. Experience reveals how the world of “things” is really the manifestation of a balance of “forces,” which are in themselves quite imperceptible. The whole world of Perception is only a middle term between this Being-in-itself, and the essential order of natural law which exists for our thought. And even in this world-

view, the activity of interpreting that brings this thought-world to consciousness, is what is still left out; when we relate the two worlds of perceptual consciousness and thought with an appropriate awareness of the fundamental role of this activity, the truth-concept of the system of "natural necessity" inverts itself. "What truly is," after all, is a free activity which interprets itself as a system of necessary laws.

The story of "Truth as perfect freedom" is long and complex; and there is a difficulty at the very beginning, because what has so far come to birth is "the Infinite," or the Divine Life as an *object*. How our conceptual activity of interpretation can be identical with this infinity of Life is not obvious. The Infinite appears to be what is absolutely *other* than our cognition, what is cut off from us. But we have already come to see in our cognition of it that what we share in is its *life*. So we do not have to pass straight on to the religious level at which that "otherness" is accepted as a simple "fact of consciousness." We can follow the path marked out by our finite participation in the life of the whole. We know that we are somehow the junction-point of finite and infinite life, of infinite and finite consciousness. The modern philosophy of subjectivity has enabled us to comprehend that, as scientific knowers, we live and move within the infinity of the absolute Self. So we can "stand in for the Concept" now, not as the Concept of Nature, but as the Concept of Freedom. We can make a transition that no one before Kant and Fichte could have made; and Schelling's philosophy of Nature is what enables us to make it correctly. We watch the Infinite order of nature differentiate itself into the form of life that is its "instinctive" self-consciousness.

Within this instinctive ordering of the sensibly and perceptibly self-conscious whole, the principle of free understanding is conscious of itself as the *proprietor*. The "world-concept" is now that of *ownership*. The world is what is properly *mine*. Even at the level of Sense-Certainty, this ownership-relation was present. The family and the cows belonged to Frau Bauer. Her world of immediate knowledge belonged to her (and to the neighbors who were hers). But that ownership applied only to the finite "byplay" of her consciousness. In absolute terms she was aware of herself and all her things as "belonging" to an inexorable fate (which she calls "God," but which is not within the range of her truth-criterion). Our newly-emergent Self-Consciousness *owns* everything absolutely; its truth-concept says simply that "the world is mine." (Only upon this interpretation can the "self" be methodically accepted as the "subject" of the total inversion experienced by Understanding.)

This living concept of World-Ownership learns first that Ownership necessarily differentiates itself into the End and the Means. For there to be a *free* Self-Consciousness at all, there must necessarily be two selves who have consciously agreed to share the true Concept of Life between them; and the truth of any such sharing is necessarily finite. The experience of Lordship reveals that it is servitude to the needs of natural life; and the experience of Servitude brings to light the higher freedom involved in the *labor* of self-formation. But that last lesson can only be picked up when the full story of the truth of Lordship has been followed out. First, in Stoicism, we have the reconciliation of ownership with being owned, through a formal retreat into the realm of purely logical thought. As free thinkers we can disassociate

ourselves from the universal lordship of Life. The Sceptic makes a mockery of this escape, by telling us that what we know absolutely in our thought is just that we know nothing. But by what right can he say that, if he admits to being merely a moment in the play of appearance himself? The two-faced Sceptical position can be consistently maintained only by one who admits that we do have the logical knowledge of the Stoic, but adds that precisely that rationally revealed knowledge is what shows us that we are cut off from actual participation in the world of pure thought. We are given over to the lordship of Death, which marks the limit of our finite existence as finite perceivers.

Now the rational religion enters our story for the first time as the key to our liberation as active (or *actual*) Reason. Our truth-concept at this stage has to be provided by our "Faith." Faith tells us that we are *not* finally cut off from the world of true being; our exclusion is only temporary while we are here in the sensible world. The exclusion will end when this life ends, and we know ourselves "even as also we are known." The self-consciousness that lives and interprets its world by this faith, takes the content of it to be a special revelation of the absolute intelligence in the supersensible world "beyond." But it requires no great insight to see that a Stoic intelligence caught in the toils of a Sceptical world-experience, can only account for the total pattern of its life by postulating the separation of the two worlds of intellect and sense. This separation is already a matter of "experience" for the Understanding; so Stoic free thought is the self-conscious Understanding.

For the moment we have the truth-concept of Faith in its self-estranged form. This world and its life belong to the forces of darkness; access to the community of rational freedom in the Beyond comes by penitent self-abnegation here. It is only when the social world has evolved into a community of equal recognition in religion, that the estranged *Vorstellung* of Reason as Divine Authority can be inverted into the happy consciousness of the Reason that is one with God.

Unlike Faith's recovery of "objectivity" (through social *Bildung*), Reason appears by a logical transformation of the singular consciousness. The liberated shape of Reason must operate at first as the self-conscious Understanding; it *observes* the world as a rational substance. But the living organism in which it recognizes itself now as an instinctive process of self-realization, remains no more than the accidental offspring of a universal life-force that has no fathomable purpose; and when the observing consciousness is turned, by this experience, back towards an introspective observation of its own activity, it is faced by a spectacle of the same kind: a disappearing identity of opposites on one side, and a completely chaotic and contingent multiplicity of "faculties" on the other. In observing the relationship between this inner world and the instinctively self-maintaining organism, Reason is forced to recognize the folly of "operating as Understanding." It makes this discovery when it tries to observe itself as an "object of consciousness."

The Understanding takes "what is" to be "the order of Nature." Observing Reason takes "the order of Nature" to be "itself." But when it tries to "read itself" in its own natural embodiment it has to accept the fact that it is *not* an "observer" but a free activity of self-expression in the world.

The logical middle between the Understanding and Observing Reason was the Unhappy Consciousness, which took “what is” to be “the Will of God.” Reason recognizes its own identity with that Divine Will, and so overcomes its “estrangement” from “what truly is.” But the identification is in the activity of theoretical cognition only; the “Will of God” as *will*, becomes a vanishing “unknown.” When Reason identifies itself as the active will that makes its own world it faces a similar difficulty. Now it cannot *say* “what is” at all, because as a subjective activity it is itself nothing substantial. But it is now in a position to *discover* the world that truly is its own substantial reality.

At this point again, just as when we made the transition to “Self-Conscious Life,” we have to be able to recognize the “world-object” of our own cognitive experience. Subjective Reason only encounters the world that it has made, the world that truly is its own objectivity, as a harsh and alien system of “Necessity.” This Necessity brings its desire to “recognize itself in its own other” to tragic defeat; it is actually Reason’s own objective reality as a self-generating and self-maintaining community. When Reason projects its own *ideal* of the community, in opposition to that real community which it takes to be only “natural,” the problem of “what is” as the identity of substantial reality with subjectivity, is for the first time posed in logically reconcilable terms. We now have a conflict between two interpretations of one and the same world. There is the “apparent” world of our “social nature,” the world as it actually is, and the “true” world of Reason, the world subjectified, or as it *ought* to be. From now onwards the problem will be to remove the contradiction, and to make these two worlds coincide.

This appears easier than it is. It seems that we need only to recognize ourselves as the rational beings that we are, and the social world as the real substance that we both constitute and serve. Each of us has a particular function in the economy of the rational substance; but as a concept of the human truth, this will not do, because it brings us back to the universal servitude of life. We are not now serving the needs of the natural masters; but in our rational freedom we are each serving our own needs, and our privately selfish desires. The “common good” is a humbug; and when we abstract from our private lives, and try to express the good of the community as a whole, we find first that we cannot do it; and secondly that we do not need to. It expresses *itself*, and it always has done so for everybody, in the feelings that we call “natural.” In those “natural” feelings of community members, the voice of universal Reason is heard as a *law*. “What ought to be” does coincide with “what actually is” after all; that was known a long time ago.

At this stage the Reason that came forth from the “experience of consciousness” as a principle of subjective freedom, discovers that it has a history as a Substance. The rational individual has completed her history as a “shape of consciousness”; but she ends by returning into that communal substance of Reason which we now recognize to be the substantial objective reality of “the Spirit.” “What truly is in itself” is what is known to be true by and for that substantial communal consciousness (or Spirit). It is “the Spirit” that both *truly is* and *truly knows*.

It turns out, however, that the natural feeling that allots “private life” to women

and “public life” to men, cannot resolve the problem of the “common good” being a humbug. This is because a community of natural *feeling* must of necessity be a finite “thing” in a world of similar things; and the relation of absolute hostility is essential to the maintenance of an immediately felt identification with the public good. Under the stress of this hostility, however, immediate feeling is bound to run to excess, and do violence to the universal feeling of identification with life (the still unconscious shape of the universal community of Reason). When this happens the self-assertive impulse of singular rational freedom can emerge *anywhere* in the community; so there are sure to be radical conflicts between the voluntary loyalties of rational commitment, and the instinctive loyalties of natural kinship. The aesthetically rational consciousness of the community of rationalized feeling presents this logical truth as a conflict between the sexes, but from our absolutely conceptual standpoint we do not need that *Vorstellung*.

Just as the world of perceptual things had to give way to the world of the Understanding, so the world of spiritual things must give way to the world of Reason. This world-shape begins with the truth-concept of a community of singular rational beings defined by the Law. What “truly is” is the Law of Reason; but the dialectic of “what ought to be” with “what is” takes over, because the actual law is only a preponderance of force. Substantial Reason as a universal Concept has the Understanding as its first moment; its evolution to maturity takes place in the self-estranged world of Faith and Reason. Here the Lordship and Bondage relationship of the social substance is worked out. Singular subjects achieve the freedom of spiritual existence, by making themselves over in the service of God. what they gradually create is the actual world of singular Reason in which the “common good” has been seen to be a humbug; and their embodied Rational Category is only the beneficent distributor of wealth. The “truth” of their world is the universal contradiction uttered by Young Rameau. When the estranged shape of their truth is overcome, the gospel of universal Utility is proclaimed, and the identity of God and Nature (Matter) is recognized. But Reason as the World’s Lawgiver is only able to condemn all individual reasoners to death.

The French Revolution is the dawn of our modern “truth of life.” Objective Spirit now passes through its “critical” phase as the “Rational Test of Laws.” In seeking to identify the human truth as the Law of Moral Duty, we discover that the “first relationship” of the Unhappy Consciousness is logically impossible: there cannot *be* a morally rational Divine Judge. Reason, being identical with the freedom of self-realization, cannot operate authoritatively. Thus when we reach the standpoint of Conscience, we have already implicitly sublated the objective substantiality of Spirit as Law.

The final syllogism of Objective Spirit brings us to *social subjectivity* as the Concept in which the opposition of substantial reality and subjective cognition is finally mediated. In the passively Beautiful Soul, the singular Law of the Heart realizes itself as a world; but now, too, because the Holy Moral Will is logically impossible, the conflict of the two successfully separated worlds has to be logically resolved in the universal graciousness of the Spirit: the Law of the Heart becomes the universal

duty of Forgiveness. The mediator in the original *Vorstellung* of Reason as an alien authority, is now recognized to be the divine agency within and between the rational agent and the rational observer universally. These two (not the Lord and the Serf) are the "sides" of Self-Consciousness in the community of *equal* recognition. Every one of us is necessarily "We" as the observer of what she does, and "I" as the agent; and God is the universal Logos of the forgiveness that the sides must exchange.

In this way we come to understand, at last, that "God," the substantial essence of "what is in truth," is simply the community's name for the social subjectivity of our human Reason itself, projected as an "object of consciousness" in the mode of thoughtful *Vorstellung*. What "God" *represents* is ourselves as a universal community in our environment as a totality. "His" knowledge of us is identical with our knowledge of Him, because both are identical with our knowledge of ourselves as a substantial community of individuals.¹

The "experience" of Religion gives this formal Concept its content. We have only been able to formulate the Concept in the first place because the crucial stages of the phenomenology of the religion in which "God became man" and revealed his Will "that all men should be saved" have already taken their place in the sequence of our recollections; so there is no point in going through the truth-concepts of Religion abstractly here. Religion shows us how (at the level of the *community* of cognition) the stages of simple Consciousness appear as the first stages in a genuinely historical sequence; and how "Life" is a separate *Gestalt* from the Understanding even though it is difficult (if not impossible) to envisage it as a singular "*Gestalt* of Consciousness." But because *every* religion incorporates all the moments of experience (more or less distinctly articulated, and not "forgotten" or "sublated") it is invidious to reduce any religious consciousness to a uniquely determinate truth-concept.

Doing that actually violates the absoluteness of the forgiveness-concept upon which our own procedure of neutral observation rests. In order to conceive the absolute community of human experience, we must forgive the necessary and inevitable "finitude" of the singular "shapes"; and by the same token we ought not to thrust finite determinations upon the shapes that are themselves implicitly "infinite." On the contrary, the multiplicity of "living" religions provides us with a vivid paradigm of how the experiential science of truth-concepts can actually have practical value. It provides both a way of conceptualizing our cultural differences, and the first step in the process of resolving or reconciling them.

We must not expect too much, of course. The principal virtue of Hegel's science in its practical bearing is negative. It shows us why disagreement and conflict are bound to persist, and how creatively imaginative the task of conceptual reconciliation is bound to be even when the will is there. In the sphere of "objective Spirit" (i.e. the sphere of "Law" in all its forms, positive, natural and moral) disagreements are formulated in terms of conflicting "rights"; but quite apart from conflicts between levels of social life (e.g. family and city) Hegel's analysis of the concept of justice (par. 430) shows why a consistent and universally recognized system of "rights" is impossible. So in our dealings with socially contentious questions such

as abortion (for instance) we are doomed to go on making compromises that satisfy neither side, unless and until the conflicting attitudes move towards reconciliation at the immediate level of feeling (or “insight”).

To a cultured moral disposition these supposedly useful “applications” may appear to be elementary common sense. That is what the theory itself predicts, and that is what is desirable. But for those committed “religiously” (or at the level of the ethical identity of “character”) it will not be so; for them, the science can only lay out the conditions for understanding (either mutually or on the part of the observer). It is only in historical comprehension that the rule of “forgiveness” can be universally applied. The “Science” of experience is ultimately for the self-enjoyment of the universal self in its “essential” community.

2. *Is the Science of Experience a Proper “Science”?*

When Hegel sent his new-printed book to Schelling in May 1807 he spoke of it as the “first part” of the system, which was “properly the Introduction.”² This is to be understood in the general context of the “absolute idealist” position according to which the “first and last thing,” the “Thing itself,” is a real identity of Being and Thinking within which everything finite is comprehended. If we take the “Thing itself” to be what is first, then the *Phenomenology* must *properly* be the *introduction* to philosophy and only that; it leads us up to the right understanding of how our finite experience lives and moves in that absolute identity, and there it stops. To be a logically convincing *introduction* was its designated function in the economy of the Absolute Identity, which Hegel and Schelling had been expounding and defending together for six and a half years. It was a marriage of the logical and the historical approaches that Hegel had tried over the years. Having completed it, Hegel was himself ready to present the system of Absolute Knowledge. Serious students of philosophy would now be able to understand what he and Schelling were doing. The Absolute was no longer being “shot from a pistol”; and those who wanted to “know” it need not be sent to the asylum.

According to the argument of the book, the absolute standpoint of “pure thought” is born of our religious experience, when our religion is seen as the only rational resolution for the problems that arise from the “freedom of conscience” (which is the final shape of “freedom of thought” as the element of personal self-expression). It is, of course, the public law that sets the bounds within which all consciences are effectively “free.” A conscience that is in conscious opposition to the universally recognized authority of the law—one that sees itself, or would like to see itself, as the “Law of the Heart”—must choose between the public sanction (which may go as far as the guillotine) and self-incarceration in the Stoic thought-world. But the religion of loving forgiveness sets up “the Law of the Heart” in its only demonstrably rational guise, as the regulative ideal for our system of public law. The final object of the legal system must be to bring everyone (offenders and offended, agents and observers alike) into the community of rational reconciliation, and to maintain them there. Thus, if it is the law of someone’s Heart to execute the

fatwa against Salman Rushdie, they will certainly learn that this cannot rationally be the “law of all hearts.” But if someone aids a fugitive from political persecution (generally recognized as a victim of persecution) then the appeal to the “law of the Heart” will be allowed as *rational*, however ineffective it may prove in the immediate circumstances of the moment.

The standpoint of Absolute Knowing takes the place of the religious standpoint. “Speculative Philosophy” was (and indeed is) a kind of “religion.” That is one reason why its proponents are apt to become passionate and to indulge in *odium theologicum*—or at least to be quietly contemptuous of those who are called “philosophers,” but who do not appear to be concerned about anything absolute. But, of course, there is no need for these negative passions in philosophy at all, and the philosophical “beautiful soul” must understand that its contempt (however silent) remains contemptible.

The one clearly logical consequence that follows from the transition to the “absolute standpoint” is the recognition that we cannot appeal to God as a “judge.” For in that capacity we cannot speak for him. The final overcoming of the Unhappy Consciousness lies in the rational comprehension that “God *cannot* judge, he can only *have mercy*”;³ and that means that (although social authorities will no doubt continue to avail themselves of it) the death-penalty cannot be made finally rational. Dr. Guillotin was attempting the impossible; for Reason requires that its channels of communication must remain as open as we can keep them. We cannot allow anyone who executes a *fatwa* to argue that they were “only sending the offender to God.” Not even from the mouth of an acknowledged saint of the purely academic life (such as Thomas) can we accept that argument. The believers may ascribe to their God any other “Beyond” that they wish (in uses of language which they acknowledge to be rationally unintelligible by the standards of “scientific” communication); but a “judge” God cannot be. The standards of rational communication have to apply to anything properly called a “judgment.” The Stoic concept of “free thought” obliges us to admit that death can be a right of the rational individual; and it may therefore be an appropriate gift sometimes, for those who lack the power to exercise their rights. But death cannot be a rightful punishment.

The fact that we cannot judge for God (because he cannot be a “judge” in practical affairs at all) may make it seem problematic whether we can actually think for him. If the “science of experience” is a science at all, perhaps it should be read as the demonstration that no further science is possible? Why should theoretical judgments be in any better case than those of practical life? Is it the case that we can reach the absolute standpoint only for the retrospective enjoyment of all of the experience that led up to it?⁴

Clearly Hegel did not himself believe this, or he would not have described his book as “properly the Introduction.” I shall not discuss the problem at any length here, because my necessary concern is with whether that “introduction” is also a science. But the relation of our putative science to “experience” in its ongoing character enables us to offer some tentative suggestions (rather than definite conclusions or proofs).

First, no one has to be “logical” in the Hegelian way unless they want to. What Hegel calls the “leading of language” is a light and easy yoke. One can refuse it at the very beginning, and stand by the practical reading of experience that we call “common sense.” We may need to distinguish “science” from common sense; but we can still accept the practical “life-efficiency” standpoint of common sense as the overarching context within which our scientific inquiries “make sense” (including all of our inquiries into the logic of language, and the rational psychology of selfhood).

So, if we are going to be logical in Hegel’s way, if we are going to follow the leading of language, we must know why we are doing it; for otherwise we shall be derailed somewhere by the insurgent pressures of the ordinary life that is lived in accordance with the dictates of common sense. Speaking generally, we must already desire to be “another self” than the one that is focussed upon the self-preservation of a handy, language-using, middle-sized mammal which is, above all, *crafty* in the securing of “its own way.” The exigencies of self-preservation already compel us to form ourselves (as language users) at least into the appearance of “another self” who is socially defined; and the highest reaches of our craftiness become visible in our capacity to deceive ourselves about our identity with that other self. That is why it is questionable whether we can really *be* “another self”—without dying to demonstrate our success. Language leads us on a “pathway of despair” because at every stage—if our concept of honesty is still bright—we know that we are hypocrites in speaking of a “truth” that is our “identity.”

The fact that life itself forces the language-using social animals to embark upon the task of remaking themselves—i.e. remaking their consciousness of the goal of their lives, which is primitively given to them as self-preservation and self-reproduction—is what gives Hegel’s undertaking some measure of plausibility and attraction for everyone with theoretical interests.⁵ But Hegel’s enterprise remains only a language-game—or at best a technique for doing psychological and social analysis—for all who are not already strongly inclined to take a “religious” view of their lives and vocations when they read him. The “pathway of despair” is only a primrose path full of sceptical laughter, and a comedy that is occasionally rather black, unless we seriously believe that we must strive for union with God, and that only by doing that shall we become our true selves. When we have *that* attitude we can understand at once why *any* view founded upon “common sense” is likely to be “false” and “upside down.”

Hegel was educated in a seminary, but he was not particularly religious personally; or at least I cannot see any evidence of it. The “despair” of which he speaks is a matter of historical observation. It is Augustine, not the Sceptical professors, who expresses the “unhappy” experience of the *Weltgeist* adequately. The task of history, in bringing philosophical consciousness to maturity, is to overcome Augustine’s despair really and truly. But it belongs to philosophy professors to be sceptical, just as it belongs to ordinary unphilosophical folk like the slave in Terence to be comically amused, and entirely friendly to the life-spectacle that amuses them. The “phenomenology of Spirit” is a pathway of despair; it ends tragically at the Mount of Calvary, with the experience that cannot fail to produce despair in every one of

us who has honestly abandoned the faith in an unintelligible Beyond. Our finite lives are bounded by death.

That we must accept; and Hamlet was right—no one in my lady's chamber is going to laugh at it. But the "experience of consciousness" is a comedy all the same. Despair belongs to the finite spirit, and to religion. But the experiential science is also a "self-fulfilling scepticism" (par. 78). When we advance into the infinite freedom of the philosophical realm, we leave despair and the tragedy of finitude behind; it is the spirit of comedy, the *liberated* spirit of the Sceptical professors, that must go with us.

Hegel laughed at the "modern" sceptics, just as Kierkegaard laughed at the Hegelian professors and their "System"—and for similar reasons. He saw that the modern sceptics were not really sceptics at all. Even in their theoretical arguments they took everything established by "modern science" for granted. Their scepticism was a verbal pretence. Similarly Kierkegaard, who knew what the despair of finitude was, and wrote about it more vividly than anyone had done before (at least since the birth of the modern scepticism), saw that "the System" was a house of words, which gave knowledge of nothing important. It was only a sham substituted for the religious tradition that it claimed to replace.

Kierkegaard is the "shape" of *true* Scepticism in the modern philosophical age. He draws attention to what philosophy cannot do for us. Philosophy cannot tell anyone how to be "authentic."⁶ Hegel's theory of Conscience shows that it must be the standing assumption of our lives together that everyone is as authentic as they know how to be. All "conscientious" declarations are to be accepted as valid; and everyone is to be forgiven for their failures, and for the necessary element of self-assertion and self-will involved in their decisions. Since most of us are not philosophers, it is correct to call this the "absolutely religious" foundation of our political life. Anyone, pretending to be a philosopher, who claims to show us the way to a more authentic mode of existence—whether it be Marx preaching the International, Gentile preaching the "educational" value of the Fascist blackjack, or Heidegger preaching the gospel of "German destiny"—is *betraying* the philosophical calling.⁷

In so far as the Hegelian doctrine of conscientious forgiveness permits us to take the attitude that Heidegger stigmatized in *Sein und Zeit* as that of *das "Man"* it is an easy yoke. To appeal to what "one" does or thinks, is to avoid having any conscientious position of one's own; but as soon as one has a real commitment of "the Heart," the path of "forgiveness" becomes as difficult as Kierkegaard says it is to be a "Christian." Kierkegaard, the existing individual, is the Hegelian Conscience that takes itself seriously. So we must leave him behind. When we go on to "absolute knowing" it is Carneades and the slave in Terence whom we take with us into the purely theoretical aether of "the System."

Of course, Kierkegaard, the thinker, was the complete figure of the Sceptic.⁸ He knew how to speak for Carneades and Terence too in their place. Let us begin with his wish that he could improve on the "tolerably dubious Hegelian arrangement of the historical process."⁹ It was someone who *did* believe in Hegel's *Logic*

(McTaggart) who demonstrated the truth of Kierkegaard's claim that "to exist under the guidance of pure thought is like travelling in Denmark with the help of a small map of Europe, on which Denmark shows no larger than a steel pen-point."¹⁰ McTaggart commented that "the beginning [of the Philosophy of History] is quite empirical"; and the openness of its ending left him believing that in the *Philosophy of Right* "Hegel passed to the conclusion that the best that had appeared was the best that could appear."¹¹ Of course, McTaggart's essentially "Kantian" view that Hegel had produced a transcendental logic for "application" to "reality" was quite mistaken. But the uselessness of the Logic as a "map" could not be more graphically illustrated.

If we turn to the *Phenomenology* for the fixing of our compass points, we can readily see that Imperial China has no more place in the "tolerably dubious Hegelian arrangement" than Kierkegaard's recently discovered tribe in "Monomotapa." Hegel's *Logic* is not meant to be "applied" to anything and everything—in the way that it was by McTaggart and all the *Privatdozenten* that Kierkegaard loves to make fun of. There would be no end to that; and since all the "empirical" material is only "approximately" conceptualized (as Kierkegaard puts it) none of the results would be satisfactory. But even when it is *correctly* interpreted, there is a "bad infinite" aspect to the logic of the concrete. Concrete logic is capable of infinite extension; and the most we can hope for is some convincing way to fit every piece of valid conceptual analysis done in any "finite" field into Hegel's conceptual theory. But nothing can be fitted into it properly unless we understand where the backbone of Hegel's logical enterprise is located.

The backbone of Logic is what the *Phenomenology* can show us. The appearing of the Spirit has led us to a conceptually visible "universal Church" of rational appreciation. What the philosophers (as the thinking consciousness of this community "for itself") must supply first, is the logical structure of this community and of membership in it. The Hegelian Logic is, first of all, the theoretical structure of rational selfhood. In that aspect it is the foundation of the scientific comprehension of the world in the "Real Philosophy" of Nature and Spirit.

The Real Philosophy logically involves an indefinitely extensible conceptual scheme); so in its "real philosophical" aspect the Logic is infinitely expandable; and in addition, it will be continually in need of reelaboration and revision. It is ironically amusing to find in the first volume of the *Collected Works* of Marx, three drafts of a structural analysis of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*.¹² For the *Philosophy of Nature* was already beginning to lose its utility (and so fall into undeserved disrepute as a project) even while Marx was making his abstracts. The reason that Hegel's Logic is not threatened with the same general desuetude is that its "backbone" has to be a philosophical system of the concepts that structure our common-sense experience and communication. Only when (and if) the advance of science and the transformation of our lives were to cause changes in the most ordinary uses of our most ordinary concepts would Hegel's own version of the Logic become superannuated. If that were to happen we should be able to see clearly what is truly "absolute" about the "Absolute Knowing" of the *Logic* itself; for we should have to

use the “method” of the *Logic* phenomenologically in order to comprehend Hegel’s own *Logic* historically.

If we look at Hegel’s “System” in this perspective, even the freaks and excesses of his *Philosophy of Spirit* became comprehensible. It was “logical” to show how the summary outline of Chinese culture and religion readily available to an educated German in 1825 typified a very undeveloped form of social “substantiality.” But both the lecturer, and his students, probably thought that this constituted a rational justification for cultural imperialism on the part of the European nations. The voice from the “penpoint” of Denmark suggesting that the Chinese—and even the still undiscovered tribe of Monomotapa—were children of God with lives of their own, was only bringing out what is implicit in paragraphs 678–680 of the *Phenomenology*. We must rejoice that it spoke up.

The question that this example raises is whether some subtler form of prejudice is present even in the most ordinary and universal concepts themselves, as they function in the mind of one who devotedly seeks to escape from prejudice. Hegel was certainly inclined to rationalize the common prejudices of his place and time in practice. Even his admiration for Antigone forms part of an apologia for the “Church, kitchen and kids” conception of woman’s role in the rational life. But although that conception was shared by the society of Sophocles and Hegel’s own world, Hegel did not believe (as Sophocles clearly did) that Antigone was wrong to act like an equal in her “brother-sister” relationship. His un-Hellenic idealization of the brother-sister relationship only makes sense in the context of the Christian Kingdom of Heaven; and that is translated out of the Beyond, into the Here and Now by the “absolute Religion” and “absolute knowing.” So the fact that Antigone is one of the saints of the visibly-invisible Church is a proof that theoretical Reason can rise above the reconciliations with “necessity” that typify “Real Philosophy.”

There may *be* prejudices in the *Logic* nonetheless. For as Kierkegaard put it: “Who is to write or complete such a system? Surely a human being.” It is indeed a “strange mode of speech which assumes that a human being becomes speculative philosophy in the abstract.”¹³ First we are up against the ambiguity of the word “abstract” here. Hegel does not hold that words have meanings (or “concepts exist”) in the abstract at all. A word has meaning *for* a speaker, hearer, reader; a “concept” is the actual activity of grasping the meaning. Properly, words have meaning (or concepts exist) when the circle of communicative interaction shows that the conceptual meaning is shared in common by a community of speakers, hearers, readers. When what is shared is entirely linguistic, when the words refer only to other words, the concepts only to other concepts, then the thinking is “pure.” At this stage a speaker or writer who submits her results to the community of others who practice “pure thinking” in that language (and so establishes that communication is actually occurring reliably) can reasonably aspire to do “speculative philosophy as such.” But she will not have securely escaped from all prejudice even so. For she must use her own natural language; and we cannot tell what subtle biases there may be in that. Only time, communication with other cultures and languages, and diligent critical attention will reveal them.¹⁴

Abstract perfection is not achievable because the ideal of “perfect communication” is not “abstractly” definable. “Perfect communication” must be concretely defined as necessarily involving the moment of critical doubt and uncertainty. Our sceptical conscience—or perhaps better, the laughing consciousness of the jester—must go with us always. The *concrete* ideal of rational communication is a system that *works*. That is to say it produces a sufficient degree of “satisfaction” on both sides to keep itself going. In practical affairs, this often involves deliberate ambiguity. Antigone and Creon we have always with us; the philosophical comprehension of how rational communication works can only lead them to accept their disagreement knowingly as “necessary.” Ambiguous formulas avoid actual conflicts. In empirical science, however, the goal is to avoid any misleading ambiguity; and for that reason logic must expose conceptual ambiguity in all of its *necessary* shapes. The rational structure of selfhood, the paradoxical union of singularity and universality in “membership,” the “identity” of “the We that is I and the I that is We”—these are the key to what is “logically necessary.” This, therefore, is the core and centre of philosophical logic; and it is safe from the continual change and transformation that must rule at the periphery of rational inquiry because the structure of our life experience will not change. Whatever may happen at the level of the scientific Understanding, we must continue to live in the world of Sense-Certainty and Perception, the world of common sense and “real life” in which we struggle to assert ourselves, and then collaborate in a system of (debatably and contentiously) “equal recognition” to make ourselves at home in the world, and to build up all the structures of objective Spirit that the “good life” (which may appear to us to be shockingly *bad*) requires. Wherever our scientific conceptualization of Nature (universal and “human”—or particular) may lead, the necessary inversion of the scientific Understanding is bound to restore the primacy of the standpoint of “life.” The reliable permanence of philosophical logic depends upon the necessary primacy of common sense; and that primacy means that—in defiance of common sense itself—even the *universal* concept of Nature is really “human.” That is the ultimate significance of the “Inverted World”; and the certainty that philosophical logic is indeed possible depends upon it.

It is by now clear, I trust, why the “science of experience” must be possible, and how we can be sure that Hegel has the fundamentals of it right. Starting from its two ends, I have shown why they are functionally necessary—and, more importantly, why their connective closure is necessary. Those who think that the Hegelian “System” can stand without its *coordinate* “First Part” are either confused about what the Hegelian logic *is*, or else so commonsensically comfortable in their possession of the point of view of modern scientific Reason that (although they know it is *essentially* “historical”) they see no need to inquire how their secure possession of it was achieved. The second case was Hegel’s own during the Berlin years of his universally recognized “authority.” He would have recognized his mistake fast enough if he had lived to hear Kierkegaard telling the Danish professors that “the System” leaves out “the ethical.” It is rare to find someone in the first case who has thought hard enough in a critically reflective way to recognize her own state of confusion.

Mure deserves our honor and respect for recognizing and admitting to it.¹⁵ Most interpreters of the *Logic* are content to go on studying and writing about Hegel as a link in the great tradition of speculative theology as if Kant had not *successfully* established that the status of that whole tradition was radically problematic, and as if Hegel's expression "God's knowledge" was directly convertible into "the knowledge of God." Michael Rosen (1982) has shown what becomes of "God's knowledge" as a supposed form of intellectual "intuition." But no doubt intellectual fantasies meet the same sort of abiding need for some intellectuals (McTaggart can serve as a paradigm, since he is safely dead) that imaginative fantasies do for more ordinary folk. So I suppose that the tradition will continue.

For those who think that the only God worth seeking, cannot properly be found "beyond and above," because that God himself leads us back home to those who made him, and made themselves into a rational community by making him—so that they can rightfully say that (logically) "He" made them able to make both themselves and him—for this constituency the *Phenomenology* remains essential. They will readily grant, I think, that the ends of the circular chain are sound enough. There is no need to claim that Hegel's performance is perfect all the way; and there are some grounds for arguing that in the middle it is susceptible to significant improvement. The chapter on "Reason" is terribly bloated in its first stages, and unduly starved and meagre at the end. The reason for the bloating becomes apparent when Hegel returns to the topic of "formalism" in the Preface. We can see there, that his indignation about the easy "empirical" way of connecting speculative logic with the order of Nature was one of the main stimuli that drove him to give a philosophical account of "experience." So it is no wonder that his pen ran away with him when he came round to "formalism" in his systematic progress. His repetitively tedious proof that the empirical observation of nature is logically helpless, obscures the deeper and more important point that even in its best formulations the experimental theory of nature will only teach us what it taught Socrates—that nothing of concrete human significance is to be learned there. Hence the "philosophy of Nature"—even when it is done properly—will prove to be far less significant in "the System" than the speculative "theologians" (and particularly Schelling from 1796 to 1806) believed.¹⁶

Hegel continued to indulge the vein of sarcastic mockery set free by "Schelling's school," in his critique of Lavater and Gall. This (also) became far more extensive than it needed to be, simply because he was enjoying himself. The account of rational self-realization is more appropriate in scale and is methodically well done; but then, at the end of the chapter Hegel was certainly conscious that he had already gone on far too long so he skimmed on his dialectic of practical reason, just as he had already made "logic" no more than the Danish penpoint on his map. I do not think that he could have done "Lawgiving Reason" properly without a lengthy excursus (but how much more worth having it would have been than that endless rigmarole about "the Inner and the Outer"!). There is perhaps a sound argument for making both theoretical Reason and the Categorical Imperative into penpoints. For the transitions are really "immediate." They depend upon

an “identity of opposites” that make common sense intensely uncomfortable; and “methodizing” them more fully (which was certainly possible in the case of “logic”) would not make them any easier.

It cannot be denied that Hegel’s ladder bears a closer resemblance to the fence built by Kullervo, son of Kalervo (in the *Kalevala*) than it does to the ladder that Dante saw in Paradise:

Kullervo, son of Kalervo, now makes a fence.

He places big pines as palings just as they were, whole tall firs he sets up as posts; he pulled withes good and hard from the tallest rowans, made a fence without an opening, made it quickly without a gate.

Then he uttered these words, spoke and said this:

“Whoever does not rise aloft like a bird, not fly along with two wings,
Let him not get over the fence of Kalervo’s son.”

Untamo chances to come to view

that fence of Kalervo’s son, the slash felled by the war slave.

He saw a fence without an opening, without a chink, without a slit,

a fence which was built up from the ground, constructed up to the clouds.

He uttered a word, spoke thus: “He is not fitted for this;

he made a fence without an opening, built it without a gate;

he raised it up to the heavens, raised it up to the clouds.

I cannot get over it or inside it through a chink.

I do not know what to apply him to, to what work I should put him.¹⁷

But on the whole, I find Hegel’s argument methodical enough; and I am content to stand by the verdict that his “science” is a success: “a work . . .” (said Peirce) “perhaps the most profound ever written”—and C. S. Peirce was then (1903) already the *next* true giant of philosophical logic.¹⁸

Notes

1. Compare Hegel’s introduction to the *History of Philosophy* (ed. Hoffmeister, 177): “The subjective spirit that is rationally aware of (*vernimmt*) the divine Spirit, is itself this divine Spirit” (mistranslated in Lauer 1971, 107). This is only one of a number of similar aperçus.

2. Letter 95, May 1807 (Hoffmeister, I, 161–162; Butler and Seiler, 79).

3. Rosenkranz, 193 (Harris and Knox, 265).

4. The last pages of T. Pinkard (1994) seem to be supporting this view.

5. Passion being the dialectical force that it is, this plausibility and attraction can lead to violent rejection. Thus Popper’s “experience” reinforced his commitment to “rational common sense”; and recognizing that social identification could lead to death-camps on one side, and the “liquidation of the Kulaks” on the other, he blamed Plato, Hegel and Marx for things that all three of them abominated as much as he did. The attraction of the ideal which all three—in their different ways—perceived and portrayed, can best be measured by the

ways in which Popper falsifies and distorts it *for himself* in order to validate his hatred and contempt. (He was very obviously wrong in thinking that Hegel wanted to predict the future direction of history. But his argument that we cannot predict the future direction of *knowledge* (1964, vi–vii) has to be taken more seriously.)

6. This is the only way in which Kierkegaard's complaint against Hegel can be *validly* formulated; and we should take note that the philosophical conscience who passes on to "Absolute Knowing," must have accepted the duty of being the best *individual* she can be before she can make the transition to being a "pure thinker." *Real* forgiveness never comes cheap. But the paths to "authenticity" are indefinitely various; they cannot be *systematized*. All the same, a "moral philosopher" who elects to study them can sometimes be seen to be (from the absolute standpoint) "on the right track." This is the case, for instance, with Iris Murdoch (1993) who finds the "metaphysical" ground of "morals" in a religious experience that has become philosophically undogmatic. (She is, of course, quite mistaken about the Hegelian Absolute. When she finds in it "a lingering shadow of determinism, and the *loss of ordinary everyday truth*" [490] it is apparent that she has substituted the general impression of Hegel's "influence" for the study of what Hegel himself says about "Absolute Knowing." Anyone who studies the last chapter of the *Science of Logic* can see that "Absolute Knowing" has nothing to do with the metaphysical fantasies of Bradley or McTaggart; and if the view of the *Science of Logic* proposed here is accepted, it will become evident that the *pedagogical* aim of Hegel's system was very close—Platonically "identical"—to Murdoch's own.)

7. The "betrayal" has many different degrees. Thus (in spite of the rhetoric of "class war" with its echoes of the Sans-culottes and their "Scythe of equality") we can fairly claim that the educational efforts of Marx and Engels themselves did not violate the principle of "respect for Conscience." They were mistaken in thinking their "science" was *philosophical*; but it was only when their "social science" lost its enlightened character as a universal gospel, and became the *instrument* of an authoritative elite, that a new breach between "philosophy" and "religion" was created. Lenin's "dictatorship of the proletariat" is the "Unhappy Consciousness" of the Marxist gospel—just as Gentile's ideal of the Fascist "Regime" was the Unhappy Consciousness of a religion of the Hegelian "Nation." The Nazi "Nation" was not Hegelian at all; its rhetoric belonged to the "animal religions." What is to be said about a philosophical position that could allow Heidegger's choice, I do not know. But anyone who can *rest* in a position from which that choice appears somehow legitimate, seems as remarkable to me as Abraham did to Kierkegaard. (Unlike Kierkegaard I would not *admire* Abraham, if I did not believe that the ram in the thicket was the work of his own intelligence rather than the miraculous gift of his God. Otherwise, like Heidegger, he simply represents the *risk* involved in an "immediate" commitment.)

8. For two different attempts to relate Kierkegaard and Hegel see R. L. Perkins (1982—brief) and M. C. Taylor (1980—lengthy). J. L. Marsh (1982) is right in pointing out that Perkins has overlooked Kierkegaard's enormous debt to the "Unhappy Consciousness." See also J. W. Elrod (1975). The life-work of N. Thulstrup (1980) is invaluable for all matters of fact, but far less insightful about Hegel's "system" than Kierkegaard himself was in all but his most polemical moments.

9. S. Kierkegaard (1941), 135.

10. S. Kierkegaard (1941), 275.

11. J.M.E. McTaggart (1896), 245–246. McTaggart thought that Hegel's willingness to discuss China, India etc. was a sufficient answer to "Lotze's reproach that modern Idealism confined the spiritual development of the Absolute to the shores of the Mediterranean"

(Lotze, *Metaphysics* sec. 217). If he had appreciated the justice of the “reproach” he might eventually have understood Hegel better.

12. See K. Marx (1975), Vol. I..

13. S. Kierkegaard (1941), 109 (my italics).

14. The understanding of “Spirit” as the human communication process, began (I think) with Josiah Royce’s *Problem of Christianity*, vol. II (1914). But it is now quite general. See, for instance, M. Theunissen (1978). (I am not sure whether this version of “open Hegelianism” is “open enough” to satisfy the requirements of D. Kolb [1991]. But regardless of what the historical Hegel, with his secure Newtonian foundations, may have thought, it will be seen that on my view, the *real* philosophy of Nature must remain a radically “open” field of inquiry. In the transition from Logic to Nature the crucial expression is that the Idea “lets itself go *freely*.” Unlike Kolb I do not find myself agreeing with S. G. Houlgate *against* John Burbidge [both 1990] but with both of them *together*—which means that a reconciliation of their views is both necessary and possible.)

15. See G.R.G. Mure (1978), 147.

16. This was, I think, the right view about an Aristotelian contemplative philosophy of nature in the conceptual context of Kant’s Copernican Revolution; and a contemplative view was the only one possible in Hegel’s time. In that context only the “breach” between Nature and Spirit was humanly (or “ethically” as Kierkegaard would have said) important. In the context of our *evolutionary* theory, the continuum between Nature and Spirit becomes vital, and the “ethical” significance of the Philosophy of Nature is both positive and immense. That is another reason why Hegel’s chapter V A leaves us dissatisfied and unhappy (and not just bored). But it is not a reason why the *Phenomenology* needs to be revised or amended; it only illustrates how the forward movement of experience—even a revolutionary movement—does not affect its logical structure.

17. *The Kalevala* (poem 31), trans. Francis P. Magoun, Cambridge MA, Harvard, 1963, 227.

18. MS. 478, 27 (Houghton Library, Harvard). Like most of Hegel’s other Anglophone admirers, Peirce saw no virtue in the dialectical method in pure logic. So his view that the *Phenomenology* is Hegel’s “greater masterpiece” (*Collected Papers* 8, 112) is prejudiced. But I think the *Phenomenology* really is “more profound”; I have tried to show *why* in this concluding essay. In general, however, I think that comparisons are odious here, because the two “masterpieces” ought never to have been separated—and I have tried to demonstrate that too. When they are separated, the Logic comes to seem “more profound” to some, and evidently useless, or even a deliberate humbug, to others; while the *Phenomenology* loses most of its profound seriousness, and reveals its comic-ironic side. It is then torn to pieces by the spiritual children of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche; and Hegel himself is as much to blame for that as those later heroes of the spirit. (I cite the Peirce MS. from the quotation in M. H. Fisch [1974, 183].)

The foundation of philosophical logic in the life-world of ordinary usage is essential because we must avoid the “illusion” of which Wittgenstein speaks:

We are under the illusion that what is peculiar, profound, essential, in our investigation, resides in its trying to grasp the incomparable essence of language. That is, the order existing between the concepts of proposition, word, proof, truth, experience, and so on. This order is a *super*-order between—so to speak—*super*-concepts. Whereas, of course, if the words ‘language,’ ‘experience,’ ‘world,’ have a use, it must be as humble a one as that of the words ‘table,’ ‘lamp,’ ‘door.’

This same ordinary-life foundation makes Hegel's *Logic translatable*—though with minor problems illustrated in Geraets, Suchting and Harris (XIII–XLVIII). The claim of H.-G. Gadamer (1976, 112) that “all attempts to translate his [Hegel's] thought are utterly futile” is amusingly absurd. But any Anglophone reader will agree that J. Derrida's claim that Hegel's discourse “still holds together the language of our era by so many threads” (1982, 119) goes a bit too far the other way. It is not Hegel's actual *language* that has this remarkable function.

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3. Secondary Literature on Hegel

My own references in footnotes will generally be found here. (I have given cross-references to the items in section 2 that might reasonably be looked for here.) But there are quite a number of items in this section to which no explicit reference is made (and some of them I have not myself seen). I thought it would be useful to readers of a work such as this to list everything (in English, French, German and Italian) that I know of. But I have been guided by the following boundary criteria:

1. The work should be fairly recent (not much is included that was written before 1960, unless its importance is generally recognized).
2. It should be *primarily* concerned with Hegel (and especially with the *Phenomenology*). Hence I have omitted some essays on Hegel and Marx (or Hegel and Goethe) for instance, because it seemed probable that they were more concerned with the other man.
3. The work should be fully published. I have omitted *theses*, except for a few to which I am myself directly indebted.

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Note: In this section I list the historical and literary works that are specifically referred to in the text (together with a few recent philosophy books that make no reference to Hegel). The literary works in French and German that were important for the evolution of Hegel's thought are given in section 2. *Classical* literature is here. But the English literary references, for which *any* decent edition will be good enough—e.g. Shakespeare—are silently ignored.

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The following abbreviations have been employed in this Index: H = Hegel, *Phen.* = *Phenomenology of Spirit*, I = individual, P = particular, S = singular, U = universal. The name G.W.F. Hegel is not indexed. His works will be found under their normal titles. Essays and fragments are listed in quotation marks.

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